



**BIRMINGHAM CITY**  
Faculty of Health, Education  
and Life Sciences

**The Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences (HELS) is based at our City South Campus. The Faculty has a strong focus on the training of health and education professionals with a rapidly growing life sciences portfolio.**

HELS is making major investments in growing the quality and volume of research across its three constituent Schools (The Schools of Education and Social Work, Health Sciences, and Nursing and Midwifery) through investments in academic staff and researchers, doctoral students and new labs and equipment. Excellence in Nursing, Health Sciences and Education is essential for the development of new solutions to major societal challenges including the Ageing Population; Sustainability and Health and is driven by the faculties two research Centres: The Centre for Studies in Practice and Culture in Education (CSPACE) and the Centre for Social Care, Health and Related Research (CSCHaRR).

HELS is seeking to recruit a scholar to undertake a Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant (GRTA) post in the area of post-natal depression in multiple birth parents in the UK.

### **Graduate Research & Teaching Assistants (GRTA):**

GRTA opportunities at Birmingham City University provide you with an opportunity to study for a PhD whilst gaining experience as an Assistant Lecturer on a funded, four-year programme. The GRTA payments consist of two elements:

1. 0.75 GRTA DTG - tax-free stipend paid monthly and has a current (2019/20) value of £11,257 per annum. The bursary is renewable annually for up to 48 months in total, subject to you making satisfactory progression within your PhD research.
2. 0.25 fixed term contract of employment (Assistant Lecturer) - renewable for up to 48 months in total, subject to satisfactory performance and progression within your PhD research. Please note that the pro rata salary for 2017-18 will be £7,213 (and this may be subject to some taxation).

This funding model also includes a FT Home fees studentship (£4,327 for 2019-20) for up to 4 years, subject to you making satisfactory progression within your PhD research.

If you are interested in a career in academia, working as a GRTA enables you to develop a range of transferable skills while building up vital work experience in your field.

GRTA opportunities are open to UK, EU and Overseas applicants. All applicants will receive the same stipend irrespective of fee status, however international applicants may be required to meet the difference in fee costs from their own funds.

### **How to apply**

**The closing date for applications is 23.59 on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019.**

To apply, please complete the [project proposal form](#) and then complete the [online application](#) where you will be required to upload your proposal in place of a personal statement.

You can find further details on studying for a PhD and details of how to apply [here](#)

**Project title: Postnatal depression in parents of twins, triplets and higher order multiples REF: GRTAPND)**

**Contact: Dr Merryl Harvey (informal enquiries) – [merryl.harvey@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:merryl.harvey@bcu.ac.uk)**

**Birmingham City University’s School of Nursing and Midwifery through the Elizabeth Bryan Multiple Births Centre is building a body of research relating to multiple births<sup>1</sup>. We are seeking proposals for a PhD study that will explore post-natal depression in multiple birth parents in the UK.**

A systematic review of international literature indicates a higher incidence of perinatal anxiety and depression in parents of multiples compared to parents of singletons (Wenze et al, 2015). Caring for multiples presents many challenges (Harvey et al, 2014; El-Toukhy et al, 2018) which may be compounded by complicated pregnancy, interventional childbirth, preterm birth or perinatal death. Anxiety, depression and isolation experienced by parents can be detrimental to parenting behaviours, child development and family life (Bryan, 2003; Jena et al, 2011). With the increasing rate of multiple births (Office for National Statistics, 2017), more families are encountering these challenges. Concomitantly, there is limited evidence of multiple birth parents’ experiences of postnatal depression in the UK; they are often excluded from such studies. Whilst the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Clinical Guideline 192 (NICE, 2014, 2018) makes brief reference to multiple births, no specific guidance is given about supporting this group of parents.

A mixed methods study is proposed involving the collection of quantitative data about incidence and qualitative data about experiences, needs and potential support strategies. It is anticipated that the findings will impact on the health and well-being of multiple birth families by informing future health care professional practice. Through the provision of evidence-based care, the needs of families will be more adequately addressed.

Candidates should have a strong academic background and relevant professional experience. In the Graduate Research & Teaching Assistant role, the candidate will be expected to contribute to teaching and related activity for programmes relating to their professional experience. This could include nursing, midwifery, health visiting or allied health care.

#### **References:**

Bryan, E. (2003) The impact of multiple preterm births in the family *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* 110(s20): 24-28

El-Toukhy, T. Bhattacharya, S. Akande, VA. on behalf of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (2018) Multiple pregnancies following assisted conception. Scientific Impact Paper no. 22 *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* DOI:10.1111/1471-0528.14974

Harvey, ME. Athi, R. Denny, E. (2014) Exploratory study on meeting the health and social care needs of mothers with twins *Community Practitioner* 87(2): 28-31

Jena, AB. Goldman, DP Joyce, G. (2011) Association between the birth of twins and parental divorce *Obstetrics and Gynecology* 117(4): 892-897

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2014) Clinical Guideline 192 ‘Antenatal and postnatal mental health: clinical management and service guidance’ London: NICE

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of the proposed study ‘multiples’ refers to twins and higher order multiples

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2018) Clinical Guideline 192 'Antenatal and postnatal mental health: clinical management and service guidance' (updated) London: NICE

Office for National Statistics (2017) Birth Characteristics in England and Wales: 2016

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/birthcharacteristicsinenglandandwales/2016>

Wenze, SJ. Battle, CL. Tezanos, KM. (2015) Raising multiples: mental health of mothers and fathers in early parenthood Archives of Women's Mental Health 18(2): 163-176