

# Project proposal

*Project title*

Traffic light labelling of food products among parents of pre-school and school-aged children: use, understanding and perceptions

*First Supervisor*

Dr



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*Second Supervisor*

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*School*

Life Sciences

*Other member of supervisory team  
(no more than three KU supervisors in total)*

Dr Liz Opara

*Specific requirements  
beyond 2:1 degree*

Project summary  
(max 4,000 characters)

## MSc by Research

Dietary intakes in the UK fall short of recommendations, whilst prevalence of chronic diseases remains high. Food labels are tools to help consumers make healthier food choices, and possibly the only information available at point of purchase. They must be simple and easily understood to allow quick, healthy food choices in a complex obesogenic environment.

Traffic light labels (TLL) give front-of-pack information. Fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt are indicated as 'high, medium or low' using traffic light colours.

Previous pilot work explored relationships between body-mass index (BMI), gender and use of TLL among University students. Those with the highest BMI best understood TLL but used them least. Clear differences between genders were shown and in agreement with the literature, understanding did not necessarily translate into use of TLL. Parents, as principle determinants of their children's diet and potential future health, are a key consumer group. Children of overweight parents are more likely to be overweight<sup>8</sup> and parents are willing to spend more on healthy food<sup>9</sup> and to read food labels than other groups.

This questionnaire-based project will extend our previous research, to examine effects of parental BMI on use, understanding and perceptions, in partnership with local schools.