



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

PGR Academy
College of Human and Health Sciences
Academi YOR
Coleg y Gwyddorau Dynol ac Iechyd



POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES

College of Human and Health Sciences
Coleg y Gwyddorau Dynol ac Iechyd



#SwanseaResearch

WELCOME!

"The College of Human and Health Sciences offers exciting opportunities to undertake research that will enable you to contribute to the growing body of knowledge within the health, social and psychological disciplines. We offer programmes that will develop your research skills with guidance from expert supervisory teams, and equip you with advanced research skills and knowledge to enhance career choices.

Postgraduate research students enjoy high levels of support and excellent facilities, and are encouraged to undertake training opportunities to develop specific research and transferable skills to maximise opportunities for future career choices.

We take pride in ensuring our research students are equipped to excel in their studies and we are proud to have achieved excellent scores, indicating a high level of satisfaction from our students, in the national Postgraduate Research Experience Survey"

Professor Jaynie Rance,
Director of Postgraduate Research



FAST FACTS

- We have a strong and diverse research base with over 100 supervisors, including 23 professorial staff.
- In the last year the College attracted £1,362,716 of research income.
- We have links to research organisations across the world.

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WELCOME!

"As the Research Student Representative for the college I am able to help ensure that all postgraduate research students completing their MPhil or PhD programmes can gain the best experience possible. It's important that students have sufficient training, resources and teaching opportunities and my role works as a liaison between students and staff to ensure that these can be met.

Within this role I am able to address concerns at both College and University level to enhance the student experience for all. Being able to work with Research Student Representatives from other colleges also allows me to be part of a team committed to new researchers gaining the best knowledge and skills for their future careers, whilst being able to fully enjoy the Swansea University experience."

Aimee Pink,
Research Student Representative



INTRODUCTION

“ Our passion for innovative and high calibre research has brought us local, national and international success ”

Studying for a research degree is a truly challenging and rewarding experience that gives you the chance to pursue a research project based around your own interests, and that can ultimately lead to real-life benefits for the wider world.

Both the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree courses are ideal for those who want to pursue a career in academia, improve employment prospects in a particular discipline; or wish to develop skills in their chosen professional career. You will be passionate about following a programme of research based on your own interests and will benefit from the sense of personal achievement from successfully following a programme of research.

The Doctorate in Professional Practice (D.Prof) is suited to those working within a health and social care setting who are keen to follow a programme of work-based learning closely linked to the needs of their workplace.

With the job market becoming increasingly competitive it is essential to stand out from the crowd and research degrees can help you do that by providing you with new and transferable skills, and expertise in a particular field. **Research by The Sutton Trust has demonstrated that an individual with a postgraduate degree can, on average, expect to earn £5,500 more a year than an individual with an undergraduate degree.**

Demand for research degrees has increased over the last 10 years as their benefits have become clear to both employers and undergraduates, with the Higher Education Funding Council for England showing the number of individuals starting a PhD programme increasing by 29% between 2005/6 and 2014/15.

Current research degrees available include: our MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate programmes, which may be offered on a full-time or part-time basis. Please note that it may be possible to transfer from an MPhil to a PhD degree if your studies are progressing satisfactorily. We are accepting students in:

- Ageing Studies
- Children and Young People
- Health Sciences
- Psychology
- Social Work and Social Policy

TOP 4 REASONS TO ENTER POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDY:

- The qualification is needed for your current career
- To support a change in career direction
- To support a career in academia or research
- To study a subject you enjoy at a deeper level

WHY STUDY AT SWANSEA UNIVERSITY?

The College of Human and Health Sciences provides you with an environment in which to pursue your research passions, and to benefit from our wealth of academic staff. From the moment you begin you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in the dynamic and supportive research culture needed to start a career in research.

- We have a vibrant body of over 130 postgraduate research students from across a range of health and social care disciplines, so support from your peers is never far away
- Each student's work actively contributes to the research activity and reputation of the College, and can even go on to bring about satisfying real-life benefits
- Our research students are highly valued by the University for the contribution they make to the wider academic community
- From the moment you start you will have the support of two academic members of staff who will supervise, mentor and guide your programme of research through to completion
- Our students can access structured training and support from the College, Postgraduate Research Academy and University, and can even have the opportunity to gain teaching experience
- Students are supported by the Postgraduate Research Academy, which is a one-stop-shop for all postgraduate research students delivering an outstanding student experience from application to graduation. The Academy is forward thinking and seeks to enhance skills and opportunities for students whilst providing a cutting edge research environment
- All of our research groups and centres fully integrate our postgraduate research students to ensure they have the support and skills development needed for their discipline.

COLLEGE OF HUMAN AND HEALTH SCIENCES

A forerunner in meeting human and health science demands, the College responds rapidly to changes in health and social care practice, and aims to achieve recognition as a centre of international excellence which informs policy, practice and education.

The research of the College is extremely varied, spanning the health sciences (such as nursing, midwifery, child studies, policy studies, philosophy, history, biomedical sciences and ethics), social sciences (such as social policy, social work and ageing) and finally psychology.

“Since I had been working as a hospital CEO with a bachelor and master's degree in Healthcare Management, it was such a precious opportunity to improve my professional competency by joining a PhD program at Swansea University.”

Salem Alasmari,
PhD Healthcare Management

REAL LIFE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

SIMON CASSIDY.
Course - PhD Health Science. Simon has recently completed his PhD studies.



What would you tell prospective research students about college life?

I would say to participate in all aspects of college life whilst they are available to you during your candidature. This is especially the case because alongside academic development I have gained life lessons about stamina, commitment, project management, supervision and reflective practice. I feel I have learned these things because I have benefited fundamentally from the influence of friends and colleagues from different backgrounds, cultures, professions and subject areas.

What did you enjoy most about your PhD?

To have the opportunity to undertake further education study and a PhD has been remarkable.

I have enjoyed the whole process which has changed me immeasurably and opened up so many opportunities.

Also something unexpected but which proved to be such a pleasant surprise was the camaraderie, advice and common bond of individuals I have come into contact with. This has marked my PhD journey especially the realisation that completing this course of study was due to the support of research participants, academic supervisors, fellow students, work colleagues, academy managers and administrators, family and friends.

Future career/academic goals

As a consequence of completing my PhD in 2016, I have continued with activities including published work, conference presentations, and advisory activities which have influenced local and national policy.

Having a PhD has therefore given me a foundation and the confidence to consider other professional development. I am grateful for the impact Swansea University has had on me in this respect. I have heard further education described as "a journey," "a marathon," "a rollercoaster" even "a survival." I would say it is all of these things, but most of all "a privilege."



TANISHA DOUGLAS.
Course – PhD Psychology.
Topic: Understanding the psychological journey following bariatric surgery



What would you tell prospective research students about college life?

College life is a lot different to being an undergraduate/post-graduate student, namely in terms of being completely responsible for yourself. As you are no longer bound by set tasks and deadlines you need to be disciplined enough to ensure that you continue to prosper in your work. While this initially seemed daunting, it is a great learning opportunity to find an effective way to keep yourself motivated and organised. In light of this, there is still a degree of time which you can dedicate to your own interests and hobbies. Personally, after undergoing my undergraduate and masters' degrees, it has been refreshing to have the chance to explore new ways to spend my free time.

What do you enjoy most about your PhD?

I have been able to develop a collaborative relationship with my supervisors. Having such a huge input in the direction of the PhD has been encouraging to both think outside the box and be confident in my ideas.

Future career/academic goals

To date, I would like to pursue a career as an academic where I can both continue my research and gain a professorship.

WHAT ARE RESEARCH DEGREES?

The first thing that you will notice about a research degree is how different it is from your undergraduate and taught postgraduate degrees. Research degrees are designed to develop you into an independent researcher, and because of this they are very intensive, focussing purely on the research needed to explore your chosen topic (which must be an original research idea).

By the end of your studies you will have developed and enhanced transferable skills such as problem solving, independent thinking, project management and critical thinking. Although these are intensive programmes, the resulting qualification is recognition of the hard work and commitment you have shown, and of the new skills, techniques and knowledge you have learnt.

SUPPORT

All research can be unpredictable, leading to new exciting findings or even unexpected obstacles. To support you in dealing with these situations you will find your supervisory sessions invaluable in moving forward with your programme of research.

Two experienced researchers (supervisors) will provide the guidance and support you need throughout your studies in the form of supervision sessions. These are a forum in which to discuss any exciting or unexpected findings, or to take stock of where you are, or how to solve a problem that you have encountered. All students must also have regular, documented supervision sessions, and typically during these meetings you will find yourself discussing:

- Research that you have undertaken to date
- Any preliminary findings that your research has revealed
- Plans and objectives for upcoming months
- Training needs
- Regulatory or compliance requirements
- Draft chapters of your thesis

However you will also need to be a committed, motivated self-starter. This will enable you to successfully pursue your studies, handle the challenges your research will encounter and write up your findings as a thesis.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION

Throughout your studies your work will be assessed to ensure that sufficient progress has taken place to permit you to continue with your research. This will eventually lead to the production and submission of a thesis at the end of your studies summarising your research, findings and conclusions.

'Work hard and enjoy it. Swansea University has been really supportive to me. Staff and students are friendly and there is always someone willing to help you out when you get stuck'.

Emma Davies, PhD Health Economics

THE VIVA

The viva voce (known simply as the viva) is an oral examination of your thesis when you defend your research and the approach taken in your work to experts in your field of research. Although this initially sounds overwhelming, supervisors help prepare students for this through mock vivas, which help them become more familiar with the types of questions they may be asked or just remind them that they have the most knowledge and insight into their own research.

Following the viva it is commonplace to be asked to make corrections and amendments to your thesis to ensure the research is presented in the most rigorous way.

MPhil (Master of Philosophy)

Duration: 2 years (full-time) or 4 years (part-time)

Thesis size: 60,000 words, maximum.

(Please note it is possible to transfer from an MPhil to a PhD if your studies are progressing satisfactorily. This will need to take place by the end of year one (full-time) or year two (part-time).)

PhD (Doctor of Philosophy)

Duration: 3 years (full-time) or 6 years (part-time)

Thesis size: 100,000 words, maximum.

DProf (Doctorate in Professional Practice)

Duration: 6 years (part-time)

Thesis size: 80,000 words, maximum.



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry requirements for our research degrees are as follows:

- MPhil: Normally an honours degree (2:1 or above) in a discipline related to your chosen speciality, or a relevant, approved postgraduate qualification.
- PhD or DProf: Applicants would normally have a first class degree, or would be studying for a Master's degree.
- If your first language is not English then you must have a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 (with a minimum of 6.5 in each component) or Swansea University recognised equivalent.
- A research proposal outlining your proposed topic of study.

Applicants can expect to be interviewed following their application to discuss their topic of research and ensure they demonstrate the necessary level of commitment to their studies and training.

CURRENT FEES AND COSTS

The current fees for research degrees are available at swansea.ac.uk/postgraduate/fees-and-funding/fees. These are revised each year and you are encouraged to check this page regularly for the latest figures.

Scholarships and bursaries may be available from the University, and details of these can be found at swansea.ac.uk/postgraduate/fees-and-funding. This link will also let you find out information about other funders that support postgraduate research studies.

In addition to tuition fees and living expenses, most studies will also incur a further element of cost throughout your research. This could take the form of travel costs, hospitality to run a focus group, conference fees, etc. You should spend some time considering what other costs you may need to fund when designing your research proposal.

TIME COMMITMENT

Before considering a research degree it is important to be clear about the amount of time that you will need to invest in your studies.

Full-time research students are expected to be studying on week days (9am to 5:30pm), and it is also commonplace during busy periods of research, to have to work in the evenings and/or weekends. It will also be necessary, especially in the first year, to set aside time for appropriate research training. Students are entitled to four weeks annual leave through the year alongside bank holidays and the Christmas closure period.

Part-time students may find they need to dedicate the evenings and weekend to their studies to enable them to meet their other domestic commitments. As a general rule, part-time students are expected to spend 15 hours a week on their studies.

'The College and Swansea University in general has worked tirelessly over the years to develop great links with external organisations so that students have a variety of opportunities available to them. This can include work experiences, internships, exchange programmes and personal development opportunities.'

Joanna Wolton, PhD Social Policy

WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ME DURING MY STUDIES?

To provide you with the support you need throughout your research, the University provides the following facilities:

- Two supervisors experienced in their fields of research
- An extensive collection of books and periodicals for loan, over 1,000 conventional study spaces, over 450 student PC's and a dedicated postgraduate study space
- Access to the online library catalogue and learning resources, Access to SPSS and NVivo analytical software, along with internet, wireless network, student email account and personal file store
- English language training if needed
- Access to study space within the College
- A skills development programme for research students focussing on research skills and enhancing your employability
- Access to a service user and carer involvement group.



SHOULD I STUDY FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME?

Choosing whether you study full-time or part-time is one of the most important decisions you will make, and careful consideration needs to be given to this as there are advantages and disadvantages to each.

PART-TIME STUDY

Part-time study is the only viable option for many, where no external funding is available for your studies, as it enables you to continue earning a salary which will then fund your fees and living costs. It can also be a useful option when it would be detrimental to take a career break. However, this decision has to be balanced against the increased time it takes to complete your studies, and on whether you can maintain a successful balance between the demands and distractions on your time that both work and study will place. Many students have found these pressures have impacted on their motivation to continue with their studies.

FULL-TIME STUDY

For others, full-time study is the preferred route as it allows you to concentrate solely on your studies and complete your degree in a shorter period of time. The shorter study period also means you are less likely to encounter issues in your home life which could interfere with your studies. It also gives you the opportunity to fully immerse yourself in the research culture at the University which may help in building networks and contacts which could help advance your career, or provide you with opportunities to gain new skills, for example teaching experience. However, this route can be financially demanding if sources of funding have not been secured in advance of starting your studies.

WHAT CAN I STUDY?

It is essential you consider how your research will complement the expertise within the College to ensure you have access to the supervisory support you need. You'll need to put together a detailed research proposal, bringing together your ideas into a coherent form. This will help you identify a potential supervisor from our academic staff, many of whom are globally recognised leaders in their fields. The diversity across the College means we have experience of a wide range of differing types of research.



GERONTOLOGY AND AGEING STUDIES

The trend toward an ageing population requires a concerted application of a multidisciplinary scientific endeavour through collaboration between scientists in a variety of disciplines, e.g. physical science, engineering, IT, social, human and health sciences.

The Centre for Innovative Ageing, based in the College of Human and Health Sciences, is at the forefront of interdisciplinary work on ageing. It houses a unique cluster of researchers and lecturers who contribute to postgraduate training.

The centre hosts CADR – a pan-Wales Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research. The Centre is the only one of its kind in Wales, identifying gaps in ageing research and generating new interdisciplinary knowledge in the field of ageing. The research emanating from the Centre is highly acclaimed and the standing and reputation of the Centre is well recognised, having achieved international recognition for its work in social gerontology as a collaborating centre of excellence and a global leader in research by the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG).

Our recent research collaborations include Age Cymru; Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC); Older People's Commissioner; National Institute for Social Care and Health Research; Arts and Humanities Research Council (ARHC); Leverhulme Trust and the Welsh Government.

The Centre aims to ensure that its research activity is translated into economic growth in commerce and industry, as well as providing practical solutions for an ageing population in both the private and public sector. It provides an exceptional training ground for researchers and postgraduates, attracting some of the finest students from around the world.

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

We invite applications from well-qualified candidates whose research interests correspond to our areas of research expertise. They are focused around the following research groupings:

- **Gerontology and Ageing Studies MPhil/PHD FT/PT**
- **Social Policy MPhil/PhD FT/PT**
- **Social Work and Social Care MPhil/PhD FT/PT**



The College leads the way for research on the civic and social engagement and participation of older people, and the disruption of this engagement by personal and structural factors. Our interests also encompass the influence that the natural and built-up environment has on the ageing population, as well as core provision for the older person across such areas as social care, health care, residential care, palliative care, chronic conditions and falls and their prevention.

Students are currently exploring topics such as examining the driving cessation process amongst current and retired older drivers and social network members, the role of social support networks in the dementia literacy of older people and understanding and improving the mental well-being of older adults in residential care.

SOCIAL POLICY

Studying contemporary social issues and policies in today's society from both national and international perspectives. Within this field current student research projects include bereavement and social policy in later life, and the use of housing adaptations to facilitate policy.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Our Centre for Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing facilitates rigorous multi and interdisciplinary research and evaluation from birth to early adulthood, with the central theme of health and wellbeing.

The Centre is dedicated to enhancing the lives of children and young people, promoting high quality, applied research that gives a voice to the young person. Staff have strong links with a range of international networks and similar university departments in Europe and around the world, and are committed to productive interactions and dialogue with front-line policy makers and practitioners.

Our recent research collaborations include: Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC); City and County of Swansea; Autism Speaks; British Medical Association; National Institute for Social Care and Health Research and Asthma UK.

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

Children and Young People MPhil/PHD FT/PT

We invite applications from well-qualified candidates whose research interests correspond to our areas of research expertise. These are focused around the following research groupings:

- **Children and young people's health** - including obesity, cardiovascular risk factors, diabetes mellitus, metabolic syndrome, inactivity, health promotion, mental health, palliative care, perinatal care, trends and chronic conditions
- **Children and young people's wellbeing** - including looked-after children, child abuse, child neglect, dyslexic children, disabled children, inequalities, play and homelessness
- **Children and young people's rights** - including recognition, promotion and protection of rights
- **Children, young people and migration** - including identities, health, asylum seeking and conflict.



HEALTH SCIENCES

Drawing on cutting edge research, the College of Human and Health Sciences is bringing about real-life benefits for the health care, voluntary and private sectors, ultimately leading to improvements for patients, users, practitioners, managers and policy makers.

As a forerunner in the field, the College is well placed to respond rapidly to changes in the delivery of care, whilst also establishing links with the main service providers in Wales, such as the NHS.

Our researchers are continually working to tackle the challenges facing the health care system, from biomedical studies to service organisation, workforce practices and public health through to policy and ethics.

Departmental staff are currently collaborating with service users and colleagues from City University on NISCHR-funded research into care co-ordination in community mental health care; working on a NISCHR-funded project in collaboration with service users and colleagues from Cardiff University and Hafal which will examine shared decision making in mental health; undertaking local government funded research into the role of kinship with looked-after children; and working on Welsh Government funded work on the integration of health and social care.

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

- Healthcare Management MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Health Economics MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Healthcare Humanities MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Health Policy MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Health Science MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Mental Health MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Nursing MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Public Health MPhil/PHD FT/PT
- Doctorate in Professional Practice DProf PT only

HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT

Examining the management, leadership, and improvement of health services, with specific attention to how effectively they provide treatment for individuals with physical and/or mental illnesses, or whether they seek to improve the health of the population through prevention and health promotion strategies.

Recent examples of student research in this field include research into performance improvement and innovation in Saudi Arabian health care, looking at barriers and opportunities.

HEALTH ECONOMICS

Delivering robust and ground breaking health economics research on the development and delivery of health care interventions and services, by combining significant qualitative skills, expertise in real-world data mining and analysis and health policy.

Research students in this area are investigating areas such as the opioid-analgesic prescribing in Wales with economic evaluation of the impact on healthcare utilisation.

HEALTH HUMANITIES

The application of the concepts and methods of history, literature and the visual arts to the analysis of health and healthcare.

Postgraduate students are exploring a variety of areas within these fields with topics such as the nature of ethical dilemmas in disaster response.

HEALTH POLICY

Focusing on cutting-edge research: to understand how behaviours influence individual's decision making; help push the boundaries of the promotion and maintenance of health; on the prevention and management of illness; and vulnerability and health risks.

Research students are currently looking at topics such as dual practice of medical professionals in public hospitals in south-east Nigeria.

HEALTH SCIENCES

Delivering the bioscientific research that: provides the key evidence base for future changes in medical practice; influences the structure and delivery of health care systems and health interventions; and improves outcomes for patients.

Currently, students are exploring clinical reasoning and patient outcome in physiotherapy, promoting emotional well-being in secondary schools in Wales and exploring nutrient and energy intake in infants weaned using a baby-led or traditional feeding style.

MENTAL HEALTH

Taking forward pioneering research across this discipline, including the evaluation of mental health services and the development and application of social outcome measures. Currently students are looking at developing ecotherapy interventions for mental health.

NURSING

Committed to translating research from the 'bench to the bedside', our nursing research addresses the full range of issues across this discipline such as professional working and patient care, the development of new treatments and interventions, and patient and carer experiences.

The latest topics being explored by our students include health professionals attitudes and experience of working with women with gestational diabetes, whether participation in an e-learning programme improves NMPs knowledge, performance, willingness to prescribe and confidence and analysing new 3D technology in the assessment of lymphoedema.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Providing an evidence base for public health practice through empirical investigation, audit and evaluation. The latest topics being explored include the influence of childbirth experience upon infant behaviour, a comparative study of the implementation of regional health plans in Oman and exploring fathers' experiences of becoming a parent.



DOCTORATE IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, DPROF

The work-based Doctorate in Professional Practice (DProf) is aimed at Senior Practitioners engaged in health, social work or higher education. Equivalent to the traditional PhD, the DProf is an innovative blend of taught modules and research projects which investigate the student's own sphere of professional practice and workplace.

Although equivalent to a PhD, it differs in that it incorporates a programme of lectures and seminars in year one and two as part of your research training. This will enable you to research three theme-based research projects which are focussed on your own practice and workplace.

This means you do not need to take time out of work to upgrade your qualifications. Key features include:

- Two compulsory research training modules of 30 credits each: 'Introduction to Work-based Research in Professional Practice' and 'Planning Work-based Research'
- A focus on identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating three work-based research projects
- Pursuing research which is of relevance to your workplace and role.

Throughout your studies you will be required to incrementally build up a thesis (of no more than 80,000 words) from three distinct, yet coherent, empirically based research projects centred on your own practice and workplace.

The DProf is only offered on a part-time basis, lasting six years, and is open only to UK based students.



PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology at Swansea University benefits from extensive laboratory space, excellent facilities and good links with hospitals and education. The Department is also a member of the Welsh Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience.

With extensive research links with other colleges at Swansea University and with other colleges worldwide, Psychology is a rapidly growing field of research within the College of Human and Health Sciences. Encompassed within a thriving research environment – that enthuses academic staff, research officers and students alike – it has achieved international acclaim in recent years.

Our recent research collaborations include BILAL Foundation; Autism Speaks; Ministry of Defence; British Heart Foundation; the NHS and the National Institute for Social Care and Health Research. These collaborations have been crucial in ensuring research informs, and is informed by, the wider healthcare environment.

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

- Psychology MPhil/PHD FT/PT

Research across this group looks to apply the principles of psychology to both the physical and mental health of the population. Understanding how behaviours develop and influence the decision making of individuals, alongside the cognition-health interface and studies into clinical or behavioural change interventions, are crucial in protecting the long-term health and wellbeing of the population.

Examples of student research include the role of social marketing in the prevention of child obesity, dieting and personality in athletes, and mindfulness attentional control in healthy eating.

The Department of Psychology undertakes scientific research under four broad themes.

CLINICAL AND HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Clinical psychology is an area of psychology dedicated to understanding and preventing psychologically-based dysfunction and promoting subjective wellbeing. Health psychology is an area of psychology dedicated to understanding biological, psychological, and social factors that are involved in health, illness and healthcare. The clinical and health psychology research group



tests and develops psychological theory, as well as informs policy and practice. We investigate a range of research questions, including aetiology and treatment of nightmares, mild cognitive impairment and acquired brain injury, issues related to diet and eating, drug and alcohol consumption, gambling, autistic spectrum disorders, and workplace factors such as long-term effects of shift work.

COGNITION AND PERCEPTION

The Cognition & Perception group conducts research in cognitive development, visual perception, memory and language. We use both overt behaviour methods, such as response speed and accuracy, eye-movements and psychophysics, as well as brain imaging methods, including fMRI and EEG. Our research also uses brain stimulation techniques (including TMS and tDCS) to study and modulate brain processes.

The overarching goal of our research is the understanding of the cognitive abilities that define human behaviour, developmentally and in the face of neural breakdown.

COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE

Cognitive neuroscience is a multidisciplinary academic field dedicated to the scientific study of the brain mechanisms that underlie cognitive processes, in both health and disease. We investigate a range of research questions, including memory, attention, affective processing, object recognition, sleep and dreaming, fear conditioning, gambling, ageing, neurodegeneration, and brain trauma. Techniques employed to tackle these questions comprise neuroimaging (MRI, fMRI, and MRS), electrophysiology (EEG and ERPs), and brain stimulation (tDCS). Postgraduate research being taken forward in this group includes substance abuse factors affecting attention, glucose metabolism and its effect on cognition and mood, and the role multimodal brain imaging has to play in cognitive and emotional control of behaviour.

FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

Forensic psychology is a branch of applied psychology concerned with the interface between psychology and the law, and includes many aspects, such as legal process, the assessment, supervision and treatment of those who have offended, working with victims of crime, and addressing risk and re-offending. The Forensic Research Group has specific interest and experience in research focused on the legal process (e.g. juror decision making, witness memory, victim testimony, fitness to plead, investigative interviewing, discharge/release decisions); offending behaviour (e.g. developmental factors, personality [psychopathy and sadism, emotionally unstable personality disorder, anti-social personality disorder], interventions and their outcomes, suggestibility, case formulation and risk assessment, specific offence types [e.g. sexual offending, intimate partner violence] and systems and staff [e.g. staff development, staff supervision and organisational factors]).

The members of this group have worked in prison, mental health, and probation settings, as well as with the police and the criminal and family courts.



SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY

As a forerunner in the field, the College is well placed to respond rapidly to changes in the delivery of social care, whilst also establishing links with the main service providers in Wales. Our Social Work PhD programme also forms part of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Centre for Wales, a pan-Wales collaboration to train top-level social scientists. Our researchers are continually working to tackle the challenges facing the social care system across a range of areas, including mental health, inclusion, welfare, older people, service organisation and workforce practices.

Our recent research collaborations include: Age Cymru; ESRC; Older People's Commissioner; National Institute for Social Care and Health Research; Arts and Humanities Research (AHRC); Leverhulme Trust and the Welsh Government. These collaborations have been crucial in ensuring research informs, and is informed by wider health and social care environment.

SOCIAL POLICY

Studying contemporary social issues and policies in today's society from both national and international perspectives. Within this field current student research projects include public participation and good governance in Thailand's public sector organisations.

SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL CARE

Generating new knowledge about the changes affecting the social care workforce and service provision, including social outcomes, such as quality of life, social inclusion and social capital measures.

Our students are investigating topics such as an exploration of placement outcomes in kinship care with a view to informing decision making in care planning.



LIFE AFTER A RESEARCH DEGREE

Following a programme of research for three to six years, where you have had to shape every aspect of the study, whilst also remaining motivated and enthusiastic, can be an intensive process which absorbs all of your attention.

As students come to the end of their studies one question which understandably comes to mind is "what next?" It's important to remember all research degrees recognise the achievement you have made, and are an endorsement of your skill as a researcher. For many, there is a transition into a research post following strands of research which interest you or link to your own studies; for others it's a move into a career in academia teaching the next generation of students; whilst some use the transferable skills they acquired to move into new careers or gain promotion. Some students even apply for their own research funding to continue the research they started in their PhD.

All students at Swansea are encouraged to access the support available throughout the University and any opportunities which arise to develop the skills they need for their intended career. Support includes:

- careers and employability service
- academic mentorship
- academic and professional enhancement centre
- business/entrepreneurship workshops and our alumni association.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

As well as the benefits to your career in attaining a PhD, throughout your studies you will continually be gaining new knowledge and learning new skills which can help in gaining employment following your studies.

At Swansea the APECS Development and Training Services section provides a wealth of courses designed to enhance your research and employability skills. In particular their Researcher Development Framework has been designed to meet the requirements of Research Councils UK, and aims to assist researchers in evaluating and planning their own personal, professional and career development. It is structured into four domains; knowledge and intellectual abilities, personal effectiveness; research governance and organisation; and engagement, influence and impact, and completion of the framework results in students gaining the Skills Development Award as recognition of their commitment to their development.



'I have come to recognise the implications of scholarly activity as weighty. I am not only representative of a Higher Education Institution, but now also contribute to the reputation of a wider research community. I was fortunate to be a part of such a community of practice at Swansea University'.

Simon Cassidy, PhD Health Science

OPEN DAYS

Upcoming open days for postgraduate study can be found here:

www.swansea.ac.uk/postgraduate/open-days

HOW TO APPLY

You can apply online and track your application status at: www.swansea.ac.uk/applyonline

CONTACT US

For further information, if you have a specific question, or wish to speak to a relevant member of academic staff, please contact the PGR Research Academy.

Email: chhs-pgr-academy@swansea.ac.uk

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Visit: swansea.ac.uk/humanandhealthsciences/research

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Research degrees give you more than just specialist knowledge with which to launch your career. Common transferable skills which are acquired include:

- Analytical and critical thinking
- Planning and organisation
- Independent thinking
- Presentation skills
- Teamwork
- Oral and written communication

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER FOCUS

Dr Amy Jenkins is a Research Fellow in the Department of Psychology, at Swansea University. Amy has an MSc in Sport Psychology, an MSc in Neuropsychology and a PhD in Psychology. Prior to her PhD, Amy had worked on a number of large multi-site projects including the 'Alzheimer's and Genetics' project, the 'Brains for Dementia' study at Cardiff University and also the 'Cognitive Function and Ageing Study' at Swansea University. Following three years of research at Swansea University, Amy was awarded the PhD of Psychology in spring 2017. During and since her PhD, Amy presented her pioneering research at national and international conferences, while also regularly publishing papers in high impact journals.

In 2014, Amy was presented with the "Best Young Researcher" prize at the annual International Conference on Alzheimer's disease and Dementia. She was also named as the regional final winner of the science communication competition, Famelab 2016, progressing through a highly competitive and talented group of competitors to represent Wales at the UK finals. Amy's ability to successfully carry out independent research has also been recognised with a two-year personal research fellowship, awarded by the BRACE-Alzheimer's research charity. BRACE is a registered charity involved in funding research into Alzheimer's disease, along with various other forms of dementia. The £100k+ funding awarded to Amy will enable her to continue her research as the Principal Investigator on a project titled "Characterising Subjective Cognitive Impairment".

Amy is also a member of the Swansea University Dementia Research Group, the Dementia Supportive Communities Swansea forum, a College of Human and Health research representative, a Chartered Psychologist of the British Psychological Society, an Associate Editor of the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and an alumni member of the UK Digital Economy Crucible 2017.







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