

Job Description

Please complete all accessible boxes and refer to the guidance on writing Job Descriptions

Position Details		
Faculty/Professional Support Service	Faculty of Health and Education	
School/Department	School of Psychology	
Division/Section/Unit		
Job Title	Senior Research Assistant	
Grade	6	
Hours of Work	FTE; flexible working including regular early evening participant contact	
Contract Duration (Perm/Fixed Term)	Fixed term - 2 years	
Reports To (Job Title)	Nicky Wright	
Responsible For (Job Title)	N/A	

Principal Accountabilities
The main purpose of this role is to provide research support for the Wirral Child Health and Development Study (WCHADS) contribution to a Wellcome-funded multi-cohort project examining the impact of changes in social media policy on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. The postholder will assist, and where appropriate take the lead, in recruiting and retaining participating families, coordinating repeated online questionnaire assessments, developing and piloting age-appropriate research measures and materials, and supporting dissemination of findings to participants, researchers and other relevant stakeholders. The postholder will co-facilitate a young person advisory group and support the development of research in child and adolescent mental health, development, and digital and social media experiences.

Key Tasks
Research Activities • Undertake longitudinal research with young people aged 9-17 years and their parents/caregivers using repeated online questionnaires and participant engagement methods. • Assist, and where appropriate take the lead, in the recruitment and retention of eligible existing WCHADS participants and younger siblings into the study. • Plan and coordinate repeated waves of young-person and parent/caregiver data collection, including invitations, reminders and participant incentives.

HR Only

- Build and maintain positive relationships with participating families throughout recruitment and follow-up, communicating with young people of different ages in an accessible, sensitive and developmentally appropriate way.
- Prepare and administer participant information, consent/assent procedures and online questionnaires in accordance with approved research and ethical protocols.
- Contribute to the selection, development and piloting of questionnaire measures and study materials for children and young people, including consideration of developmental and age appropriateness.
- Work with young people and families to obtain feedback on questionnaires, participant information and study procedures, and incorporate this feedback into study materials.
- Set up, test and monitor online questionnaires and participant communications, working with the wider project and data teams as appropriate.
- Contact participating families by telephone, email and other agreed methods to support recruitment and retention, including regular early evening telephone contact when families are more likely to be available.
- Respond sensitively to questions or concerns raised by young people and parents/caregivers and support families with participation in the research.
- Maintain accurate and secure records of recruitment, consent, questionnaire completion, participant contact and follow-up.
- Monitor questionnaire responses and participant communications in accordance with the study safeguarding protocol and escalate concerns appropriately to senior members of the research team.
- Plan, prioritise and organise own work or resources, and the work of Research Assistants and students where appropriate, in order to achieve agreed objectives.
- Conduct literature and database searches using standard techniques and methods.
- Write up results of own research and prepare for presentation to research team and relevant stakeholders.
- Contribute to the production of research reports and publications.
- Use initiative and judgement to develop appropriate techniques in order to facilitate research work and resolve problems affecting the achievement of objectives and deadlines.

Liaison and Networking

- Co-facilitate the WCHADS young person advisory group with senior members of the research team, including planning and delivering meetings and activities, supporting young people to contribute their views, and ensuring their feedback informs study materials, procedures, interpretation and dissemination.
- Participate in WCHADS and wider Wellcome-funded project meetings and networks, working collaboratively with researchers across partner institutions.
- Support preparation of participant-facing summaries, study updates and other communications about the research and its findings.
- Present research to the team and in appropriate articles for publication, such as academic/professional journals or conferences.
- Participate in internal and external partnerships and networks in order to aid the dissemination of research findings, to share best practice, and to enhance the reputation of the University.

Team Working

- Actively participate as a member of the research team, offering general help and guidance to others and PhD students who may be assisting with the research project.
 - Work closely with the WCHADS Principal Investigators and the wider project team to achieve the scientific and operational aims of the project.
- Contribute to the development and refinement of study procedures.
- Attend Faculty, Department and Programme meetings/boards as appropriate to proactively contribute to decision making.
 - Introduce new starters to the area, giving training on basic skills and activities to assist their induction to the team.
 - Assist senior staff in the guidance and support of new research assistants or members of staff within the department as appropriate.
 - Supervise the work/projects of taught postgraduate and/or research students as required to support the development of students' research skills.

Special Features

The post requires flexible working, including regular early evening telephone contact with participating The post requires flexible working, including regular early evening telephone contact with participating families at times when they are more likely to be available. The post will involve hybrid working, with attendance at both Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Liverpool as required for project activities.

Miscellaneous

You have a legal duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that you do not endanger yourself or anyone else by your acts or omissions. In addition you must cooperate with the University on health and safety matters and must not interfere or misuse anything provided for health, safety and welfare purposes.

You are responsible for applying the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

You have a responsibility to promote high levels of customer care within your own areas of work.

You are expected to co-operate with the PDR process, engaging in the setting of objectives in order to assist in the monitoring of performance and the development of the individual.

Such other relevant duties commensurate with the grade of the post as may be assigned by the Manager in agreement with you. Such agreement should not be unreasonably withheld.

You may be required to undertake a specific Health & Safety role, commensurate with your grade, to support the University in meeting its statutory Health & Safety obligations. This could include acting as a DSE Assessor, First Aider, Fire Marshall or Departmental Safety Co-ordinator. The allocation of such roles will be subject to the provision of appropriate training and assessment of competence.

You may, with reasonable notice, be required to work at any of the Manchester Metropolitan University sites.

You have the responsibility to engage with the University's commitment to Environmental Sustainability in order to reduce its waste, energy consumption and carbon footprint.

You have the responsibility to engage with the University's commitment to delivering value for money services that optimise the use of resources and therefore should consider this when undertaking all duties and aspects of your role.

Review

This is a description of the job at the time of issue. It is the University's practice periodically to review and update job descriptions to ensure that they accurately reflect the current nature of the job and requirements of the University and to incorporate reasonable changes where required, in consultation with the job holder.

Person Specification

In order to be shortlisted you must demonstrate that you meet all the essential criteria and as many of the desirable criteria as possible. Where we have a large number of applications that meet all of the essential criteria, we will then use the desirable criteria to produce the shortlist.



All disabled candidates who meet the minimum essential criteria will be included on the shortlist.

Selection Criteria				
Attributes		Item	Relevant Criteria	Rank
1	Skills & Abilities	1.1	Ability to undertake research, including preparing and administering research materials, participant recruitment and repeated follow-up.	E
		1.2	Ability to use initiative, sensitivity, creativity and judgement to develop appropriate approaches to participant engagement and to further research activities.	E
2	General & Specialist Knowledge	2.1	Proficiency in standard IT packages and confidence using online questionnaire systems such as Qualtrics or similar software.	E
		2.2		
		2.3	Possess sufficient breadth or depth of knowledge of psychological research and/or child and adolescent mental health and development to work effectively within an established research team.	E
3	Education & Training		Knowledge of research with children and young people, including an understanding of relevant psychological research methods, ethical issues and safeguarding.	D
		3.1	A degree in psychology, together with a relevant postgraduate qualification or relevant research or professional experience.	E
		3.2	Experience or additional training in one or more of the following: longitudinal research; research involving children and young people; child and adolescent mental health; developmental or clinical psychology.	D

4	Relevant Experience	4.1	Experience of: - working with or conducting research involving participants in psychological, mental health, health or related settings. - research data collection and participant recruitment, engagement or retention - communicating sensitively and effectively with children, young people, families and/or other participants, including around potentially sensitive topics - organising and prioritising work independently while working effectively as part of a team - maintaining accurate records and handling confidential or sensitive information appropriately Experience of one or more of the following would be desirable: - research or other relevant work involving children, young people and/or families - child and adolescent mental health or developmental research - participant/public involvement or youth engagement, including facilitating activities or groups with young people - developing, adapting or piloting questionnaires, psychological measures or participant-facing research materials - longitudinal research or repeated follow-up of research participants - online questionnaire platforms such as Qualtrics - contributing to research reports, presentations, conference outputs or publications	E
5	Special Requirements	5.1	Willingness and ability to work flexibly, including regular early evening work to contact and engage participating families at times convenient for them, and to attend Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Liverpool as required for project activities. Ability to handle confidential information appropriately and follow safeguarding, ethical, data protection and research governance procedures.	E
Date of Revision		October 2026		
Key		Rank	E	Essential
			D	Desirable