

Candidate Information

Position: Research Assistant
School/Department: School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences
Reference: 25/112705
Closing Date: Monday 25 August 2025
Salary: £35,136 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date: Thursday 18 September 2025
Duration: Available until 31 March 2026

JOB PURPOSE:

The post-holder will be a member of a multi-disciplinary research group working on the NICOLA Study which is a large longitudinal study addressing the social and biological determinants of healthy ageing in Northern Ireland. The post will involve working predominantly with the NICOLA Operations Group, Data Manager and Project Officer, in the delivery and support of a portfolio of research that stem from the NICOLA data resource. The post holder will work with other members of the NICOLA team in assisting in Wave 3 data collection, linkage to other data sets, and assisting in the preparation of future grant applications and project outputs. The work will fit within the research strategies of the Centre for Public Health and there will be opportunity to develop the post holder's research skills and to co-author academic papers.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Facilitation of continued research in NICOLA that fits with the overall delivery intent of the study.
2. Ensure all data collected are appropriately stored and managed so that research governance is maintained and data are kept confidential.
3. Observe the confidentiality of participant information at all times, in accordance with the Data Protection Act and to ensure that all study documentation is kept in a clearly trackable system and is stored confidentially.
4. Enter data into the study database and assist in continued quality assurance & curation of the NICOLA data collection and preparation for ongoing public archiving.
5. To promote data harmonisation procedures to ensure NICOLA is harmonised where appropriate with other cohort studies.
6. Develop and contribute to research proposals and funding bids in collaboration with others to ensure continued longevity and growth of the study.
7. Assist in the generation of scientific manuscripts and reports, including the submissions using ResearchFish.
8. Assist the research team in developing material for publication in national and international journals and presentations at national and international conferences.
9. Participate in & contribute to the stakeholder and operational groups in line with strategic decisions.
10. Carry out routine administrative tasks associated with the research project including organisation of appointments for health assessments, distribution of self-completion questionnaires and food frequency questionnaires, liaison with IPSOS, clerical staff and the health assessment team.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. First or upper second class honours degree or equivalent related to a public health science such as biomedical science, epidemiology, medical statistics, psychology, and health economics or in a discipline in a related area of professional practice.
2. Proven ability to work in an multi-disciplinary environment.
3. Experience/interest in geroscience.
4. Proven ability to work in a multi-disciplinary environment as part of a research team.
5. Experience of undertaking a range of community engagement, outreach and dissemination activities.
6. Planning and project management experience to be able to manage a varied workload as well as a number of projects/initiatives simultaneously and to balance competing pressures, deadlines and demands.
7. Proven analytical and organisational capability across a range of functions.

8. Good IT skills and good knowledge of Microsoft Office packages.
9. Excellent time management and organisational skills with the ability to meet tight deadlines and work effectively under pressure.
10. Evidence of ability to deal competently with administrative tasks and contribute to broader management tasks.
11. Understands confidentiality and the how this should be applied to the workplace.
12. Understands research governance guidelines and the need to comply with study protocols.
13. Experience, achievement and growing reputation in the discipline.
14. Excellent written and verbal communication skills including presentation skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders.
15. Proven ability to work collaboratively and independently.
16. Ability to act decisively and confidently.
17. Research interests that are sustainable and align with the aims of the NICOLA study.
18. Willingness to travel to meet the needs of the post.
19. Ability to work outside normal hours when necessary.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. MSc in Public Health, Research Methods or equivalent.
2. Knowledge of relevant public health systems and datasets.
3. Recent experience of conducting research involving older adults.
4. Experience retaining and engaging with participants for research.
5. Experience of using data analysis packages such as SPSS, STATA or MPlus.
6. Understands the concept and advantages and pitfalls of longitudinal research.
7. Experience of public engagement activities and disseminating research to non-academic audiences.
8. Strong commitment to a career in research.