

Job Title: Research Assistant

Grade: 6

Salary: £33,002 to £37,694 per annum, pro-rata if part-time

Department: School of Healthcare

Hours/Contract: Full-time, or job share considered, fixed term contract until 31 December 2027

Job Family: Teaching and Research

Reference: 12844

Role Purpose

This role involves assisting the research team and undertaking independent research activities under appropriate guidance and supervision as part of the EU Horizon funded IMPROVE PRETERM PROJECT. The aim of the project at the University of Leicester is to develop and validate a novel parent questionnaire to assess children's cognitive abilities at the age of 4-7 years. The concurrent validity of the questionnaire will be assessed by comparing children's scores on the questionnaire with their scores on tests of cognitive abilities when they are between 4 and 7 years of age. The role will involve independently carrying out primary school visits across Leicester and the East Midlands to administer standardised assessments of children's cognitive abilities, according to agreed protocols. The role-holder will also assist the research team by entering, managing and undertaking basic checks and analysis of questionnaire and test data, supporting a systematic review within pre-specified parameters, and undertaking general duties to assist the research team in the successful delivery of the project.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Research

- To be responsible for data collection through the administration of standardised tests of children's cognitive abilities at primary schools across Leicester and the East Midlands, including scoring and interpreting test results, following agreed protocols.
- To assist in managing project administration including supporting participant recruitment and liaising with parents and schools.
- To be responsible for entering and managing questionnaire and standardised test data, undertaking basic data analysis, keeping accurate records, and preparing feedback on children's assessments.
- To undertake training and achieve a high level of proficiency in project assessment techniques.
- To attend project meetings and contribute to the preparation of progress reports and the dissemination of project results as required.
- To support the research team in carrying out a systematic review within pre-specified parameters, including literature searching, screening, and data extraction.
- To contribute to the preparation of project outputs, such as scientific reports, journal papers and presentations.



Professional Development

- Development of skills and experience in the administration, scoring and interpretation of standardised tests of children's cognitive abilities and in wider research skills and methods relevant to developmental psychology.
- The role-holder will be encouraged to attend appropriate events and engage in continuous professional development.

Impact and Knowledge Exchange

- To assist the project team in preparing materials to aid the dissemination of research findings to a wide range of audiences, and to contribute, where appropriate, to presentations, workshops or meetings with stakeholders.

Leadership and Citizenship:

- Contribute to the overall success of the IMPROVE PRETERM project.

Internal and External Relationships

Internal

Communicate and liaise regularly with colleagues in the IMPROVE PRETERM project at the University of Leicester.

Communicate with colleagues in the School of Healthcare, Division of Nursing Science, Pregnancy and Child Health and the wider university to facilitate successful delivery of the project.

External

Communicate with colleagues and collaborators in the wider IMPROVE PRETERM European Consortium as required.

Liaise with parents and professionals in primary schools to arrange project assessments and provide feedback.

Planning and Organising

With guidance from the Principal Investigator, effectively plan and organise own workload to meet the demands of the project schedule.

Liaise with parents and school staff to organise and schedule project assessments.

Attend relevant training courses or equivalent and be proactive in terms of continued professional development.

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- An Honours degree in Psychology or a related discipline, at 2:1 or above, or relevant experience*
- Experience of working with children of primary school age*





- Experience in data entry and management*

Desirable

- Experience of administering and scoring standardised tests*
- Experience of carrying out research with children of primary school age*
- Familiarity with school environments
- Experience of carrying out systematic reviews
- Knowledge of ethical issues involved in conducting research with children

Skills, Abilities and Competencies

Essential

- Interest and enthusiasm in developmental psychology, child development and/or the specific subject area*
- High level of proficiency in English, sufficient to carry out tests of children's cognitive abilities*
- Ability to work with minimum supervision, manage own workload and take responsibility for meeting project targets*
- Willingness to travel and work independently to carry out data collection through school visits*
- Excellent written communication skills*
- Excellent oral communication skills
- Excellent IT skills, including email, word processing, and database and statistical packages
- Ability to work well within a team
- Ability to maintain a professional and courteous manner when communicating with members of the public including parents and young children
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and sensitivity when working with families and young children
- Display a professional attitude towards colleagues and others

Desirable

- Excellent analytical and problem solving skills
- Commitment to continuous professional development

****Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview***

Reason for Fixed Term Contract

The reason for the fixed term contract is stated in section 1.9 in the summary of contractual terms in your contract of employment.

Criminal Declaration and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.





This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 because the appointee will have substantial access to young people and/or vulnerable adults. Therefore, an appointment to this post will be subject to checking through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The successful applicant for this post will, therefore, be required to give consent for the University to check and obtain appropriate clearance with the DBS for the existence and content of any criminal record in the form of an Enhanced Disclosure with Child Barred List.

Information received from the DBS and the police will be kept in strict confidence and will be destroyed once the University is satisfied in this regard.

Supporting University Activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are encouraged to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We encourage all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required. If supporting these activities is likely to affect your workload, please speak to your line manager in the first instance

University Values

Inclusive - We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring - We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful - As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community

Freedom of Speech

The University is committed to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law throughout our recruitment processes. We ensure that all candidates are considered based on merit and suitability for the role, without regard to their lawful viewpoints or the expression of challenging or controversial ideas. Our recruitment policies and practices are designed to protect applicants from discrimination or adverse treatment on the basis of their opinions, and to foster an environment where open debate and diverse perspectives are valued as essential to our academic mission.

Equity and Diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equality support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equality, diversity and inclusion.

