FAQ for peer support PhD studentship with Dr Juliet Foster and Dr Nicola Byrom

* Would the PhD student be expected to live in London, or is regular travel to Kings satisfactory?

I am happy to be flexible. I believe it can be helpful to work in KCL regularly to give you a chance to network with the wider academic community – completing a PhD can be a lonely experience. It is important to try to take advantage of opportunities to develop and sustain a social network. Please keep in mind that there is likely to be quite a bit of travel around the UK to collect data for this project as Peer Support projects are running in universities across the UK.

* Is the studentship with Student Minds pre-defined in terms of location and timings, or is it determined in consultation with the candidate?

Some consultation is possible – remote working should be possible.

* Given the PhD is awarded by Kings, is it assumed only Kings students will be involved as research participants, or is it possible to work with students, and student groups across the UK?

The study will involve student groups across the UK

* Is it expected that the PhD candidate would undertake teaching hours as part of the funding terms?

There is no teaching requirement as part of the funding terms. There are options within KCL for teaching as a Graduate Teaching Assistant from the second year of a PhD – these are paid, in addition to the funding stipend. Training and support is available to develop in the GTA role and build teaching experience if this is desired. This is optional.

* How much opportunity is there for direct clinical contact and are the peer support groups mental health focused?

The peer support groups are mental health focused – that is the criteria for this project. There will not be much / any opportunity for clinical contact through the project – we will be working with the volunteers facilitating peer support groups. Any engagement with students attending the peer support groups will be in a purely research based capacity – rather than a clinical capacity.

* How do I approach the research proposal task?

The application form asks for a research proposal. Please don’t think of this as the final plan for your PhD – it won’t be! Rather we are setting this task to get you try to think about how you would design a study – starting from scratch.

As you move into a PhD, you’ll start to lead your own research, and through the process of completing a PhD should become confident in designing and developing our own research projects. We are looking to see if you are ready to make this step – have you got ideas about how to run a research study? Can you communicate these clearly and logically?