

Research Externships

NIHR INSIGHT 2025

1. Overview

This externship is designed as a “taster” program, enabling participants to gain first-hand experience and a comprehensive understanding of the diverse facets of research practice. Whether you are new to research or looking to enhance your skills, this program offers a supportive and enriching environment to take your first steps into the world of research.

Duration

- 30 hours over 8 weeks

Dates

- 6th May – breakfast launch! Meet the team, 09.00-12.00
- 13th May – introduction to a trials unit 09.00 -13.00
- 20th May - developing a research question (PCTU) / research delivery 09.00 -13.00 / 14.00- 17.00
- 3rd June – Engaging the public (QMUL Centre of Public Engagement) 09.00- 15.00
- 10th June – Refining the question (PCTU) 09.00-13.00
- 17th June – close out 09.00-12.00

1. Introduction May 6th 2025

Meet the Externs!

This session you will meet your fellow externs and meet clinical academics (healthcare professionals) from QMUL.

Over breakfast, you will find out about the externship and meet clinical academics who will support you over the externship to develop the idea. You will spend time with the following groups to develop an overview of clinical research.

- **Pragmatic Clinical Trials Unit**: Three days dedicated to learning about research methodology, developing a research question, and gaining insight into pragmatic approaches to trial design.
- **Public Engagement**: Time at the Centre for Public Engagement to explore effective ways to involve the public in the development and delivery of research projects.
- **Research Delivery**: An introduction to research delivery – workshop – research in practice. in partnership with Barts Health, offering practical insight into managing and implementing studies in clinical settings.

2. What happens in a clinical trials unit? May 13th 2025

Led by the team at the Pragmatic Clinical Trials Unit you will cover the following:

- Developing a research question
- Trial design
- Funding
- Introduction to engaging patients in your research

3. Developing a trial idea May 20th 2025

You will spend the morning in the PCTU and the afternoon with the research delivery team in ED at the Royal London Hospital, Barts Health

Participants will work in small groups to design a trial to a brief Facilitators will help to ensure they end up with a clear PICO and idea that could be taken forward to a mock PCTU pre-submission meeting

The afternoon will be spent with the ED research delivery team at the Royal London Hospital. Here you will learn about the practicalities of delivering a trial and things to consider when designing a study.

3. Engage with Public Engagement: A dynamic training session June 3rd 2025

Join us for an immersive and insightful training day designed to equip you with the skills and experiences necessary for impactful public and community engagement.

Morning: Learn the Fundamentals

- Kick off the day with engaging lecture-style and workshop sessions covering the essentials of public and community engagement. Whether you're new to these concepts or looking to deepen your understanding, this session will provide a solid foundation to enhance your approach.

Afternoon: Experience Public Engagement Firsthand

- In the afternoon, step beyond the classroom and into the community. Participate in field trips to explore real-world public engagement activities. Highlights may include a visit to the Centre of the Cell, an interactive science education centre, and a session with local initiatives such as the Tower Hamlets Family Hubs, where you'll see engagement in action.

4. Working up the idea June 10th 2025

You will rejoin the team at the PCTU for the morning

- Start with meeting methodologists across the PCTU and learn about what part they play in clinical trials
 - Trial management
 - Data management
 - Quality Assurance
 - Statistics
 - Health Economics
- Presenting your chosen idea with an interactive session on who to involve in your study and at what stage

5. Close out, what next? June 17th 2025

- You will come together as a group with each individual presenting their idea, and how it has changed over the process of the externship
- One of these ideas will be supported to take forward and develop a bid for pre doctoral clinical academic funding with mentorship
- As a cohort you will work through the best way to support each other going forward and provide peer support.



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