



Title: Doctoral Studentship (PhD)

Application Closing Date: 5th July 2024

Location: Hartpury University, Gloucestershire.

Stipend: £19,237 per annum

Contract Type: Full Time (3 years)

Area of Research: Harnessing horse owner behaviour change for improvement in saddlery fit.

Correct saddlery fit is essential for the welfare and performance of the ridden horse, however, there is quantitative evidence that saddlery fit for horses is often sub-optimal due to a large percentage of horse owners failing to seek adequate support from professional saddlery fitters. With recreational horse welfare being primarily the responsibility of the horse owner there is an urgent and critical need to understand horse owner behaviour with respect to saddlery fit for large scale and sustained improvement in horse welfare, using a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach.

The proposed study aims to firstly identify barriers to the achievement of optimal saddlery (i.e., saddle, bridle and bit) fit. Using the data from part one, an intervention strategy will be designed to effect horse owner behaviour change with respect to saddlery fit utilizing a multifaceted, multi-stakeholder approach and lastly, to produce, test and measure the effectiveness of a training tool using the intervention strategy.

The concept for this PhD arises directly from industry. The project will be supported via Hartpury's partners, the Society of Master Saddlers and the Worshipful Company of Saddlers. It is anticipated that data collection will take place both at Hartpury University's Equine Centre and surrounding equestrian events. Potential candidates should be prepared to be based at Hartpury University.

For more information and for an initial discussion please contact: Assoc. Prof. Kathryn Nankervis: Kathryn.nankervis@hartpury.ac.uk or Dr Russell MacKechnie-Guire: russell.mackechnie-guire@hartpury.ac.uk

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to become part of vibrant postgraduate community in an idyllic rural setting, with world leading facilities and undertaking impactful cutting-edge research. The University of the West of England is the awarding body for this degree.

Studentships comprise of tuition fees and a stipend of GBP £19,237 per annum tenable for 3 years. Alongside their research projects, successful candidates will be asked (as a condition of their stipend) to deliver up to 7 hours per week teaching or research support within the University.

PhD Studentship Selection Criteria:

Please demonstrate the following criteria in your CV and/or covering letter:

- Essential: An undergraduate degree or MSc in a field relating to either equine physiology or biomechanics, veterinary physiotherapy, or veterinary science or related field.
- Essential: Quantitative data analysis skills in Excel
- Essential: Qualitative data analysis skills.
- Essential: Experience/background with horses and riding
- Desirable: Experience with COM-B model and/or Behaviour Change Wheel analysis
- Desirable: Demonstrable interest in saddlery and equine health
- Desirable: Skill/experience of working with others in a research setting and/or industry experience

Candidates should also be aware of the following:

The normal expectation is that applicants will hold at least a 2:1 or a Masters qualification from a UK university or a degree of comparable standing from a university outside the UK. The candidate's degree relevant to the studentship should demonstrate their potential for practice-led research or alternative evidence of research aptitude.

Applicants whose first language is not English require a recognized English language qualification. The minimum entry requirement is GCSE English at grade C or above or IELTS score 7.0 or TOEFL score 600 (or demonstrable equivalent).

Applying for a PhD studentship

To apply for a PhD studentship you must send the following documents to RKE.Administrator@hartpury.ac.uk:

- A curriculum vitae (maximum 3 pages)
- Copies of academic transcripts
- A covering letter outlining your suitability for the studentship
- Your undergraduate or postgraduate dissertation or another relevant piece of research you have completed or contributed to.
- If English is not your first language, certification of English language qualification

Applications that do not arrive by Midnight (UK time) on 7th July 2023 will not be considered.

If your application is selected, you will be invited for interview on 15th of July 2024. All

applicants must ensure their availability on this date.

Key Dates:

- 5th July 2024: Deadline for submission of applications
- 10th July 2024: Interview invitations sent to shortlisted candidates*
- 15th July 2024: Interviews at Hartpury*
- 31 July 2024: Deadline for accepting studentship
- September 2024: Studentship begins

*Please note that by submitting an application you are confirming your availability to attend an interview on Monday the 15th of July 2024.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks along with other relevant employment checks.

Hartpury values a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

