

Phelan United States Centre Undergraduate Research Assistantship Programme: *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. **How many places?** This year, we are offering 10 places on the UGRA programme.
2. **Who can apply?** Applications are open to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year undergraduate students, as well as General Course students.
3. **When do applications close?** The application window ends at **23.59 on Monday 13 October**. However, we anticipate considerable demand for the programme this year, and reserve the right to close the application window early if there is an overwhelming number of applications. Although we will not close the application early without warning, we recommend that interested students apply early to avoid disappointment.
4. **“I don’t have any previous research experience; is it worth me applying?”** Absolutely. You do not need previous research experience to submit a strong application. We treat experience of any kind as important – for example, volunteering, participation in student societies, or hospitality. Please provide us with examples of the experience that you do have and the skills that you have developed as a result.
5. **Can I apply for more than one project?** Yes, you can list up to three projects in your order of preference on the application form, but please focus the contents of your application on your top priority.
6. **How much are research assistants paid?** Approximately £18/hour for a maximum of 100 hours across the academic year (December 2025 – June 2026). You can only work a maximum of 10 hours per week.
7. **How do I get paid?** You will be asked to submit a time-sheet at the end of each month, in which you specify how many hours you have worked that month. This must be signed off by your faculty supervisor before it is sent to the Phelan US Centre Manager for approval. You will receive regular email reminders about upcoming payroll deadlines.
8. **When will I receive my first paycheck?** If you start working in December, you will receive your first paycheck in January.
9. **When do I have to work?** The hours will be decided between you and your faculty supervisor based on both of your schedules. However, you can only work a maximum of 10 hours per week and 100 hours overall.
10. **How do I apply?** Please apply by filling out the short application form, which you can find on the [Undergraduate Research Assistantship page of our website](#).
11. **Can I contact a faculty supervisor directly about their research project during the application process?** Please do not contact faculty supervisors directly during the application process. If you have any questions or queries about any aspect of the UGRA programme, please contact the Phelan US Centre team at uscentre@lse.ac.uk.

12. **Can I submit a CV or other additional documents?** No, selection is solely based on the online application. Unsolicited resumes and CVs will not be considered.
13. **What happens after the deadline?** Members of the Phelan US Centre team will read every application that is submitted, judging them according to the criteria laid out in the person specification. A shortlist will be created for each project, which will be passed to faculty supervisors to make the final decision, usually after an informal discussion with the candidates.
14. **When will I hear back about my application?** All applicants will receive an email notifying them whether they have been shortlisted by 31 October, with final decisions in early November 2025. Please be patient, as we endeavour to ensure that every application gets the time and attention that it deserves.
15. **What should I write in my application?** Your application will be judged according to the extent to which it meets the person specification, so please consult this document closely and make sure to address all criteria. If you have skills and/or experience relevant to a particular project, such as data, software or quantitative skills, please also specify these. Make sure to give concrete examples of your skills and experience, where possible.
16. **What kind of tasks are research assistants asked to do?** Research assistants are given a wide range of tasks, from gathering archival resources, to writing bibliographic essays, or using quantitative methodologies. Please consult each project description closely to find out more. Faculty supervisors will explain how to do these tasks, so do not worry if you lack prior experience.
17. **When does the programme start?** You will start work in December 2025.
18. **When does the programme end?** The programme will end on 30 June 2026.
19. **What is the report that I have to write at the end?** In June 2026, all research assistants will be required to submit a short report (approximately 1000 words) outlining their experience in the programme. You can find previous examples on our website. We will also ask you to submit a feedback form at the end of the programme.
20. **Visa regulations?** The student is responsible for checking their own visa regulations (if applicable) and confirming they are permitted to work on the project. Please see the LSE website for more information about visas: <https://info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/immigration-advice>. If you have any queries about your visa regulations, we encourage you to contact the LSE HR Division at humanresources@lse.ac.uk.