

PhD Opportunity

Working with farming families to build resilience
when living with dementia

Supervisory Team

Director of Studies: Dr Catrin Hedd Jones

Supervisors: Professor Nick Evans

External Advisor: Dr Jen Roberts, Dementia Services Development Centre, Bangor University.

Research Group: [Association for Dementia Studies](#)

The PhD Opportunity

Although there is no cure for dementia, the experience can be shaped by the individual's coping style, life history, health, neurological impairments and social environment. Perceived self-stigma can be a barrier to gaining support and a great deal of the existing support for life with dementia had been developed and provided in urban environments. Farming families affected by dementia experience a unique set of challenges which are related to the interdependence of work, home and intergenerational businesses (Roberts et al). The latest report on dementia prevention, intervention and care (Livingston et al, 2024) identified 14 potential risk factors that have the potential to modify 45% of the cases of dementia. The successful candidate would work with established agricultural organisations and experts by experience to develop and test bespoke awareness sessions focussing on risk reduction and supporting the resilience of people affected by dementia within farming communities.

References

Livingston, G. et al. (2024). Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2024 report of the Lancet standing Commission, *The Lancet*, 404 (10452), 572 - 628

Roberts et al Experiences of Dementia in Farming Communities: A Scoping Review.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2025.103710>

A project in this area will incur some additional costs that will be met by the student, for fieldwork and consultation with experts by experience. The exact costs will depend on the specific project and will be discussed both at interview and kept under review throughout the duration of the project.

Application Process

To begin the application process please go to:

<https://www.worc.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/applying-for-a-phd/>.

The Interview

All successful applicants will be offered an interview with the proposed Supervisory Team. You will be contacted by a member of the Doctoral School Team to find a suitable date. Interviews can be conducted in person or over Microsoft Teams.

Funding your PhD

For information about Doctoral Loans please visit: <https://www.worc.ac.uk/study/fees-and-finance/doctoral-loans.aspx>

During your PhD you can access the Research Conference Support Scheme to support the costs of presenting your research at an external conference.

Research at the University of Worcester

Research is central to the University's mission to make a difference in everything that we do. We are committed to delivering excellent research which extends the boundaries of human knowledge but which also improves people's lives by enabling better health outcomes, improving food security, developing environmentally sustainable solutions for crop production and socially sustainable solutions to our ageing population, enhancing public knowledge and understanding of the past and present.

The University hence focuses its research around five high-level challenges facing society, locally, nationally and globally:

- [Human Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Sustainable Futures](#)
- [Digital Innovation](#)
- [Culture, Identity and Social Exclusion](#)
- [Professional Education](#)

The success of our research is reflected in our continuous improvement in external research assessment processes. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework, REF 2021, the University saw a near 50% increase in the scale of its research and 12% increase in quality, building on its performance in REF 2014 when it was the UK's most improved university in terms of Research Power, a combination of scale and quality.

Research Degrees at Worcester

Our research students are central to our overall mission for research. They are working at the cutting edge of their disciplines and driving forward the quality of our research whilst enriching our research culture. We are looking to increase our research student numbers as a strategic imperative.

Our commitment to our students is reflected in the results of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2023 in which we ranked 3rd for overall research student satisfaction nationally. Key to our success in this area is the Doctoral School, a focal point for all our research students.

It provides:

- day-to-day support for our students, both administrative and practical, through our dedicated team.
- a Research Student Study Space with both PCs and laptop docking station.
- a comprehensive Researcher Development Programme for students and their supervisors.
- a programme of student-led conferences and seminars.

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.

For further information or an informal discussion about this project, please contact Dr Catrin Hedd Jones: catrin.jones@worc.ac.uk