



SeNSS ESRC-FUNDED COLLABORATIVE STUDENTSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

SITUATION AWARENESS IN REMOTE VEHICLE OPERATORS

Primary supervisor: Professor Polly Dalton

Institution: Department of Psychology, Royal Holloway, University of London

SeNSS Pathway: Psychology

Collaborative partner: Transport Research Laboratory (TRL)

Degree structure: either a three-year PhD programme, or a one year Masters degree, followed by a three-year PhD programme

Research project

Driverless cars will need to be operated remotely under some circumstances. For example, a remote human operator may need to take over control when a problem arises that prevents a driverless vehicle from navigating independently. The remote operator will need to control the car, potentially in busy traffic, using information conveyed “second hand” from the scene.

This project, which is a collaborative project between Royal Holloway’s Department of Psychology and the UK’s Transport Research Laboratory, examines the factors influencing situation awareness in these contexts. How long is required for an operator to develop situation awareness when they have not previously been monitoring the scene? And which types of scene information best support situation awareness?

The project will be based on Royal Holloway, University of London’s beautiful campus close to London. The Department of Psychology has an excellent research reputation including an active postgraduate community and cutting edge facilities. It was ranked sixth out of 82 UK psychology departments in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework

Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) is an internationally recognised centre of excellence providing world-class research, consultancy and product testing, covering all aspects of transport. TRL has access to a range of dedicated facilities including advanced driving simulators and test tracks.

Training opportunities

Students have access to a wide range of training opportunities, both through Royal Holloway's Researcher Development Programme, which provides general training in research skills, and through the Department's Postgraduate Research Training Seminars, which cover more specialist topics such as experimental programming and eye tracking techniques.

Applicants: essential and/or desirable attributes/skills

- You should ideally hold, or be predicted to achieve, a first class undergraduate degree or equivalent in Psychology or a related discipline (minimum requirement: 2.1).
- An MSc in a psychology-related subject is desirable but not essential.
- The ideal candidate will have strong skills in experimental design and statistical analysis.
- Some experience of video editing, computer programming, eye tracking and/or driving simulation would be advantageous.

Studentship award details:

- This studentship may be taken as either a 1+3 year award (a one-year MSc followed by a three-year PhD), or a +3 award (a three-year PhD)
- It may be taken full-time or part-time
- The studentship award covers your university fees, and provides you with a stipend of £16,553 per year (this includes £2,000 London weighting). You will also be able to apply for small amounts of additional funding via the SeNSS Research Training Support Grant.

Residential eligibility

To be eligible for a **full award** you must be a Home or EU student who satisfies the criteria below:

- You must have settled status in the UK, meaning there are no restrictions on how long you can stay in the UK; **AND**
- You must have been 'ordinarily resident' in the UK for 3 years prior to 30 September 2018, when the Studentship starts. 'Ordinarily resident' means that you must have been normally residing in the UK (apart from any temporary or occasional absences; **AND**
- You must not have been residing in the UK wholly or mainly for the purpose of full-time education. However, this criterion does not apply to UK or EU nationals.

Students from EU countries other than the UK are generally eligible for a **fees-only award**. To be eligible for a fees-only award, you must be ordinarily resident in a member state of the EU, in the same way as UK students must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

How to apply for this studentship

In order to be considered for this SeNSS studentship, you must first apply for a place to study at Royal Holloway, University of London, noting that you are applying for the collaborative studentship. Please go to:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studyhere/researchdegrees/applying/applicationprocessforresearchdegrees.aspx> for information on how to make your application.

You will then need to make a separate application to SeNSS for this collaborative studentship. Please read the SeNSS Collaborative Studentship Application Guidance Notes before completing our online application form. The Guidance Notes are available at the bottom of the following webpage: [Applying for a SeNSS collaborative studentship](#)

Deadline:

The deadline applying to Royal Holloway, University of London for a place is **23:59 GMT on 21 January 2018**. No extensions to this deadline will be permitted. Interviews are likely to be held at Royal Holloway on Tuesday 13th February 2018.

For further enquiries:

For enquiries related to the studentship topic, please email Professor Polly Dalton (polly.dalton@rhul.ac.uk)

For enquiries related to your eligibility for this studentship, and the application process, please email esrcdtp@rhul.ac.uk

About SeNSS

The South East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) is a consortium formed of 10 leading UK universities, all of which are engaged in cutting-edge social science research and training. The SeNSS consortium members are:

- City, University of London
- University of East Anglia
- University of Essex (the co-ordinating institution)
- Goldsmiths, University of London
- University of Kent
- University of Reading
- University of Roehampton, London
- Royal Holloway, University of London
- University of Surrey
- University of Sussex

SeNSS offers a world-class inter-disciplinary PhD research and training environment. It is committed to supporting its internationally recognised researchers and to producing the next generation of talented social scientists. SeNSS has been accredited as a prestigious Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the national body which funds research and training in economic and social issues.

We pride ourselves on our rigorous doctoral training programme, making the most of our members' diverse specialisms and offering our students a wide array of subject-specific as well as advanced training opportunities. SeNSS offers high-calibre supervision, driven by our members' emphasis on formal training and research culture.

For further information about SeNSS, please visit [the SeNSS website](#)