



BSS RESEARCH STUDENTSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The BSS Studentship Programme offers an opportunity for undergraduate and postgraduate students to gain hands-on experience conducting original research projects in the field of sleep. Applicants will have the opportunity to develop their skills, contribute to sleep research, and build connections within the sleep research community.

Running for 8 to 10 weeks during the summer, this programme is hosted in the United Kingdom and welcomes applications from students across the UK. Projects must focus on sleep-related topics but can span a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to medical science, psychology, social sciences, and public health. All funded projects must seek and obtain appropriate ethical approval before commencement of the project or demonstrate exemption from ethics based on study design, previous approvals etc.

Each research project will be evaluated on:

- Research Quality
- Relevance to Sleep Research
- Merit of the Student – Demonstrated academic excellence, curiosity, and the ability to contribute meaningfully to the research process.
- Feasibility and Timeline of the project
- Impact and Dissemination Plan
- Ethical Considerations where applicable

Application Deadline:

Applications are open from **February 24th** with **24th March 2025 deadline**.

Decision Announcement:

Final decisions will be communicated to applicants in **May 2025**, allowing sufficient time for students and supervisors to prepare for the project start.

Who is eligible to apply?

The Studentship Programme is open to both undergraduate and postgraduate students engaged in either teaching or research. Students may apply to undertake their project at an academic or clinical institution outside their own or within their current institution, provided it is within the United Kingdom.

Undergraduate and postgraduate students (including PGTs and PGRs) engaged in teaching or research within the UK. While it is expected that if undergraduates' applicants will typically be in their second year of undergraduate study (third year for students in Scottish institutions), exceptional first-year students (second-year for Scottish institutions) are encouraged to apply. Immediate post-degree candidates will also be eligible to apply during the first summer after completion of their undergraduate studies.

To be eligible, both the host supervisor and the student must be members of the British Sleep Society (BSS).



Successful applicants and their supervisors are expected to demonstrate a strong commitment to the project and ensure adherence to the project timeline, maintaining high standards of research and collaboration throughout the programme. Please see **Supervisor guidance** for details.

Application Process

To apply for the BSS Studentship Programme, the student must submit the following documents:

1. Student's CV (Maximum 2 Pages):

The CV should outline the student's academic achievements, relevant experience, and research skills.

Must include the name and contact details of at least one academic reference (other than the proposed studentship supervisor) who can be contacted upon award of the studentship. The relationship between the referee and the applicant (e.g., lecturer, research supervisor) must also be specified.

2. Student's Personal Statement (Maximum 1 Page):

The student must explain why they want to undertake this research project.

The statement should also address the following:

- The knowledge and skills they aim to acquire during the studentship.
- How they plan to apply these skills and knowledge in future research or their career.
- How the studentship will contribute to their development as a sleep researcher.

3. Research Proposal (Maximum 1000 Words):

The research proposal should be written collaboratively by the student and supervisor and should include:

Background: Context of the research and its relevance to sleep.

Aims: The primary objectives of the research.

Hypotheses: Clearly defined hypotheses.

Methods: Detailed methodology, including data collection, analysis plans, and ethical considerations (if relevant).

A **clear timeline of the project milestones** (e.g., presented as a Gantt chart) must also be included to demonstrate feasibility within the 8–10 week timeframe (not included in the wordcount)

Refer to the provided Student Guidance Document for further details.

4. Supervisor's Statement (Maximum 1 Page):

The supervisor must submit a statement confirming their willingness and commitment to host the student, supervise the research project, and assist in managing the project. The statement should also highlight the



supervisor's belief that the project is feasible within the given timeframe. **Please see the supervisor guidance for further details.**

Decision Process

Applications to the BSS Studentship Programme will undergo an evaluation process to ensure that the most deserving projects are funded.

Initial Assessment by the Research Committee:

Applications are reviewed and scored by two members of the Research and or Executive Committee using a **pre-determined scoring system (see scoring document guidance).**

Each application is assessed against a set of **marking criteria**, which will be made available to applicants at the point of application.

Key criteria include the **relevance** of the research question to the field of sleep science.

Pass Threshold:

Applications must meet a minimum **pass threshold** to be considered for funding. If no applications meet this threshold, no bursaries will be awarded. Applications will be excluded if they scored 0 at any of the marking categories.

Final Decision by Research Leads:

The Research Leads will make final decisions on awarding the studentships based on the scores provided by the Research Committee.

If multiple applications are deemed as high priority for funding and exceed the number of available bursaries, the Research Committee may escalate the decision to the Executive Committee to determine if **additional studies** can be funded within budget constraints.

Outcome Notification:

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their submission following the final decision process approximately in May 2025.



Programme Outputs and Expectations

Participation in Studentship Programme requires the completion of specific outputs designed to promote professional development. These include the following:

1. **Mandatory Report Submission:**

Students are required to submit a report (2,000 to 3,500 words, excluding references, tables, figures, and abstract) in the format of a research article with the findings of their project. The report must be submitted up to 2 weeks after the end of the project. The final bursary payment will only be released once the report has been submitted.

2. **Abstract Submission:**

Students are required to submit an **abstract** of their research to the British Sleep Society (BSS). These abstracts will be subject to the normal process of selection for either a poster or oral presentation at the next BSS meeting and will not automatically be included in the program.

3. **Recognition in the BSS Hoot Newsletter:**

Students will be featured in the BSS's newsletter, *The Hoot*, as a bursary winner. This includes an **interview**, which must be conducted as part of the programme's requirements.

4. **Waivered BSS Conference Admission:**

Upon acceptance of their abstract, successful applicants will receive **waivered admission** to the next BSS meeting, providing an invaluable opportunity for networking and professional development. **This does not include travel or accommodation, please see below.**

5. **Eligibility for Travel Bursary:**

Students who submit their abstract are also eligible to apply for a **Travel bursary**.



Student guidance

The BSS Studentship Programme provides an opportunity for undergraduate and postgraduate students to engage in original research focused on sleep-related topics (projects include secondary data analysis, systematic reviews and meta-analyses as well as qualitative design). This document outlines the requirements, expectations, and application process for students.

Please read it carefully before preparing your application.

Eligibility:

Undergraduate and postgraduate students (PGTs and PGRs) engaged in teaching or research within the UK.

Students can apply to any Higher Education across the UK. Students must reach out to the proposed supervisor to discuss project prior to application.

If undergraduates, applicants are typically expected to be in their second year of undergraduate study (third year for Scottish institutions). Outstanding first-year students (second year for Scottish institutions) may also apply. Immediate post-degree and Master's students will also be eligible to apply during the first summer after completion of their undergraduate studies.

Both the host supervisor and the student must be members of the British Sleep Society (BSS).

Student Bursary:

A stipend of £275 per week is provided to the student for the duration of the project, which can run from 8 to 10 weeks (project length must be clearly justified in the application). This equates to a total bursary of £2,200–£2,750 per student, depending on the project duration.

Host Institution Consumables Budget:

Up to £1,000 is available to the host institution to cover essential research consumables or project-specific expenses. This funding will be reimbursed upon receipt of an invoice, with payments processed bi-annually.

Key Requirements:

Students must demonstrate a strong commitment to the project and adhere to the agreed timeline, typically 8-10 weeks during the summer.

Outputs

Submit a report of your findings within two weeks of the end of your project. Final bursary payment (£500 or £750 based on project duration) is contingent upon submission of the final report of your findings.



Submit an abstract of your research to the British Sleep Society.

Participate in an interview for the BSS newsletter, The Hoot.

Waivered admission to the BSS meeting will be provided upon abstract acceptance.

Application Process

Curriculum Vitae (CV) – Maximum 2 Pages

Include academic achievements, relevant experience, and research skills.

Provide the name and contact details of at least one academic reference. Specify the referee's relationship to you (e.g., lecturer, research supervisor). Please note, this **should not be** the proposed host supervisor of the studentship.

Personal Statement – Maximum 1 Page

Explain your motivation for undertaking the research project.

The knowledge and skills you aim to acquire.

How you plan to apply these skills in future research or your career.

How the studentship will assist in your development as a sleep researcher.

Research Proposal – Maximum 1000 Words

Collaborate with your proposed supervisor to prepare the research proposal.

The proposal should include:

Background: Context and relevance of the research to sleep.

Aims: Objectives of the project.

Hypotheses: Specific hypotheses to be tested.

Methods: Methodology, including data collection, analysis, and ethical considerations.

References *

Include a clear timeline* (e.g., Gantt chart) showing key milestones and ensuring feasibility within 8-10 weeks.

*References and timeline or any figures are not included in the wordcount.

Template for Student Application

Your Full Name:

Email:

Phone:

Institution:



Host Institution:

Proposed Supervisor:

Degree Programme: [Your Degree Programme and Year/ Level and expected graduation]

Have you applied for the BSS Summer Studentship before? YES/ NO

If yes, what was the outcome? Project title and Year.

Please ensure that the above is submitted to **BSS email: admin@sleepsociety.org.uk** along with all of the required documents above.

Ensure you also refer to **the Supervisor Guidance Document** for details on their role and responsibilities.

Additional Support

For questions or further guidance, please contact the BSS Research Leads:

Dr Maria Gardani, email: maria.gardani@ed.ac.uk

Prof Michelle Miller, email: Michelle.Miller@warwick.ac.uk

Supervisor Guidance

Eligibility Criteria for Supervisors:

Institutional Position

The supervisor must be based in the UK and hold a formal academic or clinical institutional position (e.g., academic or research staff, senior lecturer, professor, or equivalent, consultant). It is essential that they have expertise at the field of the project and supervisory experience.

Collaboration with Student Prior to Application

The supervisor must meet with the student prior to the application submission to ensure the feasibility of the proposed project, advise on appropriate methods, objectives, ethics and resources.

Support Statement

The supervisor must provide a statement in support of the student and project proposal, addressing the student's potential and the feasibility of the project (up to one page).

Supervisor Responsibilities:

Guidance and Mentorship

Meet regularly with the student to provide advice on project development, methodology, and data analysis.



Offer guidance on navigating ethical considerations and any potential challenges related to the project.

Supervision and Support

Ensure the student has access to appropriate resources (e.g., equipment, facilities, data, and software) to carry out their project successfully.

Regular Monitoring and Reporting

Respond to Microsoft form at **week 5** of the studentship to confirm that the student remains committed to the project and that the project is progressing as expected. The reports should assess the student's engagement, the status of the project, and any adjustments or additional support required. Final bursary of the studentship is contingent on this report.

BSS Meeting Participation (Optional but Encouraged)

Although not mandatory, the supervisor is encouraged to attend the BSS meeting in 2025 to provide additional support and guidance to the student.

Recommended Timeline:

Before the Application Deadline: Supervisor to meet with the student to discuss the project proposal and feasibility.

Application Submission: Supervisor to submit a one-page support statement along with the student's application.

Upon Award: Supervisor to meet with student to discuss project details and commencement date.

Week 5 Post Award: Supervisor to update on the student's ongoing commitment and project development.

Report and Abstract Submission: Supervisor to support the student with the report (due 2 weeks after the project end) and abstract submission to BSS.