

Working in Research

PSI/NIBPS Joint Careers Event

UCD, 6th March 2011

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UCD School of Psychology

Scoil na Siceolaíochta UCD

Working in research



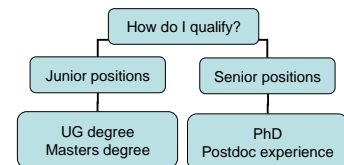
Working in research

- Research psychologists carry out investigations on a wide range of topics using a range of methodologies
- Psychologists involved in teaching and practice are also involved in conducting research
- This group work in a wide range of settings including colleges/universities, adult education centres, government departments, health boards, research bodies and private companies



Training pathways

- Most major third level institutions have Masters by research (MA, MSc, Mlit) and PhD programmes
- Masters by research is typically 2 years while a PhD can be 3 or 4 years (depends whether you have a masters already)



Securing a place: Postgraduate research

- Generally requires a 2nd class honours degree or higher
- Choosing a thesis topic:
 - Could develop undergraduate project
 - Could develop a new project
 - PhD topics - *Must* be research of publishable quality and make a *substantial contribution* to the area
 - Masters topics - Should make a contribution to the area



An example

'My favourite things to do' and 'my favourite people': Exploring salient aspects of children's self-concept

Childhood
17(4) 545-562
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co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/0907568210364667
http://chd.sagepub.com
SAGE

Mimi Tatlow-Golden and Suzanne Guerin
University College Dublin, Ireland

Abstract

This study explores the potential of the 'draw-and-write' method for inviting children to communicate salient aspects of their self-concept. Irish primary school children aged 10–13 years drew and wrote about their favourite people and things to do (social and active self). Children drew and described many salient activities (39 in total) and people – including pets. Results suggest that widely used, adult-constructed self-esteem scales for children, while multidimensional, are limited, and that 'draw-and-write' is an effective multimodal method with which children can express their social and active self-concepts.



Postgraduate research: Key task

- Identifying a supervisor
 - Should be selected based on the proposed topic or methodology
 - More often than not need to secure a supervisor in advance of applying for a course
 - Supervisor can provide support with funding



Postgraduate scholarship schemes

- Number of opportunities for students to secure funding
 - Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (www.irchss.ie)
 - Office for the Minister of Children (www.nco.ie)
 - North-South Masters Bursaries (www.universitiesireland.ie)
 - University Programmes



<http://www.irchss.ie/schemes/index.html>

Postgraduate Scholarships 2010/2011



IRCHSS

An Chomhairle um Thaighde sna Dána agus sna hEolaíochtaí Sóisialta
Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences



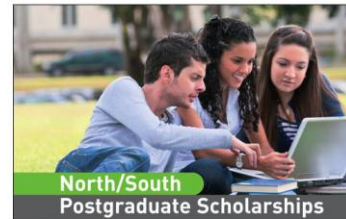
GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS
IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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North-South Postgraduate Scholarships



<http://omc.gov.ie/>

APPLY NOW FOR AN OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFAIRS RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs invites applications* for the following research opportunities:

A masters degree by research
A doctoral degree by research

The research must be directly related to progressing the implementation of the National Children's Strategy. Scholarships are valued at 16,000 per annum plus fees.

Application forms, terms and conditions and copies of the National Children's Strategy are available from:
Suzanne Shanon,
Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs,
Department of Health & Children,
Bansloe House,
Bansloe Street,
Dublin 4, D04 R122
or alternatively, may be downloaded from:
www.omc.gov.ie/

CLOSURE DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS IS 12 NOON, FRIDAY 14TH APRIL 2011

*This programme is open to European citizens and students



- Funding generally covers
- Fees covered (capped)
- Annual stipend (approx 16,000 euro)
- Project expenses (if part of a funded project)

Other funding

- Some students formally apply for positions on funded projects
- Potential supervisors will be aware of opportunities



UCD Ad Astra Research Scholarships In Psychology

Research Opportunity: Three-year fully-funded scholarship towards a PhD in the School of Psychology.

Research Area: Examining the predictors of educational, well-being and health statuses of children in the Growing Up In Ireland (GUI) survey.

Location: UCD School of Psychology, Dublin 4, Ireland

Duration: 3 years

Deadline for application: November 26th, 2010

Start date (probable): January 1st 2011

Doctorate Studentship for the students pursuing in Psychological Sciences at Birkbeck College University of London in UK-2011

Study Subject: Mechanisms Of Social Influence In Typical Development And Autism

Employer: University of London

Level: PhD

The Centre for Research in Autism and Education, the Department of Psychology and Human Development at the Institute of Education, London, and the Department of Psychological Sciences, Birkbeck College, are pleased to offer a full scholarship for a 3-year [Bloomberg](#) Colleges collaborative PhD.

The successful PhD candidate will investigate the psychology of social susceptibility in childhood and early adolescence and in autism.

Graduates in experimental psychology or related subjects with a good first degree, or [Masters degree](#) are encouraged to apply. The student will receive excellent training in the design and implementation of rigorous experimental studies, which will also be both child-friendly and developmentally sensitive. This training will therefore be interdisciplinary in nature, combining developmental and educational psychology with experimental social psychological methods, and will ensure a thorough grounding in how basic science can be realised in a more real-world context.

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Research programme content

- Predominantly thesis based - student should be willing/able to work on their own or as part of a team
- Some programmes offer optional taught modules in research methods, ethics, etc.
- Some programmes have required taught modules
 - Structured PhD programmes

Working as a researcher

- Opportunities in a variety of settings
- Junior positions vs Senior positions
- Finding positions
 - School/Department websites
 - National and local newspapers
 - BPS and PSI publications
 - Job websites, e.g. www.gradireland.ie



Research Positions

<p>Mandatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA in psychology (2.1. honours degree) • Interviewing skills • Data entry and analysis skills • Writing skills 	<p>Principal Duties and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit participants for data collection • Carry out data processing in SPSS • Coordinate survey testing and administer surveys to participants • Carry out routine administrative tasks associated with the research • Liaise with the research team over work progress and participate in team meetings <p>Selection Criteria Selection criteria outline the qualifications, skills, knowledge and/or experience that the successful candidate would need to demonstrate for successful discharge of the responsibilities of the post. Applications will be assessed on the basis of how well candidates satisfy these criteria.</p> <p>Mandatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of an undergraduate qualification in psychology • Sound knowledge of the statistical software package - SPSS • Flexible, dynamic team-worker with strong interpersonal skills • Excellent organisational skills and a proven ability to work to deadlines • Own transport
<p>Mandatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A third level qualification in a related health field • An understanding of mental illness either through study or self experience • Completion of a research project at undergraduate level 	<p>The successful candidate will possess: an Honours degree in Psychology or Social Science; good research and report writing skills, I.T. skills and competence in SPSS.</p> <p>In addition, the successful candidate will demonstrate a particular understanding of the factors that influence mental health recovery.</p>



Must sell your skills ...

- Sell your skills not your project!
 - Project topic does not limit possibilities
- Experience from undergraduate/postgraduate research
 - "... research is an inquiry process that includes ... research design, methodology, data collection and analysis, concluding with the communication of the findings." (Juznic & Urbanija, 2003, p. 324)



Transferable Skills ...

IRISH UNIVERSITIES' PhD Graduates'

NIUA
Irish Universities Association
Career Development Centre

Research skills and awareness

- exhibit knowledge of advances and developments in their field
- demonstrate knowledge of research in related fields and disciplines
- comprehend and effectively employ appropriate research methodologies
- critically analyse and synthesise new and complex information from diverse sources
- formulate and apply solutions to research problems and effectively interpret research results
- exercise critical judgement and thinking to create new ways of understanding
- demonstrate, where appropriate, a knowledge of health and safety procedures and their application in the research environment
- have a broad awareness and knowledge of key relevant funding sources and grant application procedures
- appreciate basic principles of project and time management



Research career paths

Research Career Structure	Job Description	Person Specification
Postgraduate Research Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting a research project; • collecting and analysing information; • writing up results; • participating in career development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a degree or equivalent experience/qualification; • relevant experience; • salary scale dependent on qualifications and experience.
Post Doctoral Research Assistant/ Research Associate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting a research project; • collecting and analysing information; • drafting final reports; • may assist with PhD supervision after a couple of years at this level of appointment; • participating in career development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a PhD or equivalent experience; • relevant experience; • salary scale dependent on qualifications and experience.
Research Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent researcher; • preparing reports; • submitting research grant applications; • supervising small groups including Research Assistants and PhD students; • participating in career development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years postdoctoral experience or equivalent; • experience of undertaking independent research; • salary scale dependent on qualifications and experience.
Senior Research Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading research groups; • managing staff; • undertaking career development of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 years postdoctoral experience or equivalent; • experience of leading research projects or research groups; • salary scale dependent on qualifications and experience.

From www.brookes.ac.uk

Pros

- Work on a wide range of projects
- Work in multidisciplinary research teams
- Can help with access to other postgraduate programmes
- May have an opportunity to do PhD
- May have opportunities to gain teaching experience
- International opportunities
- Opportunities for teaching in academic settings



Cons

- Often short-term or temporary contracts
- Positions can be dependent on securing funding
- Might have limited opportunities to develop your own research ideas in junior posts
- Career progression can be difficult



Nevertheless ...

- Any research experience is valuable
- Important to develop a portfolio of skills from across a range of methodologies
- PSI Division of Teachers & Researchers in Psychology
- NIBPS planning a Division

