



Candidate Information

Position:	Research Assistant
School/Department:	Biological Sciences
Reference:	21/108793
Closing Date:	Monday 17 May 2021
Salary:	£28,331 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date:	Monday 24 May 2021
Duration:	This post is available until 30 June 2021

JOB PURPOSE:

As part of the Northern Ireland SARS-CoV-2 monitoring programme Queen's University are undertaking the routine surveillance of wastewater treatment systems for SARS-CoV-2 in partnership with a number of government agencies. A wastewater testing laboratory has been established at the Medical Biology Centre which will process samples from wastewater sites across Northern Ireland. The post holder will be required to undertake driving duties to Wastewater treatment works across Northern Ireland.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Support a research team/project in the acquisition, assessment, evaluation and/or interpretation of data and other specialised information.
2. Sample collection and maintenance of on-site autosamplers.
3. Ensuring the continued safe and compliant operation of all aspects of the surveillance programme – from wastewater processing to PCR analysis (aliquoting of samples, reaction mix preparation in a clean room, processing of samples, interpretation of results).
4. Write up results of own work and contribute to the production of research reports, publications and proposals in a timely manner.
5. Working in Containment Level 2 laboratories following local code of practice.
6. Assisting in the disposal of samples in accordance with all relevant guidelines.
7. Prepare, in consultation with supervisor, material for publication in national and international journals and presentations at international conferences.
8. Assist grant holder in the preparation of funding proposals and applications to external bodies.
9. Carry out routine administrative tasks associated with the research project/s to ensure that project/s are completed on time and within budget. These might include organisation of project meetings and documentation, financial control, risk assessment of research activities.
10. Carry out occasional undergraduate supervision, demonstrating or teaching duties within the post holder's area of expertise and under the direct guidance of a member of academic staff.
11. Read academic papers, journals and textbooks to keep abreast of developments in own specialism and related disciplines.
12. Flexibility to travel and undertake work with collaborators based in UK/Europe when required.
13. Travel to and from Wastewater treatment works across Northern Ireland, access to a van will be provided by the University.

Planning and Organising:

1. Plan own day-to-day activity within the framework of the agreed testing programme.
2. Contribute to the planning of projects, reports and publications etc.
3. Plan for the use of research resources, laboratories and workshops where appropriate.
4. Assist with planning in advance to meet deadlines for journal publications and to prepare presentations and papers for conferences.
5. Coordinate and liaise with other members of the research group over work progress.

Resource Management Responsibilities:

1. Ensure research resources are used in the most effective and efficient manner.

2. Provide guidance as required to support staff and any students who may be assisting with research.

Internal and External Relationships:

1. Liaise with research colleagues and support staff on routine matters.
2. Attend and contribute to relevant meetings.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. *Degree in Microbiology, Pharmacy, Microbial Ecology, Biomedical Sciences, Molecular Microbiology, Bioinformatics, Biochemistry or related discipline.
2. *At least 1-year recent relevant research experience in a laboratory setting.
3. Experience in the operation of wastewater autosamplers.
4. Ability to carry out routine administrative tasks associated with the project.
5. Ability to undertake work across all sections of the laboratory
6. Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.
7. Have excellent attention to detail, communication and team-working skills.
8. Ability to present scientific arguments and data in a clear, concise and confident manner.
9. Ability to present regular reports on results to members of the surveillance programme.
10. Ability to work in a disciplined manner within a team environment.
11. Maintain effective communication with line managers and demonstrates a positive attitude to the work of the laboratory and other members of the team.
12. Excellent problem-solving skills.
13. Willing to handle samples, which may contain potentially harmful pathogens.
14. Must be prepared to travel and undertake work with collaborators based in UK/Europe.
15. Willing to work shifts which may be outside normal office hours.
16. A full current driving licence valid for use in the UK or ability to meet the mobility requirements of the post.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Have or about to obtain a Masters or PhD in Microbiology, Pharmacy, Microbial Ecology, Biomedical Sciences, Molecular Microbiology, Bioinformatics, Biochemistry or related discipline.
2. Experience in handling wastewater or environmental samples.
3. Experience in the concentration of viruses from environmental samples.