

Work at Keele



PhD Studentship

Making sleep support work in mental health services: co-producing interventions with service users and professionals

Faculty/Directorate: Faculty of Natural Sciences

Dept/School: Psychology

Location: Campus / Hybrid

Funding: Stipend of £21,805 per year

Duration: 3 years, full-time

Closing date: 23rd July 2026

Start date: September 2026

Ref: FNS_SPSY2026



Opportunities to grow, thrive, and progress

A vibrant community on a beautiful campus

Embracing flexibility, balance, and wellbeing

THIS IS KEELE



The Person



Thank you for considering a PhD Studentship at Keele University.

Inside this document, you'll discover key details about the role and our diverse and vibrant institution.

The Role

This PhD studentship offers an exciting opportunity to lead an applied programme of research focused on improving sleep support for people experiencing mental health difficulties. Sleep problems are common in mental health settings, yet evidence-based sleep interventions are not routinely used in everyday care. This project will address that gap by developing practical, acceptable and feasible intervention materials that can be used by patients, professionals and services.

The successful candidate will work with people with lived experience, mental health professionals, researchers and partner organisations (e.g., The Sleep Charity) to co-produce sleep intervention prototypes that respond directly to real-world barriers identified through the [REST-UP project](#). The research will be informed by behavioural science, implementation science and co-production approaches, and will involve mixed-methods work including consensus-building, stakeholder engagement, intervention development and early feasibility testing.

This role will suit a motivated and well-organised researcher who is interested in applied health research, sleep, mental health, behaviour change and real-world impact.





The Person



Main duties and responsibilities

The successful candidate will undertake a PhD project focused on co-producing practical sleep intervention materials for use in mental health settings.

The main duties and responsibilities will include:

- Reviewing relevant literature on sleep, mental health, behaviour change, co-production, intervention development and implementation science
- Planning and delivering a mixed-methods programme of research, which may include a Delphi consensus study, co-production workshops, and early feasibility and acceptability work
- Working with people with lived experience, mental health professionals, researchers and partner organisations to identify priorities and develop practical intervention materials.
- Collecting, managing, analysing and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data.
- Preparing ethics applications, participant-facing materials, study documents and project reports.
- Communicating research findings through academic writing, conference presentations, stakeholder engagement and accessible dissemination activities.
- Attending supervision and project meetings, contributing to the wider research environment, and engaging with relevant training and development opportunities.



The Person



Person specification

Selection Criteria	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)
Qualifications	
A minimum of a 2:1 bachelor's degree or equivalent in Psychology, or another relevant cognate discipline	E
A MSc degree (Merit or Distinction) in a relevant discipline	D
Experience, knowledge, and skills	
Knowledge of research methods relevant to applied health, psychology, mental health, behavioural science, or public health research.	E
Interest in applied health research, intervention development, mental health, sleep, behaviour change, or implementation science.	E
Knowledge of the relationship between sleep and mental health.	D
Knowledge of behavioural science and/or implementation science approaches	D
Experience of conducting or contributing to research using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches.	D
Experience of working with, or engaging, stakeholders such as patients, people with lived experience, healthcare professionals, voluntary/community organisations, or policy/practice partners.	D
Attitude and personality	
Effective oral and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate clearly with academic, clinical, professional and public audiences.	E
Professional, reliable and well-organised approach to work, with good attention to detail	E
Able to work independently while also responding constructively to supervision, feedback, and guidance.	E



Further Information



Funding support available

- This is a funded PhD studentship
- Yearly stipend of £21,805 for three years
- Tuition fees covered
- Students are also provided with access to Faculty research training funds for research related expenses including - but not limited to - conference attendance, external training courses and UK fieldwork.

How to apply

- For full post details and to apply, please visit:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/pgresearch/studentships/>

- Due to the nature of the funding this studentship is open to candidates who qualify for Home fee status only.

Contact

- For further information, please contact the project lead, Dr Alex Scott (a.scott@keele.ac.uk)

Further Information

- Closing date for applications: 23rd July 2026
- Terms and conditions: As per the [University Code of Practice](#)
- Keele University values diversity, and is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. In support of these commitments, Keele University particularly welcomes applications from women and from individuals of black and ethnic minority backgrounds for this post. More information is available [here](#).



About Keele



About Keele

We're Keele and we're different. Founded 75 years ago to meet the demands of a new kind of society, economy and world, our principles resonate now more than ever.

We are a campus university with **over 15,000 students**, nestled in 600 acres of Staffordshire countryside and just an hour from Manchester and Birmingham. It's a big campus but a small and cosmopolitan community, with space to think and plenty to do.

Our research seeks to **improve lives and address the most pressing challenges** across our region, country, and world. Our academics are actively studying matters of global importance: from food security, climate change and smart energy, to neglected tropical diseases, global health and sustainable futures.

As well as **world-leading research** (Research Excellence Framework, 2021), Keele also sets the gold standard for teaching, with some of the most satisfied students in the country – in 2022, students ranked us “**Britain’s best university**” in the Student Crowd University Awards, and in 2023 we were awarded the **highest rating of “Gold” overall** in the Teaching Excellence Framework.

For more information about the benefits of working at Keele University, visit www.keele.ac.uk/jobs.

