**Title:** Exploring the role of emotional intelligence in adolescents’ attentional processing of emotions under stress

**Funder:** University of Worcester

**Closing date:** 12th December 2014

**Interview date:** January 2015 (date tbc)

**Supervisors**

**Director of Studies:** Dr Sarah Davis, Lecturer in Applied Psychology, Psychological Sciences, Institute of Health and Society, University of Worcester, UK

**Other Supervisors:** Dr Daniel Farrelly, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, Psychological Sciences, Institute of Health & Society, University of Worcester, UK; Dr Pamela Qualter, Reader in Developmental Psychology, University of Central Lancashire, UK

**Context**

Emotional intelligence (EI) captures individual differences in perceiving, regulating and understanding self and other-relevant emotions (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2009). Some research suggests that EI may afford protection from the adverse effects of stressors (e.g., minimal mood deterioration, heart rate variation etc) and promote better mental health (Ciarrochi, Dean, & Anderson, 2002; Davis & Humphrey, 2012; Laborde, Brüll, Weber, & Anders, 2011; Mikolajczak, Roy, Luminet, Fillée, & de Timary, 2007). However, it is unclear how EI exerts this beneficial effect. It is possible EI influences differences in early attentional biases which are pivotal to both early emotion regulation (through orienting; rapid detection of threat) and later effortful coping (threat evaluation; strategy selection) processes. Hence, this research will utilise portable eye-tracking technology to examine patterns of visual fixation, alongside other physiological measures (e.g., electrodermal activity), to indicate the processes underpinning stress reactivity in adolescents. Findings will be of theoretical but also practical significance given the continued interest in training EI via school-based programmes to promote wellbeing (e.g. Durlak et al., 2011).
Further Reading


Qualifications needed

**Essential:** Applicants should have or be able to demonstrate:

- A 2:1 (or above) GBR recognised degree in Psychology or a closely related and relevant discipline;
- A Masters Degree in Psychology or allied discipline
- Proficiency in oral and written English;
- Computer literacy;
- Excellent organizational skills and ability to meet deadlines;
- Good interpersonal and communication skills;
- Ability to work independently and contribute to a team;
- Commitment and an enthusiastic approach to completing a higher research degree
- Experience of psychological data collection with human participants
- Experience of working with social science statistics and data sets

**Desirable:**

- Full UK Driving License
- Experience in working with young people

The successful applicant will need to undergo full CRB check. It is an expectation that the successful candidate will participate fully in the activities of the Institute of and gain additional experience in the teaching and research environment of the University.

**Facilities:** This research studentship is funded by the University of Worcester. During your time at Worcester, you will be provided with your own computer and an office space, which you will normally share with other full-time research students. Your office will be located in the Graduate Research School or your Institute.

The successful candidate will join the Institute of Health and Society, a dynamic, multi-professional department that has experienced dramatic growth in recent years, particularly in research output. Staff in the institute contribute to the development of knowledge and practice by engaging in a wide range of research and consultancy activities. Working in collaboration with different disciplines and with other universities, private industry and the public sector, research is always grounded in the aim of achieving real-life benefits. Dr Sarah Davis has research expertise in emotional intelligence and adolescent mental health whilst Dr Daniel Farrelly’s interests include the application of emotional intelligence to occupational and health settings. Dr Pamela Qualter, who will act as external supervisor to the project, has a keen interest in understanding the role of emotional intelligence in social development and social engagement.

Candidates will be expected to have suitable academic qualifications as outlined in the person specification but additional specialised training will be available as required.

www.worcester.ac.uk/researchstudentships
**Bursary:** You will receive a tax free bursary of £13,863 for a period of 3 years plus access to a research fund to which you can apply for expenses directly related to your research. Fees will be paid in full at the UK/EU rate for home and EU citizens. Applicants from outside the EU are welcome but will need to pay the balance of registration fees for non-EU students. If you are applying and not eligible as an EU student you should make a statement on your application form to confirm you will fund the additional fees (approx £6000 per year).

**The Interview:** The interview will be held in January 2015 (date tbc). All successful applicants will be interviewed. The interview normally lasts around 3 hours in total and includes a meeting with the project supervisor(s), a chance to talk to some of our full-time students and an opportunity to view the campus and Institutional facilities. You will be asked to make a short presentation on a topic related to the study. There is also an opportunity to present the supervisory team with an example of your written work (e.g. an independent study/assignment) at the interview.

**Widening Participation:** As part of its mission statement the University is committed to widening participation for its higher degrees. Although most candidates will have an undergraduate and/or a Masters degree, the University is happy to accept applications from candidates with relevant professional qualifications and work related experience.

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**Application forms are available at:**
http://www.worcester.ac.uk/researchstudentships

**For further information** or an informal discussion on this project, please contact Dr Sarah Davis by email (sarah.davis@worc.ac.uk)

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact Mrs Helen Tabinor, Graduate Research School Manager (tel: 01905 855012, email: h.tabinor@worc.ac.uk).

Completed application forms should be sent by email to: research@worc.ac.uk or sent to: Graduate Research School, University of Worcester, Henwick Grove, Worcester, WR2 6AJ, UK