



Evaluating the psychosocial criminogenic influences on youth offending ESRC DTP Joint Studentship

Loughborough University and University of Birmingham

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

We are now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Joint Studentship between Loughborough University (where the student will be registered) and the University of Birmingham to commence in October 2019.

Project details

Youth justice for policy in England and Wales frames, understands and responds to youth offending as a result of exposure to psychological and social (psychosocial) 'risk factors' during childhood and adolescence that increase the likelihood of later offending. Interventions are often judged to be 'effective' in preventing offending when evaluated using randomised controlled trials (RCTs).

This studentship examines how risk-based youth justice is problematic because it can overlook contextual/structural explanations of crime, whilst RCT evaluations can factor out the contextual influences on intervention effectiveness due to their processes of randomisation. The consequent shortfall in understandings of youth offending and effective youth justice responses will be examined using a **Realist Synthesis (RS)** re-analysis of cognitive behavioural programmes (e.g. social competency, self-control), the most common psychosocial intervention category. The RS methodology will involve:

1. Identification and analysis of intervention/programme theories through **literature review and workshops** with key stakeholders;
2. **Synthesis – testing and refining theories** through searching electronic databases, selecting and appraising relevant studies, abstracting and noting theoretically-relevant information and synthesising data through within- and cross-study analysis;
3. **Production of actionable guidance** in collaboration with a stakeholder advisory group; guidance identifying key learning points to inform the design and implementation of improved youth crime prevention interventions locally.

The ideal candidate will have:

- An understanding of contemporary youth justice issues
- Experience of conducting research using realist methods (desirable, not essential)
- An ability to convey complex ideas to others in way which promotes understanding
- An ability to work independently and part of a multidisciplinary team
- Effective time management and organisation skills and an ability to meet deadlines
- Effective interpersonal and communication skills

Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the Joint Studentship application form [available online here](#). Please complete the application form, along with a cover letter and CV, then submit via email to Professor Stephen Case at s.case@lboro.ac.uk.

Shortlisted applicants will also be required to provide two references.

Application deadline: Monday 4th March, 2019

Interview date: Monday 11th March, 2019

Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP

Our ESRC studentships cover fees and maintenance stipend and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available only to successful applicants who fulfil eligibility criteria. To check your eligibility, visit:

www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/

Informal enquiries about the research or Social and Policy Studies Unit at Loughborough University prior to application can be directed to s.case@lboro.ac.uk.