

## DEPARTMENT OF EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

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## DPhil Studentship 2014

<b>Award</b>	DPhil Studentship
<b>Department</b>	Department of Experimental Psychology
<b>College</b>	St Cross
<b>Grade and salary</b>	To cover the UK/EU university and college tuition fees, as well as a stipend of £15,078 per annum.
<b>Contract type</b>	Fixed-Term for 36 months
<b>Reporting to</b>	Professor Elaine Fox
<b>Additional information</b>	Funded by European Research Council
<b>Reference Code</b>	14EXPSY01WEBJOB
<b>Closing date</b>	6 June 2014

### Introduction

#### The University

The University of Oxford is a complex and stimulating organisation, which enjoys an international reputation as a world-class centre of excellence in research and teaching. It employs over 10,000 staff and has a student population of over 20,000.

Most staff are directly appointed and managed by one of the University's 130 departments or other units within a highly devolved operational structure - this includes 5,600 'academic-related' staff (postgraduate research, computing, senior library, and administrative staff) and 2,850 'support' staff (including clerical, library, technical, and manual staff). There are also over 1,600 academic staff (professors, readers, lecturers), whose appointments are in the main overseen by a combination of broader divisional and local faculty board/departmental structures. Academics are generally all also employed by one of the 38 constituent colleges of the University as well as by the central University itself.

Our annual income in 2012/13 was £1,086.9m. Oxford is one of Europe's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities: income from external research contracts exceeds £436m p.a., and more than 60 spin-off companies have been created.

For more information please visit [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)

## **Medical Sciences**

The Medical Sciences Division is an internationally recognized centre of excellence for biomedical and clinical research and teaching. We are the largest academic division in the University of Oxford

World-leading programmes, housed in state-of-the-art facilities, cover the full range of scientific endeavour from the molecule to the population. With our NHS partners we also foster the highest possible standards in patient care.

For more information please visit: [www.medsci.ox.ac.uk](http://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk)

## **Department of Experimental Psychology**

Experimental Psychology at Oxford is widely regarded as the leading psychology department in the UK, and a major international centre for research in psychology and cognitive neuroscience, with over 120 postgraduate and postdoctoral research and academic staff. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise 80% of the research was classified as internationally excellent or above, with 35% ranked as 'world leading'. Departmental turnover for 2012/13 was over £11.25 million.

Research in the Department is organised into 4 research groupings roughly equal in size: Behavioural Neuroscience, Cognitive Neuroscience, Developmental Psychology and Social Psychology & Psychological Disorders. The Department has consistently received the highest possible ratings in the British Funding Councils' Research Assessment Exercise recognising research of leading, international standing.

The Department has a state-of-the-art Developmental Science research centre, created in 2010 and facilities for EEG, TMS, and tES, along with multiple laboratories with eye movement recording equipment. In 2011 and 2012 two new clinical research centres were created – the Oxford Centre for Anxiety Disorders and Trauma (OXCADAT) and the Oxford Cognitive Neuropsychology Centre (CNC) – which provide facilities for the treatment, as well as the assessment, of patients within Experimental Psychology. The new centres form part of a new NIHR Clinical Research Facility in Oxford Cognitive Health.

The Department also has close links with Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences and we make heavy use of the FMRI brain imaging centre at the John Radcliffe Hospital (3 and 7T MRI) and the Oxford Centre for Human Brain Activity (OHBA) at the Warneford Hospital (MEG). A new Biomedical Services Building (BSB) also provides state-of-the-art facilities for animal research.

There are excellent links to a wide variety of special populations including a panel of older participants (ageing research), mothers and babies (BabyLab), schools (developmental research), acquired and developmental neuropsychological patients, patients with psychological problems. There is an exceptionally rich intellectual environment offering many opportunities for interaction within and outside the Department itself.

At the undergraduate level, the Department is the focus for lectures, classes, practicals and project work. It is a centre used by the undergraduates from all colleges for the Experimental Psychology (EP), Psychology and Philosophy (PP), Psychology and Linguistics (PL) and Biomedical Science (BMS) courses. The Department provides lecture rooms, IT facilities and laboratories for experimental and project work.

## **Oxford Centre for Emotions and Affective Neuroscience (OCEAN)**

Professor Elaine Fox established the Oxford Centre for Emotions and Affective Neuroscience (OCEAN) in 2013 with funding from the European Research Council (ERC) and the current post will be based in this centre.

For more information please visit: <http://www.psy.ox.ac.uk/research/ocean>

<b>Research topic</b>	The cognitive characteristics of resilience and optimal mental health
<b>Principal Investigator / supervisor</b>	Professor Elaine Fox

## **The Project: The cognitive characteristics of resilience and optimal mental health**

The project is funded by the European Research Council and aims:

- 1) To develop implicit, behavioural measures of cognitive biases and functions associated with psychological resilience.
- 2) To establish the neural correlates of resilience and to establish neural markers of resilience.
- 3) To establish the relations between the behavioural and neural measures in both laboratory and real-life situations with high ecological validity.
- 4) To assess if cognitive training procedures change basic cognitive and neural mechanisms to boost resilience and enhance optimal mental health.

### **Overview of the role**

The position is available for 36 months from 01/01/2015. The student will have a key role in participant recruitment, data collection, statistical analyses, and dissemination of results as a DPhil thesis and peer-reviewed papers. The project is associated with a 5-year ERC-funded Advanced Investigator Award led by Professor Elaine Fox that examines the cognitive and genetic mechanisms underlying emotional vulnerability and resilience. Methods will include behavioural tasks to measure and modify cognitive processing. There may also be opportunities to incorporate genetic methods as well as neuroscientific methods (EEG, fMRI) in the study.

### **Responsibilities/duties**

Experimental design and programming  
 Participant recruitment  
 Data collection  
 Statistical analyses  
 Dissemination

### **Communication**

- Maintaining confidentiality regarding research data when interacting with other researchers.
- Participating in and contributing to didactic activities in the lab (journal clubs and discussion groups).
- Preparing posters/oral presentations of research, and manuscripts for dissemination to local and broad scientific community

### **Education and training**

- Attending appropriate scientific seminars and meetings locally, nationally and internationally

### **Other General Responsibilities**

- Being accountable for professional conduct within the project.
- Ensuring that work in the laboratory is conducted safely and, in particular, that they undertake work using appropriate safety procedures and in the dedicated areas.
- Conducting themselves with due regard to the University Equal Opportunities and Data Protection policies.

### **Selection Criteria**

#### **Essential**

Applicants are normally expected to be predicted or to have achieved an upper second class (2:1) undergraduate degree or above (or equivalent international qualifications). For applicants with a degree from the USA, the minimum GPA we seek is 3.5.

The applicant must also have an English Language Requirement of 7.5 score in IELTS, 110 score in TOEFL or a Grade C in the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English.

Other essential criteria include:

- Strong statistical knowledge
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Experience in running psychological experiments
- Good upper second or first-class degree in a cognitive discipline (e.g. psychology, cognitive science)
- Enthusiastic
- Well-motivated
- Able to work independently as well as part of a collaborative research team
- The applicant must be a UK/EU citizen.

#### **Desirable**

- Programming experience (e.g. in MATLAB, E-Prime)
- Master degree

The DPhil studentship is associated with membership of St Cross College. Details of the College and its facilities are available on the College website at <http://www.stx.ox.ac.uk>.

### **How to apply**

In addition to the submission of a completed application form and the application fee, the following materials are compulsory for all applications:

1. Three academic references
2. Transcript(s) of previous higher education
3. CV/résumé
4. Two page research proposal on the general topic of 'Cognitive Characteristics of Resilience and Wellbeing'

You will need to apply for both the programme and this studentship via the main University online graduate application form, and pay an application fee of £50. The application form, all supporting materials required for the programme (including references) and payment must be submitted by the appropriate studentship deadline. Further details and guidance notes can be found here [application form and application guide](#)

Application details:

To submit your application click here to access the official online application for University of Oxford Graduate Programmes for 2014/15 <https://apply.embark.com/grad/Oxford/17/>

On the application form you **must** quote the unique reference code quoted at the top of this job description in order to apply for the studentship.

You must also apply for the **DPhil in Experimental Psychology Course** using the course code: 001890.

You must select the applicable College (St. Cross).

Closing date for applications is 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014