

Placement opportunity for ESRC-funded students

The following information has been provided by the host organisation and outlines the opportunity available. Any queries about this placement should be addressed to the host organisation at the details provided below.

Name of host organisation:	Network Plus for Analytical Behavioural Science in Security and Defence, Lancaster University
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Brief description of the host organisation:

The [Network Plus for Analytical Behavioural Science \(NABS+\) in Security and Defence](#) is a UKRI-funded network that seeks to develop the next generation of analytical and behavioural scientists for national security and defence. NABS+ brings together a community of researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders to advance research using new forms of data and analytics to improve public safety in areas of risk, inference, influence, and futures.

Placement opportunity available

This placement will support a rapid review assessing evidence relating to behavioural markers of wellbeing, with a specific focus on workplace-deployable, unobtrusive methods of measurement. Public safety, defence, and security-related work can place significant psychological and physical demands on personnel, yet organisational wellbeing monitoring often relies on self-report measures that can be limited by low participation and barriers to disclosure. This project aims to synthesise evidence on alternative behavioural approaches to wellbeing assessment, alongside associated ethical and organisational considerations.

This placement will provide an opportunity to be a core member of the review team. Day-to-day collaboration will be facilitated through shared digital workspaces, while weekly team meetings and one-to-one supervision will provide structured opportunities for guidance, feedback, and active participation in team discussions. The project will provide experience in evidence synthesis, including data extraction, synthesis, and writing for both academic publication and stakeholder audiences.

Key activities will include:

- Contributing as a second extractor, independently extracting study data in line with the pre-registered protocol
- Assisting with data verification and quality assurance
- Contribute to analysis and narrative synthesis
- Co-authoring outputs in the form of a journal article for publication, alongside a short report of the findings for non-academic stakeholders which will be publicly available on the NABS+ channels

Support provided:

The student will receive an induction to the project, access to all protocols and materials,

and regular supervision from the project lead. Ongoing guidance will be provided throughout the placement, with opportunities to develop advanced skills in systematic evidence synthesis, methodological appraisal, and collaborative academic writing.

Skills and experience required for the role

Essential:

- Current ESRC-funded PhD student in psychology, behavioural science, or a related discipline
- Strong understanding of research design and methods, particularly within psychological or behavioural research
- Ability to extract and organise complex study information accurately and consistently
- Confidence using Microsoft Excel and structured data extraction tools
- Strong analytical and written communication skills
- Ability to work independently while collaborating closely with the project lead

Desirable:

- Previous experience as a research assistant on evidence synthesis projects
- Familiarity with methodological appraisal tools (e.g. MMAT, CASP, or similar)
- Interest in wellbeing research, behavioural measurement, or ethical deployment of monitoring technologies
- Experience contributing to academic publications

Working arrangements and location of the placement

The placement can be undertaken either fully remotely or on campus at Lancaster University, where desk space will be provided. Flexible working hours agreed between the student and host (part-time arrangements possible). The student will be supported through regular weekly team meetings, one-to-one supervision, and opportunities to engage with the team through a mix of virtual and hybrid meeting arrangements. A laptop can also be loaned for use on the project, whether the student chooses to work remotely or on campus. The placement is expected to last between two to three months.

How to apply

Applicants should submit:

- A CV
- A short cover letter outlining relevant experience and interest in the placement
- *ESRC placement funding permission form*

Applications should be submitted by **28 June 2026, 23:59 BST** via email to c.lowery@lancaster.ac.uk

The anticipated start date is 13 July.

Recruitment process

Applications will be reviewed by the NABS+ team. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a brief interview or discussion to assess fit with the project and availability within the placement timeframe.

Security restrictions (if relevant)

There is no security restriction associated with this placement.

Host contact details

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