

## Information on Postgraduate Research Studentship:

<b>Faculty:</b> Education, Health and Human Sciences and Institute for Lifecourse Development
<b>Lead Supervisor:</b> Paul Gorczynski, PhD, HCPC, CPsychol, AFBPsS
<b>Project Title:</b> Exploring and addressing loneliness amongst LGBTQI+ individuals

**About the Project:** Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers have shown that physical, social, and mental health research disparities exist between lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, plus (LGBTQI+) populations, and [others](#). Such exclusion from the research process has contributed to a health knowledge deficit for LGBTQI+ populations and resulted in limited evidence-based interventions that address the many health inequalities that disproportionately affect these populations across the lifespan. When compared to other populations, [research](#) evidence shows that LGBTQI+ populations experience higher rates of chronic disease (e.g., diabetes, coronary heart disease, and certain forms of cancer), social health inequalities (e.g., violence, harassment, discrimination, and exclusion), and mental health symptoms and disorders (e.g., major depressive disorder, anxiety, substance use, and suicide). Although several calls to action have been written to ensure that LGBTQI+ people are included in [mental](#) and [physical](#) health research and consulted within the creation of LGBTQI+ focused health interventions, such calls have not been fully addressed.

As we respond to COVID19 and chart paths of health and social support services into the future in the UK, it is vital that researchers, practitioners, and policy makers adopt a [health equity model](#). This model operates from a standpoint that unites [science and social justice](#). Within this model, health equity is defined in a manner where individuals have both agency and fair access to health and social support services to ensure they can achieve the highest levels of physical, social, and mental health. The model challenges researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to move beyond addressing individual behavioural modifications and choices, and instead address ecological factors that touch upon interpersonal relationships, community development and structures, elements of the built environment, and local and national policies. In a research context, this model would ensure that the health needs of LGBTQI+ people are better understood and contextualized, so that appropriate health and social support services can be structured in a collaborative and inclusive manner to ensure wellbeing. One determinant of health that has been exacerbated by the pandemic, and one that uniquely has been shown to predict poor physical and mental health, is loneliness.

[Loneliness](#) can be described as an emotional state, one where individuals feel dissatisfied that their social needs are not being met by desired qualities and quantities of social interaction. These feelings of dissatisfaction can be temporary and situational, or they can be chronic and last a very long time. Loneliness, if not addressed, can lead to a variety of physical and mental health symptoms and disorders. [Research](#) has shown that loneliness is a predictor of various forms of morbidity, where increases in loneliness are associated with increases in the likelihood of experiencing diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, cancer, functional physical limitations, as well as major depressive disorder. Overall, [loneliness](#) has been found to be associated with a 26-50% increased risk of mortality. To compound the consequences of loneliness amongst LGBTQI+ people, my recent [meta-analytic research](#) has shown that LGBTQI+ individuals across the lifespan are significantly more likely to experience loneliness than others. Researchers, policy makers, charities, and practitioners have called for inclusive and equitable strategies to better understand loneliness amongst LGBTQI+ individuals and help develop individual and social interventions to address it.

**Aim:** The aim of this mixed-methods research programme is to examine loneliness amongst LGBTQI+ individuals in London and develop an intervention that is embedded in the [health equity model](#) to address loneliness.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity and the PhD project before applying, please contact Paul Gorczynski, [paul.gorczynski@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:paul.gorczynski@greenwich.ac.uk)

**Duration: 3 years Full-Time Study or 6 years Part-Time Study. Type: Self-Funded**

<b>Person Specification of Essential (E) or Desirable (D) requirements:</b>	
<b>Criteria:</b>	<b>E or D</b>
<b>Education and Training:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Class or 2<sup>nd</sup> class, First Division (Upper Second Class) Honours Degree or a taught Masters degree with a minimum average of 60% in all areas of assessment (UK or UK equivalent) in a relevant area to the proposed research project (e.g., psychology, health policy, social work, public health)</li> </ul>	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For those whose first language is not English and/or if from a country where English is not the majority spoken language (as recognised by the UKBA), a language proficiency score of at least IELTS 6.5 (in all elements of the test) or an equivalent UK VISA and Immigration secure English Language Test is required, unless the degree above was taught in English <b>and</b> obtained in a majority English speaking country, e.g., UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, etc, as recognised by the UKBA.</li> </ul>	E
<b>Experience &amp; Skills:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience of undertaking research in psychology, healthy policy, or public health (e.g., undergraduate or taught Master's dissertation)</li> </ul>	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of methods used in research including narrative reviews, systematic reviews, scoping reviews, qualitative methods, quantitative methods</li> </ul>	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good writing skills</li> </ul>	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good quantitative and qualitative research skills</li> </ul>	E
<b>Personal Attributes:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the fundamental differences between a taught degree and a research degree in terms of approach and personal discipline/motivation</li> </ul>	E

• Able to, under guidance, complete independent work successfully	E
<b>Other Requirements:</b>	
• A PhD project research proposal that is related to the research area	E
<b>Closing date for applications:</b> applications are accepted all year round	
<b>For further information contact: Paul Gorczynski</b>	
<b>E-mail: <a href="mailto:paul.gorczynski@greenwich.ac.uk">paul.gorczynski@greenwich.ac.uk</a></b>	

\*please complete the text marked in red ink according to you PhD project area

### How to Apply:

Please read this information before making an application. Information on the application process is available at: <https://www.gre.ac.uk/research/study/apply/application-process>. Applications need to be made online via this link. **No other form of application will be considered.**

All applications **must include** the following information. Applications not containing these documents will not be considered.

1. Personal statement outlining the motivation for a PhD and this particular project
2. Research proposal (about 1500 words) related to the subject topic \*
3. A CV including 2 referees \* (one ideally being from a dissertation supervisor)
4. Academic qualification certificates/transcripts and IELTS/English Language certificate if you are an international applicant or if English is not your first language or you are from a country where English is not the majority spoken language as defined by the UK Border Agency \*

*\*upload to the qualification section of the application form. Attachments must be a PDF format.*

Before submitting your application, you are encouraged to liaise with the Lead Supervisor on the details above.