

**Information on Postgraduate Research Studentship:**

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| **Faculty:** Education, Health and Human Sciences and Institute for Lifecourse Development |
| **Lead Supervisor:** Dr Thomas Rhys Evans, Dr Amena Amer & Dr Denise Miller |
| **Project Title:** Inequalities in Research Feedback for Minoritized Early Career Researchers |

**About the Project:**

Early Career Researchers (ECRs) face a number of challenges as they pursue a research career. Precarious job opportunities, limited permanent faculty positions and highly competitive fundings pools are just some of the many hurdles ECRs are expected to navigate and overcome. For minoritised ECRs however, these challenges are further compounded by additional interpersonal and structural obstacles faced. One particular area which is of priority when considering career development and progression are their experiences of receiving feedback.

Minoritised early career researchers (ECRs) face a number of interpersonal and structural barriers to receiving meaningful feedback throughout their research. Feedback can have direct implications for securing outcomes, building reputation and increasing the quality of work, however little is done to acknowledge these inequalities when supporting this research community (Graves et al., 2022). This research proposal draws upon expertise from the Centre for Workforce Development and Centre for Inequalities to a) identify the scope of this inequality, b) to locate opportunities less susceptible to inequalities that can facilitate feedback, and c) to develop recommendations for researchers and organisations to better support minoritized researchers.

The proposed research addresses the following:

RQ1: How, and to what extent, do minoritised early career researchers experience structural and interpersonal barriers to meaningful feedback on their research?

RQ2: What could (or should) be done to support minoritised early career researchers to receive feedback that better supports their development and research quality?

The proposed programme of work aims to better understand the barriers to quality research feedback experienced by minoritised ECRs and produce recommendations for individuals and organisations to more effectively navigate such inequalities. Collecting descriptive data on the scope of inequalities, and longitudinal qualitative data on participants’ experiences of feedback in research from across the research cycle, this project will make some of the ‘hidden curriculum’ explicit. This project adopts a broad definition of ‘early career researcher’ including both academic and practitioner researchers, and any specific focus in inequalities is to be co-agreed with the research team, prioritising opportunities to identify intersectional discrimination (Kozlowski et al., 2022).

The proposed research programme has been designed to maximise the skill development and career prospects of the candidate, and features two main projects.

1. Following best-practice guidelines (Kochari & Ostarek, 2018), the first year will involve a replication study to build essential quantitative/descriptive research skills, enhance familiarisation with the literature, and to further evidence the scope of inequalities experienced. Based upon the interests of the candidate and final research team, this will likely capture inequalities in presenting (Nittrouer et al., 2017) or speaking (Hinsley et al., 2017) at academic conferences, or within the publication process (Roberts et al., 2020). The supervisory team hold a number of Associate Editor, Editor and Conference Lead roles which will enable access to data collection opportunities.

2. Having evaluated the scope of issues currently faced and comparing them to the original findings, the PhD will focus upon building a qualitative understanding of the experiences of minoritised ECRs obtaining feedback for their research. A longitudinal qualitative design is planned, exploring the attempts of minoritised ECRs to secure feedback, with each participant discussing a single research project as a narrative framework to guide the exploration. As the existing literature, and indeed the structural incentives within research, typically focuses upon inequalities and outcomes at the end of the research cycle, the use of repeat interviews will be particularly unique in helping capture a more diverse range of feedback strategies and identify a more holistic view of the barriers and opportunities. As we anticipate a number of similarities and differences in experiences of discrimination faced by different minoritized groups and within different disciplines of research, the sample of the work will be co-agreed through discussion with the candidate and research team.

This project is well structured to inform recommendations for more inclusive and effective feedback practices, supporting minoritized ECRs to navigate the interpersonal and structural barriers to meaningful feedback. We anticipate being able to create signposted resources of support available and produce policy-recommendations for those employing researchers to best support professional development and outputs. This programme of research is intended to directly contribute to the 10th Global Goal – Reducing Inequalities.

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We encourage you to discuss this opportunity and the PhD project before applying; please contact Dr Thomas Rhys Evans (Tom/He/Him) on [Thomas.Evans@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:Thomas.Evans@greenwich.ac.uk) to arrange a discussion with the supervisory team. Individuals who identify with communities that are currently (or have historically been) minoritized or marginalised are especially encouraged to apply.

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

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| ***Person Specification of Essential (E) or Desirable (D) requirements:*** | |
| ***Criteria:*** | ***E or D*** |
| ***Education and Training:*** | |
| • 1st Class or 2nd class, First Division (Upper Second Class) Honours Degree or a taught Master’s degree with a minimum average of 60% in all areas of assessment (UK or UK equivalent) in a relevant area (e.g., Psychology, Research, Social Sciences) | **E**  page2image12104page2image13008 |
| • 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 **and** obtained in a majority English speaking country, e.g., UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, etc, as recognised by the UKBA. | **E** |
| ***Experience & Skills:*** | |
| • Previous experience of undertaking research (e.g., through an undergraduate or taught Master’s dissertation) | **E** |
| • A fair grounding in research methods and research design | **E** |
| • Good communication skills (e.g. verbal, written, data visualisation, etc.) | **E** |
| • Skills and/or practical experience with both quantitative and qualitative research | **D** |
| • An interest in, or evidenced commitment to, transparency and rigor in research (i.e., open scholarship, open data/materials, preregistration, etc.) | **D** |
| ***Personal Attributes:*** | |
| • Understands the fundamental differences between a taught degree and a research degree in terms of approach and personal discipline/motivation | **E** |
| • Able to, under guidance, complete independent work successfully | **E** |
| • An interest in, or commitment to, challenging inequalities and promoting JEDI (justice, equality, diversity and inclusion) developments, with experience negotiating these sensitively and compassionately | **E** |

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| **Closing date for applications:** Applications are accepted all year round |
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| **For further information contact:** Dr Thomas Rhys Evans  ***E-mail:*** *Thomas.Evans@greenwich.ac.uk* |

**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.