



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**



Crime, Punishment, and Politics Across Generations – A Multi-Cohort Study in the UK ESRC DTP Strategic Joint Studentship

University of Warwick and University of Nottingham

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 15 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the Universities of Warwick, Birmingham, Nottingham, Aston, Leicester, Loughborough, De Montfort and Nottingham Trent.

We are now inviting applications for an ESRC Strategic Joint Studentship between the University of Warwick (where the student will be registered) and the University of Nottingham to commence in October 2025.

About the project

This studentship offers a unique opportunity to explore the long-term relationships between crime, punishment, and politics in the UK. Drawing on high-quality UK birth-cohort datasets, the project will examine how socio-economic and political contexts shape attitudes, experiences, and outcomes across generations.

The project is designed to provide flexibility, allowing the successful applicant to define the specific focus of the research. Whether exploring political socialisation, the impact of economic inequality, or the role of policy or legal shifts on crime and criminal justice, the project offers scope to align the research with your academic interests and career aspirations.

Key research directions might ask:

- What temporal trends emerge in the relationship between crime, punishment, and politics across UK cohorts born between 1958 and 2024?
- How do structural factors (e.g., political socialisation, economic inequality) intersect with individual characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity) and area-level variations, to shape experiences and perceptions of crime?
- To what extent do policy changes influence generational attitudes and outcomes related to crime and justice?

Methodology

The research will leverage at least two of the following renowned UK cohort datasets:

- National Child Development Study (born 1958)
- 1970 British Cohort Study (born 1970)
- Next Steps Cohort (born 1989/90)
- Millennium Cohort Study (born 2000/01)

These datasets capture pivotal political and economic shifts, such as neoliberalism, austerity, Brexit, and the Covid-19 pandemic. Complementary national datasets, including the British Social Attitudes Survey (from 1983) and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (from 1982), will further contextualise the analysis.

Supervision and Training

You will join a vibrant research environment with supervision from leading experts in longitudinal and cohort-based analyses. The studentship will provide access to research resources and tailored training opportunities in statistical methods and data management.

We seek a motivated candidate with an academic background in criminology, sociology, political science, or a related discipline. Prior experience with quantitative methods and an interest in social justice are advantageous but not essential, as training will be provided.

Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the strategic Joint Studentship application form [available online here](#). Please also upload an anonymised CV and cover letter as part of the online application process. Shortlisted applicants will also be required to provide transcripts and two references.

Application deadline: 20th February

Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP

Our ESRC studentships cover fees at the home rate, a maintenance stipend, and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available to both home and international applicants. For further details, visit: www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/.

Informal enquiries about the research prior to application can be directed to Dr. Emily Gray at emily.gray@warwick.ac.uk or Professor Stephen Farrall at stephen.farrall@nottingham.ac.uk