

University of Manchester Q-Step Summer Project 2016

Ref: #26 UoMQStep 2016 Age UK Loneliness

For enquiries contact Dr Jackie Carter, jackie.carter@manchester.ac.uk or Dr Mark Brown, mark.brown@manchester.ac.uk, Q-Step Co-directors

Organisation Name: Age UK

Team / Department: Research Department

Address: Tavis House, 1 – 6 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9NA

Provisional title for project: What is the relationship between social isolation and loneliness in older people in the UK?

100 word abstract of what the project would probably undertake, and any data to be used:

Loneliness is a major issue for older people in the UK. This research project aims to advance knowledge by understanding the relationship between social isolation and loneliness in later life. The findings will inform the construction of a social isolation index, which could be used by local Age UKs to find older people at higher risk of being socially isolated. This research may also reveal synergies with Age UK's published loneliness index. Working with our Research Manager for Evaluation and Impact, the student will address the question through cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis using the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing and Understanding Society.

Key words (up to 12):

Loneliness, social isolation, older people, ageing.

Essential and desirable skills that the student would need to have:

Essential:

Understanding of selection of variables for research; dataset manipulation skills; data analysis skills and experience with quantitative data; basic knowledge of statistical packages such as SPSS, Stata, R or other; knowledge of Microsoft Office; excellent oral and written English.

Desirable:

Experience with multivariate analysis; advanced knowledge of SPSS; above basic experience with Stata, R or other statistical package.

Where the work would be carried out:

At Age UK's London office, for 7 weeks during the summer. Our working hours are 9.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Some flexibility may be possible in these daily start and finish times.

Preferred selection method (interview or other meeting):

Face-to-face interview in Manchester.

Support and training offered by the organisation:

The student will be guided and supported by the Age UK Research team in each activity but will be expected to think and work independently. Members of the team are highly experienced in social, health and economic research. Towards the end of the placement, the student will have a feedback interview on their work as well as presenting to a group of Age UK colleagues.

Any issues of data confidentiality and/or IPR that would need to be resolved:

All outputs and any IP generated by the student will remain the property of Age UK. Any issues of confidentiality are not completely clear at this stage so arrangements for sharing through public reports and presentations will be agreed with the student towards the end of the placement.

Supporting information:

Depending on the quality of the work, we expect to include it in a final report on the project. Publication in a peer reviewed journal will be under review as the project progresses. We are willing to consider the possibility of blogs or thought pieces on well-being in later life.

Financial assistance offered by the organisation:

We may be able to provide modest support towards the student's cost of travel from home to London at the start of the placement and return at the end.