

SPCR internship projects 2026

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Name & email of reviewer(s) for applicants applying to undertake this internship project: Mark Lown (m.lown@soton.ac.uk)
Length and dates of internship: Flexible, depending on mutual availability of intern and supervisor. Any time from 1 June 2026. Equivalent of 4 weeks full-time placement based on 35 hours per week a total of 140 hours. But this could be part-time spread out over more weeks.
Host department: Primary Care, Population Sciences and Medical Education, University of Southampton
How will the internship be conducted: <input type="checkbox"/> In person at the university <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Virtual/ from home <input type="checkbox"/> Both are possible, depending on preference of student
Title internship project: Antenatal Couples Counselling in Uganda to improve uptake of birth planning and post-partum family planning
Summary of the internship project: <i>(max 250 words, can include hyperlinks to further information)</i> The intern will work alongside a team in the UK and Uganda on the collection and analysis of data from the ACCU-2 project. This is an “impact” project funded by FCDO. The abstract for the whole project is below. The precise role of the intern will depend on the needs of the project at the time when the intern is able to join the project. We anticipate this could include involvement in data cleaning and analysis. Project abstract: Maternal and perinatal mortality are still high in Uganda, with high unmet need for contraception. Although 86% of women deliver in health facilities, many high-risk women do not deliver in an appropriate hospital. Only 16% receive counselling about family planning after their delivery. Our FCDO-funded feasibility trial of Antenatal Couples Counselling in Uganda (ACCU) showed that routine antenatal clinics could be used to screen health education films and deliver couples’ counselling about birth planning and post-partum family planning. This was associated with an increased uptake of delivery at an appropriate health facility and of post-partum family planning (PPFP).

We aim to scale this up to all 20 government primary health care facilities in Mbarara city and district (covering a population of 438,464) and in Rwamwanja refugee settlement (covering >100,000 refugees).

Starting in March 2026, our main activities for this project will be: (1) Screening our health education films on family planning in 7 health facilities in Mbarara city and district; (2) Adapting and screening these films in 3 health facilities serving >100,000 disadvantaged Congolese refugees in Rwamwanja settlement; (3) Training health workers in these health facilities on antenatal couples' counselling and provision of PFP; (4) Monitoring the impact of these activities on uptake of birth planning and PFP; (5) Engaging stakeholders in the study sites and at the Ministry of Health Technical Working Group.

The impact will be sustained because health facilities can continue screening films at no cost after the project, and health workers can also continue to deliver couples' counselling and PFP.

Learning objectives:

- TO learn skills in quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis
- To gain experience of working in a collaborative global health project with partners in Uganda and the UK

Any further information: