

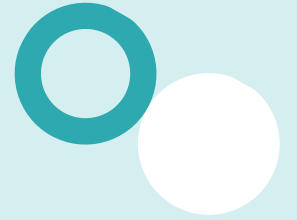
# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

Programme Outline Round 3

2026

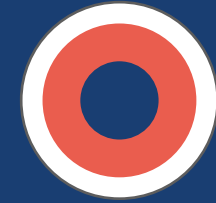


A research-active healthcare, social work, and public health workforce is key to improving the quality of national care services and improving outcomes for those who access them



# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Aim

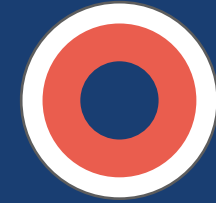


In 2024 the NIHR awarded 3 years of funding to institutions across 12 regions of England to deliver programmes which:

- Provide opportunities for newly qualified and **early career healthcare, social work, and public health professionals\*** to gain academic training and experience to develop an evidence-informed approach to their practice
- Enable individuals from a **diverse group of professions\*** to access a wide range of research careers, from research delivery to academic pathways
- Develop a workforce with the knowledge and skills to tackle the complex health and care challenges of the future



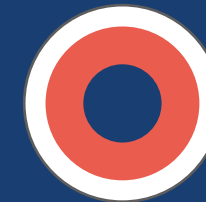
# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West Offer



- **Up to 24** research Master's places
- Studentships including tuition fees\* and stipend†
- Full and part-time study routes††
- 6 Master's courses‡ at 4 North West universities
- Dissertation with a leading researcher
- First step on the NIHR research career pathway



**Round 3 call opens 2<sup>nd</sup> March**



## Funding duration, studentships are tenable for

- Full-time = 12 months
- Part-time = 24 months

## Stipend amounts (capped at UKRI rates)

- **Exact amount tbc upon release of UKRI rates 26/27, 2025/2026 Stipend amounts were:**
  - Full-time £20,780 for one year
  - Part-time £10,390 per year (pro rata) for two years

## Stipend payment options, see [Appendix 2](#)

- Direct payment
- Salary Contribution

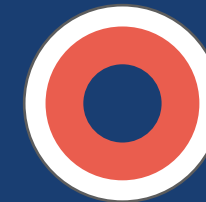
## Additional paid work whilst in receipt of stipend

- Full-time, no more than 1 day (0.2FTE)
- Part-time, no more than 3 days (0.6FTE)



# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Eligibility criteria



- Current undergraduate and postgraduate students in their final year of study (graduating 2026)
- Recently qualified healthcare, social work, and public health professionals\*† who have been in practice for **up to 5 years** at the time of application (since 2021)
- Working towards, or have recently completed, professional registration with one of the approved regulatory bodies (Appendix 3)
- Meet the entry requirements of the chosen Master's course
- **Managerial support** required if applying for part-time study with “Salary Contribution” stipend payment option

\* Dentists and doctors are not eligible to apply, see Appendix 4 for alternative opportunities

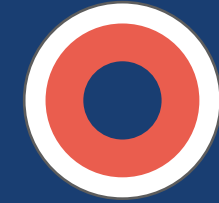
† We recognise that an individual may not easily fit into these categories depending on their personal circumstances, for example if a career break has been taken.

**If you are unsure whether you are eligible, please contact the INSIGHT NW programme team for advice**

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# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West Courses



University of Lancashire



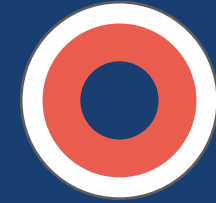
The University of Manchester



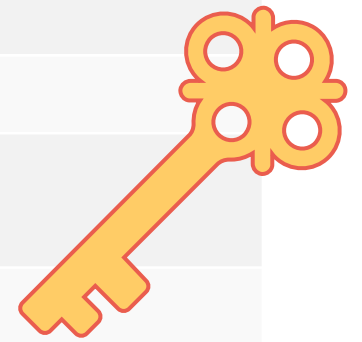
HEI	COURSE(S) OFFERED
Lancashire	MSc Health and Social Care Research
Lancaster	MSc Clinical Research
Liverpool	Master of Public Health
Manchester	MCLin Res Clinical Research
	MRes Health and Social Care
	MRes Public Health

# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

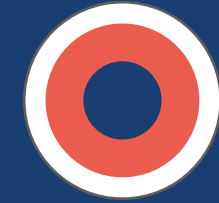
## Key dates for Round 3



Action	Date
Launch Webinar	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026: 12.00:13.00 Online
Opening date for applications	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026
<b>Closing date for applications</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> April 2026</b>
Notified of interview if shortlisted	w/c 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
Interview dates (online)	University of Manchester: w/c 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026 University of Liverpool: w/c 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 Lancaster University: w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 University of Lancashire: w/c 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2026
Notified of interview outcome	w/c 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2026
Complete application and enrolment at host HEI (successful candidates only)	July-Aug 2026
Commence study	October 2026



# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West Informational Drop-in Sessions



The INSIGHT Programme Team will hold drop-in sessions for both **Potential Applicants** and **Employers** to ask specific questions relating to their individual circumstances, as well as an opportunity to speak to the **course leaders**.

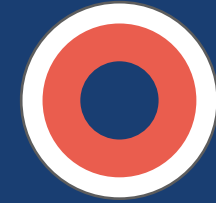
Email [INSIGHTNW@lancashire.ac.uk](mailto:INSIGHTNW@lancashire.ac.uk) to receive link for a convenient session.

Applicant Drop-in	Employer Drop-in	Course Drop-in
Tuesday 18th March, 12-1pm	Thursday 20th March, 12-1pm	LANCASTER UNIVERSITY Thursday 14th March, 12-1pm
Tuesday 25th March, 12-1pm	Monday 27th March, 12-1pm	UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER Thursday 3rd April, 1-2pm
Thursday 3rd April, 12-1pm	Monday 7th April, 12-1pm	UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL Monday 7th April, 12-1pm
Tuesday 15th April, 12-1pm		UCLAN Wednesday 9th April, 12-1pm
Monday 28th April, 12-1pm		



# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Application hints and tips



- Check you **meet the eligibility criteria for both** the **INSIGHT Programme** and the **Master's course** you wish to study
- Ensure **line management support** is sought prior to application if you are planning to study part-time
  - discuss the salary contribution stipend option with your employer\*
- Consider **two referees** who are able to comment on your character, academic ability, and your suitability for research work
- Spend time developing your **personal statement** (max 1000 words)
  - Your reasons for undertaking a Master's programme
    - motivation, relevant experience, goals
- Make a note of the **set interview dates**, negotiate time to attend and prepare yourself for the interview

\*Line manager support is a pre-requisite of application, if you require support to liaise with your employer, please contact the INSIGHT programme team who will offer support and guidance

## NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

# How will postgraduate study affect my earning ability?

**Monthly  
Wage  
£1,905**

### Full-Time Employment

Based on full-time employment with a salary of £29,970 and assuming:

- Student Loan, post 2012 programme, £20
- Pension at 8.3% contributions, £207.29
- Tax and National Insurance, £364.54



### Full-Time Study (with or without Employment) – Completion within 12 months

Based on full-time study plus 1 day of paid employment at £29,970 pro-rata:

- Annual tax free stipend £20,780 per annum, or £1,731 per calendar month
- One day (0.2FTE) paid employment at £5,994 per annum, or £499 per calendar month – tax free as the income is below the personal tax threshold

*Please note full-time students can undertake no more than one day per week (0.2FTE) additional paid employment*

**Monthly  
Stipend  
£1,731 -  
£2,230**

**Monthly  
Stipend  
+ Salary  
£2,138**

### Part-Time Study + Employment – Completion within 24 months

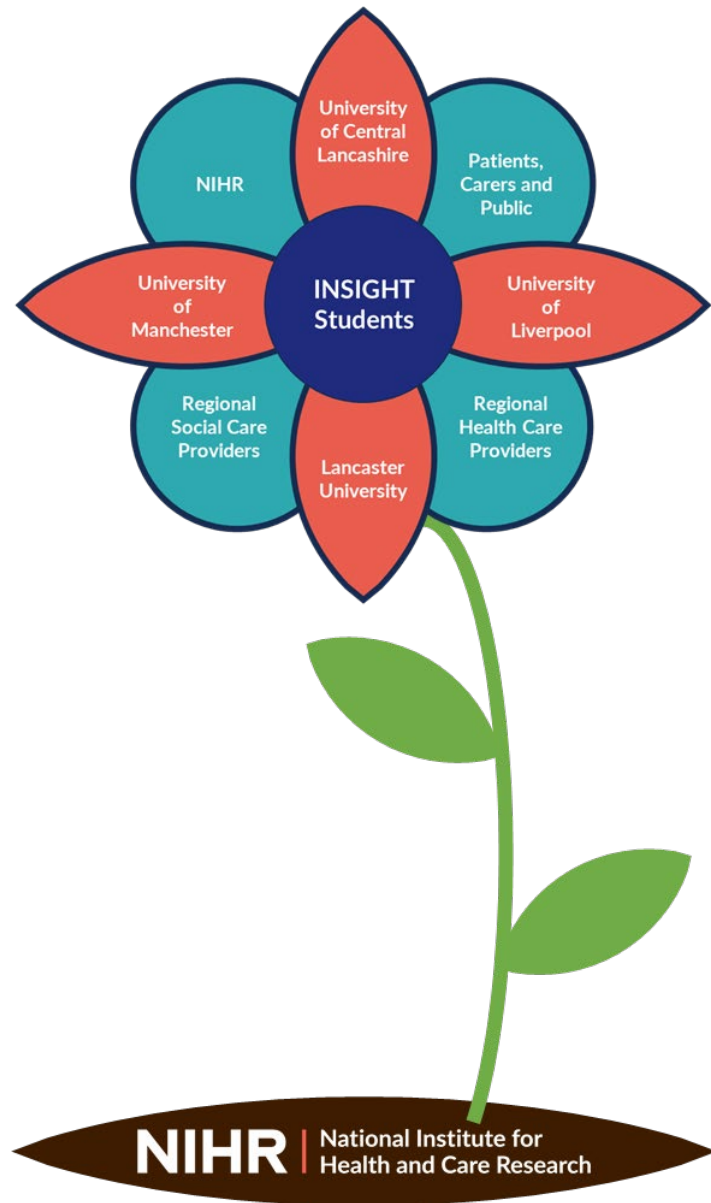
Based on part-time study plus 3 days (0.6FTE) of paid employment at £29,970 pro-rata:

- Annual tax-free stipend £10,390 per annum, or £865 per calendar month
- Three days (0.6FTE) paid employment at £17,982 per annum, or £1,273 per calendar month assuming deductions for pension, tax, and national insurance

The above examples provide an illustration of your potential earning ability should you choose to undertake full or part-time study, exact amounts will vary based on individual circumstances

**It is the responsibility of the award holder to ensure they are complying with tax laws should additional paid work be completed in addition to the tax-free stipend payment.**

We are always happy to discuss options based on your individual circumstances. Please get in touch at [INSIGHTNW@UCLan.ac.uk](mailto:INSIGHTNW@UCLan.ac.uk)



# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

Planting the seeds of research capacity to nurture the growth of the region's health and social care professionals

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**NIHR** | National Institute for Health and Care Research

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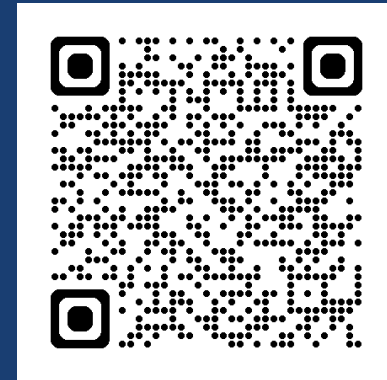
# For more information:



INSIGHTNW@UCLan.ac.uk



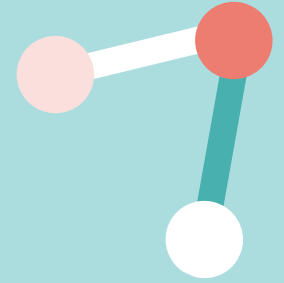
<https://arc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/insight/>



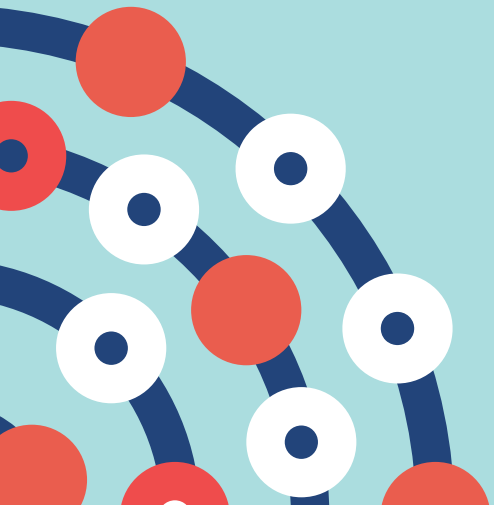
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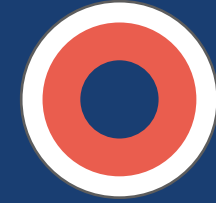


# Appendices



# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Appendix 1: Who can apply?

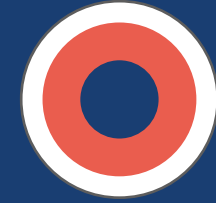


The research Masters places are open to students and recent graduates from a diverse group of professions including, but not limited to:

- nurses, midwives, and allied health professionals comprising of:
  - art, music and drama therapists
  - dieticians
  - occupational therapists
  - operating department practitioners
  - orthoptists
  - osteopaths
  - paramedics
  - physiotherapists
  - podiatrists
  - prosthetists and orthotists
  - diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers
  - speech and language therapists
- pharmacists
- healthcare scientists
- registered social work professionals (also those working towards registration)
- registered public health professionals (also those working towards registration)

# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Appendix 2: Stipend payment options



Stipends can be paid in two ways\*:

### 1. Direct (Student)

- Paid to **INSIGHT Scholar** in line with host HEI stipend payment regulations (e.g., 1/4ly in advance)
- Tax free

### 2. Salary Contribution (Employer)

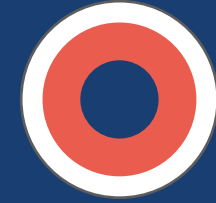
- Paid to **Employer** in line with the INSIGHT Employer Agreement
- Employer commits to
  - retain the INSIGHT Scholar on their substantive contract of employment for the duration of the Studentship
  - facilitate study release of 0.4FTE
  - ensure working hours in line with INSIGHT requirements of  $\leq 0.6$ FTE
- **Managerial support for this option is essential at application stage**

NB: Stipend amounts Round 2 – illustration only

- Full-time £20,780
- Part-time £10,390
- **UKRI are expected to announce the increased stipend rates for 26/27 in January 2026**

# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Appendix 3: Approved regulatory bodies



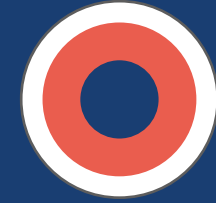
- NIHR Approved regulatory bodies

- Academy for Healthcare Science
- General Chiropractic Council
- General Dental Council
- General Medical Council
- General Optical Council
- General Osteopathic Council
- General Pharmaceutical Council
- Health and Care Professions Council
- Nursing and Midwifery Council
- Social Work England
- UK Public Health Register

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/heenih-ica-programme-approved-regulatory-bodies>

# NIHR INSIGHT Programme North West

## Appendix 4: Opportunities for those who are not eligible



### Alternatives for doctors and dentists

The INSIGHT Programme is not available to doctors and dentists. If that's you, you could consider alternative Masters-level opportunities:

- awards available through the Integrated Academic Training (IAT) Programme:
  - [Academic Clinical Fellowship](#) and locally funded Integrated Academic Training Posts
  - [Clinical Lectureship](#)
  - [In-Practice Fellowship](#)
- activities offered by the [INSPIRE](#) scheme coordinated by the Academy of Medical Sciences

### Alternatives for experienced health and care professionals

If you are at a more advanced stage of your registered profession, and are looking to start your career in research, the NIHR offers a number of other [predoctoral funding opportunities](#).

The [Clinician Researcher Credentials Framework](#) provides Masters level qualifications for experienced healthcare practitioners from all professional backgrounds who want to take on leadership roles in clinical research delivery.

[Explore NIHR support and information tailored to your profession](#)