

Candidate Information

Position:	Research Ethics Officer
School/Department:	Research Governance
Reference:	21/109075
Closing Date:	Monday 16 August 2021
Salary:	£28,331-£32,817 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date:	Thursday 26 August 2021
Duration:	3 years

JOB PURPOSE:

As a member of the Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity Team the post holder will provide administrative support for the development of a robust research ethics service in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS). This will be undertaken in accordance with relevant legislative, ethical frameworks and established good practice in the University. The post holder will be the point of contact for research ethics advice and guidance, both pre and post award, actively engaging with researchers (academic staff and students) through training, meetings, and participating in the decision making process at Research Ethics Committees.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Provide a comprehensive project and professional support service for a diverse range of research ethics queries and subsequent ethical review within the University by a Research Ethics Committee (REC).
2. In collaboration with the Head of Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity contribute to the ongoing development, implementation, maintenance and review of research ethics, including:
 - Advising researchers on the ethical review requirements through a thorough knowledge of the Governance Arrangements for Research Ethics Committees;
 - Supporting Chairs of Research Ethics Committees in the consideration of ethical matters raised through the review of research projects.
 - Provide support, attend and participate in the review of ethics applications as required by the Chairs of each University Faculty REC.
 - Monitor developments within higher education, in particular, around research ethics, ensuring that the requirements of funders, professional bodies and good practice requirements are complied with.
 - Provide practical support to researchers, staff and students, applying to University RECs or the sub-committees thereof, ensuring that ethical issues within research projects are carefully identified and risks mitigated, prior to submitting an application to a REC.
3. Understand and maintain a knowledge base relating to:
 - the Human Tissue Act with a strong focus on the University REC review of studies involving human tissue;
 - the ethical use of animals in research, in particular, around the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986;
 - the Governance Arrangements for Research Ethics Committees, escalating ethical and governance concerns to the Research Governance Managers when appropriate;
 - Government and funder requirements regarding the integrity of research.
4. Continuously evaluate the processes being used to ensure they are both timely and support research within the University. Where directed support the identification of best practices and using this knowledge assist in the preparation of detailed briefing for senior management and key stakeholders. Escalate emerging risks identified through individual projects to the relevant Research Governance Manager who sits on the Committee.
5. Assist in the identification and delivery of training, events and seminars, in particular, when pertinent to research ethics.
6. Contribute to website developments providing researchers, academics and students with information around research ethics, be it human or animal related.

7. Support the provision of assurances to the University regarding compliance with its Regulations, Policies and Procedures through a programme of audit, focusing on Category A projects i.e. those approved by University RECs and/or their subcommittees and studies involving animals.
8. In conjunction with the Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity Team support the University's research integrity agenda helping to ensure relevant University policies and procedures are adhered to in relation to Data Protection, information security, data management, Open Access, and Trusted Research, where relevant.
9. IT literacy and/or up to date knowledge of relevant packages, equipment, hardware, software, databases, information systems and procedures, development and maintenance of websites etc.
10. Travel on occasions to training and work related meetings

Planning and Organising:

1. Plan short-term and long-term activities under the guidance of the Head of Research Governance. Responsible for setting own day-to-day priorities.
2. Ensure that internally and externally imposed deadlines are met in a timely way through appropriate planning.
3. Organise and coordinate management information and provide ad-hoc reports, as required.
4. Responsible for maintaining regular management information reports.

Resource Management Responsibilities:

1. Assist with the development and maintenance of an electronic research ethics system to facilitate the good governance of research within the University.
2. Assist in the development of reporting of budgets for internally and externally funded initiatives, and monitor and report on spend.

Internal and External Relationships:

1. Liaise with other colleagues throughout the Research and Enterprise Directorate.
2. Liaise with staff including Pro-Vice Chancellors, Heads of School, School Managers, Faculty Office Staff, Research Office staff, Finance, Human Resources, Information Services, academic staff and students and others in matters of research ethics.
3. Liaise with external bodies, including the Health Research Authority Research Ethics Committees, health and social care staff, funders, other universities to support good working practices.
4. Assist external regulatory authorities in carrying out their activities in relation to monitoring of the University's research activity and integrity in which it is conducted.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. An honours Degree plus 2 years recent relevant experience, OR Relevant academic or vocational qualifications e.g. 2 A-Levels at Grade D or above, or NVQ 3, or equivalent qualification with typically 4 years recent relevant experience.
2. An understanding of the ethical review processes in the UK and the ability to interpret relevant legislation and guidance documents from, for example, the Health Research Authority.
3. Have knowledge and/or experience of legislation related to research governance, for example operating in compliance with the Human Tissue Act 2004.
4. Ability to work with highly sensitive information and maintaining a high level of confidentiality.
5. Experience of committee servicing, including preparation of agendas, papers and minute taking.
6. Ability to work to a high level of accuracy, prioritise and manage own workload and meet tight deadlines.
7. Ability to build and develop successful relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
8. Use initiative and judgement to resolve daily problems independently or through a support team where appropriate.
9. IT literacy and/or up to date knowledge of relevant packages, equipment, hardware, software, databases, information systems and procedures, and maintenance of websites.
10. Ability to assess and organise resources, and plan and progress work activities, projects, changes within own work area, etc., using initiative and judgement with limited recourse to managers.
11. Flexibility and ability to work irregular hours on an occasional basis as required.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Knowledge and experience of wider University and Higher Education Sector issues.
2. Experience of contributing to, maintaining and working in accordance with a Quality Management System.
3. Experience of developing a website.