

Title: Doctoral Studentship (PhD)

Application Closing Date: 6 July 2026

Location: Hartpury University, Gloucestershire.

Funding: Fees paid only (max. 5 years)

Contract Type: Part-time over a minimum of 4 years

Area of Research: Human–wildlife interactions, agri-environment management, and conservation in working farmland landscapes

Title: Farming with Curlew: Development and Evaluation of a Farmer-led Curlew Management Toolkit to Support Breeding Curlew Recovery in Agricultural Landscapes

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND CONTACT DETAILS

Breeding curlew populations have experienced significant declines across the UK (~60%), largely driven by changes in agricultural land use, reduced breeding success, and increasing pressures on farmland ecosystems. This project will address these challenges by developing and evaluating a farmer-led Curlew Management Toolkit designed to support curlew recovery within working agricultural landscapes.

The PhD will focus on understanding how farmers perceive, adopt, and implement conservation measures that can benefit breeding curlew, and how practical management interventions can be designed to fit within real-world farming systems. Using a human–wildlife interaction and applied conservation approach, the research will combine stakeholder engagement, qualitative and quantitative social science methods, and ecological knowledge to co-develop practical, evidence-based guidance.

Working closely with farmers, conservation organisations, and policy makers, the student will co-design and test a toolkit that translates curlew conservation science into actionable on-farm practices. The project will evaluate both the feasibility of implementation and its potential to improve breeding conditions for curlew in agricultural landscapes.

For more information and for an initial discussion please contact: Lucy.Garrett@Hartpury.ac.uk

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to become part of vibrant postgraduate community in an idyllic rural setting, with world leading facilities and undertaking impactful cutting-edge research. The University of the West of England is the awarding body for this degree. Studentships comprise of tuition fees and research project allocation.

PhD Studentship Selection Criteria:

Please demonstrate the following criteria in your CV and/or covering letter:

- Essential: Undergraduate degree or MSc in a field relating to the project.
- Essential: Strong communication, relationship-building, qualitative research and analytical skills.
- Desirable: Practical experience within the natural science/ecology or agricultural sectors.

- Desirable: Research or practical experience working with birds, and in particular wading birds.

Candidates should also be aware of the following:

The normal expectation is that applicants will hold a 1st or a Masters qualification from a UK university or a degree of comparable standing from a university outside the UK. The candidate's degree relevant to the studentship should demonstrate their potential for practice-led research or alternative evidence of research aptitude.

Applicants whose first language is not English require a recognised English language qualification. The minimum entry requirement is GCSE English at grade C or above or IELTS score 7.0 or TOEFL score 600 (or demonstrable equivalent).

Applying for a PhD studentship

To apply for a PhD studentship, you must send the following documents
RKE.Administrator@hartpury.ac.uk:

- A curriculum vitae (maximum 3 pages)
- Copies of academic transcripts
- A covering letter outlining your suitability for the studentship
- Your undergraduate or postgraduate dissertation or another relevant piece of research you have completed or contributed to.
- If English is not your first language, certification of English language qualification

Applications that do not arrive by Midnight (UK time) on **6 July 2026** will not be considered.

If your application is selected, you will be invited for interview on **Thursday 23 July 2026**. All applicants must ensure their availability on this date.

Key Dates:

6 July 2026: Deadline for submission of applications
w/c 13 July 2026: Interview invitations sent to shortlisted candidates*
23 July 2026: Interviews at Hartpury*
24 August 2026: Deadline for accepting studentship
September 2026: Studentship begins

*Please note that by submitting an application you are confirming your availability to attend an interview on **Thursday 23 July 2026**.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks along with other relevant employment checks.

Hartpury values a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all sections of the

community.

