

Candidate Information

Position: Research Assistant (0.8 FTE)
School/Department: School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences
Reference: 25/112776
Closing Date: Monday 8 September 2025
Salary: £35,136 pro rata per annum
Anticipated Interview Date: Thursday 18 September 2025
Duration: Available for 37 months or until 30 September 2028, whichever is soonest

JOB PURPOSE:

The Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine (WWIEM), School of Medicine, Dentistry & Biomedical Sciences (MDBS) at Queen's University Belfast, is seeking to appoint a Research Assistant (Optometrist) to support and promote the practice of clinical research in Ophthalmology and Vision Science related studies.

These studies are led by Professor Noemi Lois and include:

- DAME: a large UK-wide multicentric randomised equivalence trial comparing Anti-Vascular Endothelial Growth factor (anti-VEGF) monotherapy versus treatment with Anti-VEGF followed by subthreshold Micropulse lasEr when the thickness of the central retina goes below 400 microns for the treatment of patients presenting with severe Diabetic Macular Oedema (DMO) (DMO with central retinal thickness of > 400 microns).
- COMBAT: a large UK-wide randomised equivalence trial comparing phacovitrectomy versus vitrectomy for the treatment of non-highly myopic, phakic, rhegmatogenous retinal detachment.

The position is funded by the NIHR and is suited to an ambitious, productive, and collaborative individual who is motivated and able to work within a team, committed to meeting deadlines, with strong organisation skills.

Applications are invited from highly motivated, efficient and organised individuals with a strong commitment to research.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. To be actively involved in supporting the research programme as directed by Prof. Lois and to contribute to the coordination and advancement of studies so that the overall research objectives for the projects are fully realised.
2. To obtain informed consent from participants and facilitate the conducting of study visits in accordance with good clinical practice (GCP) guidelines. This will include performing refractions, functional examinations, and acquiring state-of-the-art retinal images and scans, as needed. Training will be provided if and as required.
3. To implement routine administrative tasks to ensure that research studies are completed efficiently and effectively. For example, contacting participants to arrange study visits, scheduling team meetings, maintaining study files, managing and procuring consumables, and developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) if required.
4. To enter data in study worksheets and electronic case report forms, as required, whilst maintaining participant confidentiality.
5. To regularly attend research team meetings and present progress reports.
6. To participate in local research-related activities such as training sessions, journal clubs, and seminar series.
7. To maintain knowledge of the field of interest and communicate relevant publications to the research group.
8. To contribute to the preparation of research funding applications, ethical approval submissions, publications, and proposals.
9. To assist in conducting clinical audits as necessary as well as monitoring visits related to the research studies.
10. To support the supervision of undergraduate students under the guidance of academic staff, if required.
11. To abide by all QUB and WWIEM policies and to comply with health and safety regulations.
12. The above describes the type of work that is typically required of research staff at this level. It is not expected that anyone carries out all the activities mentioned above; some may carry out additional duties.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Degree in optometry.
2. Registered optometrist (General Optical Council Registered and appropriate professional indemnity cover) or eligibility to be registered to fulfil the requirements of the post.
3. Relevant experience in optometry, post registration.
4. Current optometrist role or having been active as an optometrist within the last 6 months.
5. Fulfilment of Continued Professional Development (CPD) stipulations according to GOC guidelines.
6. Ability to interact with research colleagues and support staff.
7. Ability to analyse and communicate effectively.
8. Ability to work alone and as part of a team as appropriate.
9. Ability to analyse and communicate research data effectively in different settings
10. Evidence of computer literacy competency.
11. Demonstrable intellectual ability.
12. Excellent interpersonal skills.
13. Flexibility to work the hours required for the job.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Previous experience with research or clinical trials in Ophthalmology.
2. Experience in Hospital Optometry or use of advanced imaging and examination techniques.
3. Have undertaken Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training.
4. Knowledge of Research Governance and Ethics.
5. Knowledge of relevant database, statistical and presentation packages.
6. Ability to analyse and communicate research data effectively in different settings.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Informal Enquiries to: Seosamh Rogers s.rogers@qub.ac.uk