



The Well-Being Benefits of Higher Education: ESRC DTP Collaborative Studentship in the Midlands Graduate School

University of Warwick and HEFCE

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP), with the first intake of students in October 2017.

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.

The University of Warwick as part of the Midlands Graduate School is now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Studentship in association with our collaborative partner HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) to commence in October 2017.

The proposed research will develop and test a model of the returns to higher education for individuals' subjective well-being (SWB), with a particular focus on effects of the subjects that individuals study and the institutions that they attend. Such an analysis is important both for public policy formulation and to inform and enrich student choice. Recent interest on the returns to higher education for the individual have concentrated primarily on the earnings of graduates. There is therefore a need for detailed data on the effects of higher education on SWB. Key questions to be addressed include: Are there returns to higher education for SWB? Which dimensions of SWB (e.g., cognitive vs. affective) are most affected? Can such returns be distinguished from returns to income and effects of employment type, which will themselves both influence SWB? Do NSS and REF scores, and/or other characteristics of attended institutions and departments (such as size) influence SWB?

The methodology and techniques will be interdisciplinary, drawing on both econometrics and psychology. The key analyses will make use of relevant existing datasets. Additional experiments, motivated by a large "affective forecasting" literature within psychology, will examine people's ability to make accurate predictions of the benefits they will receive from higher education.

Benefits to the student will centre around (a) strong quantitative training in the econometric techniques appropriate to the analysis of large datasets, (b) exposure to and engagement with issues relating to public policy, along with (c) their membership of the large interdisciplinary academic behavioural science community at the University of Warwick. The student will be based in the Psychology Department at Warwick but will be expected to make three extended visits to HEFCE (Bristol) during the studentship.

The project will be supervised by Gordon Brown (Psychology, Warwick), Nick Powdthavee (Behavioural Science, Warwick Business School) and Stephen McDonald (Senior Economist,

HEFCE). Applicants should have a background in a quantitative discipline (e.g., a BA, BSc or MSc degree in economics).

Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the Collaborative Studentship application form [available online here](#) along with a full CV, and along with two references, email this to g.d.a.brown@warwick.ac.uk.

Application deadline: 27th February (midnight UK time)

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:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/mgsdtp/studentships/eligibility/

Informal enquiries about the research project prior to application can be directed to Gordon Brown (g.d.a.brown@warwick.ac.uk) or Nick Powdthavee (Nattavudh.Powdthavee@wbs.ac.uk).