

Information on Postgraduate Research Scholarship - Ref: VCS-FEHHS-01-26			
Faculty:	Education, Health and Human Sciences	Department:	Human Sciences
Lead Supervisor:	Claire Monks		
Project Title:	Understanding the impact of bias bullying-victimisation in schools		
Project Description:	Bullying remains an important public health issue, with potentially negative short and long-term impacts on individuals (Gorman et al., 2021). A substantial body of research investigating experiences of school bullying and this has led to the development of evidence-informed generalised anti-bullying programmes, which have demonstrated some success (e.g. Hensums et al., 2023). However, less research has focussed on bias bullying, defined as, <i>'aggressive behaviour directed towards a less powerful person on the basis of a stereotype of a group to which the target is perceived or alleged to belong, and that causes harm to the target.'</i> (Shute, 2005, p. 113). Research indicates that bias bullying is experienced by many pupils. However, most research has been conducted in the USA, where data indicates that one in four pupils who reported being targets of bullying, reported experiencing bias bullying (US Government Accountability Office, 2021). Furthermore, the limited research to-date has suggested that this form of bullying may be associated with even more negative consequences than bullying which is not focussed on an individual's protected characteristics (Kurpiel, 2024). Research indicates that bias bullying is experienced by a significant proportion of pupils and that it can have serious negative consequences (Sapouna et al., 2023; Shute, 2025). This PhD aims to provide some insights into the levels of bias bullying experienced by pupils and to address some of the key 'gaps' in our understanding of these behaviours in the UK. This doctorate is a collaboration between researchers at the University of Greenwich and the National Children's Bureau (NCB) and Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA). Research Questions 1. Does school bullying/cyberbullying victimisation vary by individuals' protected characteristics within a large UK-based sample? 2. Does the association between bullying/cyberbullying victimisation and school belonging, internalising and externalising factors, vary by protected characteristics within a large UK-based sample? 3. Does experience and impact of bullying vary developmentally within this UK school sample?		

	4. Do bias and non-bias bullying/cyberbullying victimisation predict negative outcomes (academic engagement and wellbeing) longitudinally over the course of a year? 5. Do individual, school and contextual factors moderate or mediate these relationships? Proposed methodology Study 1: A secondary data analysis using cross-sectional data collected by the Anti-Bullying Alliance in 2021-2024 of the bullying/cyberbullying experiences of a sample of over 130,000 pupils (aged 5 to 17 years) will be conducted. Analysis of the extent and associations with wellbeing and feelings of school belonging of reported bullying and cyberbullying victimisation will be examined by protected characteristics and across age. (RQs 1-3) Drawing on the findings of study 1 we will identify subgroups, ages, and contexts to explore longitudinally in Study 2, so this will be refined further during the PhD (RQs 4-5).
Duration:	3 years, Full-Time Study or 6 years, Part-Time Study
Bursary available (subject to satisfactory performance): From 01 October for the 2026-27 academic year this amount will be Year 1: (FT) £21,805 including £2,000 London Weighting or pro-rata (PT) Year 2: In line with UKRI rate Year 3: In line with UKRI rate In addition, the successful candidate will receive a contribution to tuition fees equivalent to the university's Home-student rate, currently £5,238 (FT) or pro-rata (PT), for the duration of their scholarship. International applicants will need to pay the remainder tuition fee for the duration of their scholarship. This fee is subject to an annual increase.	
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 to the proposed research project	E
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, if your programme falls within the faculty of Engineering and Science a language proficiency score of at least IELTS 6.5 overall with a minimum of 6.0 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 <u>and</u> 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 of research methods and research design with experience of using both quantitative and qualitative research methods	E
Strong communication skills (e.g., written, verbal, data visualisation, etc.)	E
An interest in, or evidenced commitment to, transparency and rigor in research (i.e., open scholarship, open data/materials, preregistration, etc.)	E
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
Other Requirements:	
This scholarship may require Academic Technology Approval Scheme approval for the successful candidate if from outside of the EU/EEA	E
The scholarship must commence before the end of February 2026	E
Closing date for applications:	30th October 2026
For further information contact:	C.P.Monks@greenwich.ac.uk
Making an application: 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. Please ensure that you select 'MPhil/PhD Human Sciences' from the list to ensure prompt processing of applications. All applications must include the following information. Applications not containing these documents will not be considered: VC Scholarship Reference Number (VCS-FEHHS-01-26)– included in the personal statement section Personal Statement* - outlining your motivation for applying for this PhD, and your previous research experience (e.g., as a research assistant or completing a dissertation). Academic qualification certificates/transcripts* 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 * Your complete CV* Two reference letters (one ideally from a dissertation supervisor)* Research Proposal* Applications should include a 1,500-word (excluding references) research proposal outlining their project's background, aims, methodology, and expected contribution to the field. - Please ensure that you submit to the MPhil/PhD Human Sciences programme. <i>*upload to the qualification section of the application form. Attachments must be in PDF format. You will need to submit this as 1 single PDF, to be uploaded as attachment.</i>	

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