1495 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Research Fellow (Post-Doctoral Researcher)

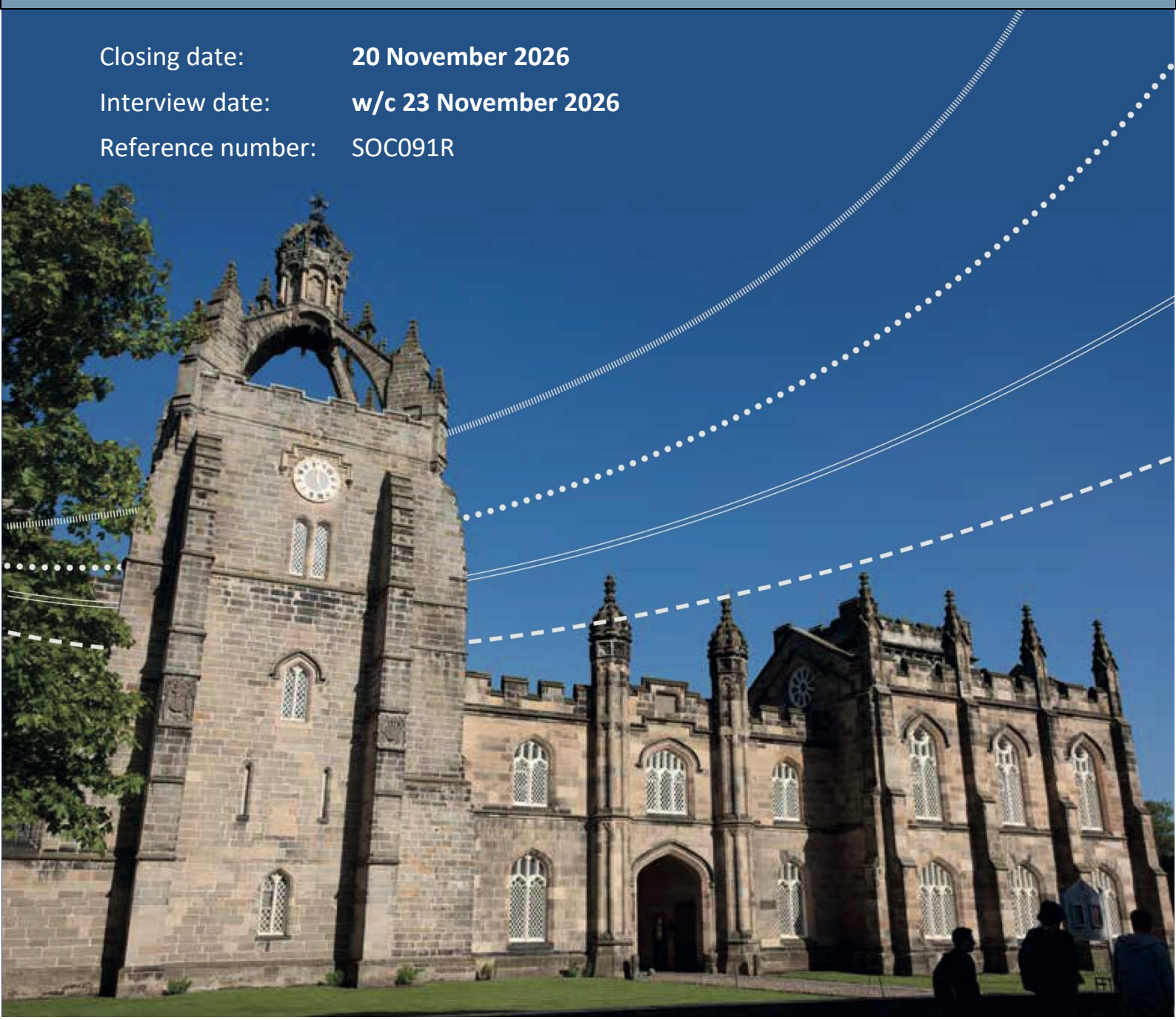
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Closing date: **20 November 2026**

Interview date: **w/c 23 November 2026**

Reference number: SOC091R



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Athena SWAN Bronze Award

Stonewall SCOTLAND DIVERSITY CHAMPION

INTRODUCTION

An opportunity has arisen for the role of Research Fellow (Post-Doctoral Researcher) within the Department of Politics and International Relations, School of Social Science. This is a full-time post for the duration of 18 months.

We are inviting applications for a position as Research Fellow to conduct research as part of the ESRC-funded project, 'The International Politics of Soldier Exchanges: Military Families, States and International Institutions'.

The Research Fellow will work closely with Project Co-Lead Dr Natasha Danilova alongside PI (Dr Jenny Mathers, University of Aberystwyth) and Co-Lead Dr Katerina Krulisova (Nottingham Trent University) on analysing data pertinent to humanitarian soldier exchanges , and experiences of military families in Russia, using available policy-framing documents, media and social media data sourced from the Integrum database and other relevant sources. Tasks include participating in the creation of a dataset of policy documents that govern the reporting on missing and killed soldiers in Russia; contributing to the analysis of the media coverage of military families across traditional and digital media, including soldiers' mothers and wives' protests, and take a lead in the mixed-method analysis of Russia's military families' organising on social media and via other digital means.

The Research Fellow will co-author relevant research outputs, participate in the training of the project's staff, and have an opportunity to present preliminary project findings at relevant workshops and conferences.

The successful candidate will have advanced knowledge and skills in mixed-method, computational/qualitative content analysis (inc. social media data) with expertise on Russia's politics, gender, war, security and society-military relations. They will be comfortable working across policy documents, traditional mass media, and social media sources, and interested in themes such as military families, gender and feminist analysis of conflicts and conflict-mediation, peace work, humanitarian exchanges, and state-society relations in highly militarized autocratic states.

This postdoctoral position requires a doctoral degree (or a thesis submitted and awaiting examination) in Politics, International Relations, Conflict, Peace and Mediation Studies, Russian Studies, History, or a closely related discipline. The successful candidate will demonstrate advanced skills in mixed-method research methodology, advanced writing skills, and a high level of proficiency in the Russian language.

The School is proud to have been awarded the Athena SWAN Silver Award for Equality and Diversity.

More information on the School is available at: [The School of Social Science | The University of Aberdeen]

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JOB DESCRIPTION

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

UKRI ESRC-funded research project, *The International Politics of Soldier Exchange in the Russo-Ukrainian War: Military Families, States and International Institutions* (September 2026 to August 2029).
The project is led by Dr Jenny Mathers (Aberystwyth University) and Dr Katerina Krulisova (Nottingham Trent University). Over the next three years, it will explore the humanitarian practice of soldier exchange through the involvement of military families, particularly the wives and mothers of soldiers, in lobbying their respective governments and engaging with international organisations. The project will shed light on the most obscured aspect of conflict mediation and also the overlooked, gendered dimension of humanitarian work in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine, while also drawing lessons applicable to other conflict settings.

This post is funded through the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- In collaboration with the Project Co-Lead, conduct analysis of policy-framing documents and Russian-speaking media coverage pertinent to military families' concerns and humanitarian exchanges. This entails participating in regular project meetings, and contributing to the discussion of methodological and conceptual aspects of sourcing and analysis relevant empirical data.
- Take a lead in the analysis of social media data using methodological expertise in computational and qualitative content analysis. In collaboration with the project team, develop the indicators and methodological procedures to capture military families' engagement.
- Support the delivery of project outputs and co-write project publications, including academic papers and policy reports.
- Present the findings of the project at workshops and conferences alongside the project team.
- Participate in and contribute to departmental research events and the wider research community.
- Contribute to public engagement events and write for media-based stakeholders
- Undertake relevant research training.
- Undertake other duties as assigned by your line manager, commensurate with the role's grade
- Promote equality of opportunity, and to support and uphold the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion in all aspects of your work.

CANDIDATE BACKGROUND

Applicants should have a PhD in relevant discipline, expertise in Russian politics, gender, feminist analysis as well as methodological proficiency in mixed methods, especially quantitative and qualitative analysis of social media data in addition to fluency in Russian language.

This post is eligible for flexible working arrangement, with at least 50% of time spent in Aberdeen.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Salary will be at the appropriate point on the Grade 6 scale, £39,560 - £40,704 per annum, and negotiable with placement according to qualifications and experience.

Any appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and probation period.

For further information on various staff benefits and policies please visit Working Here | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen

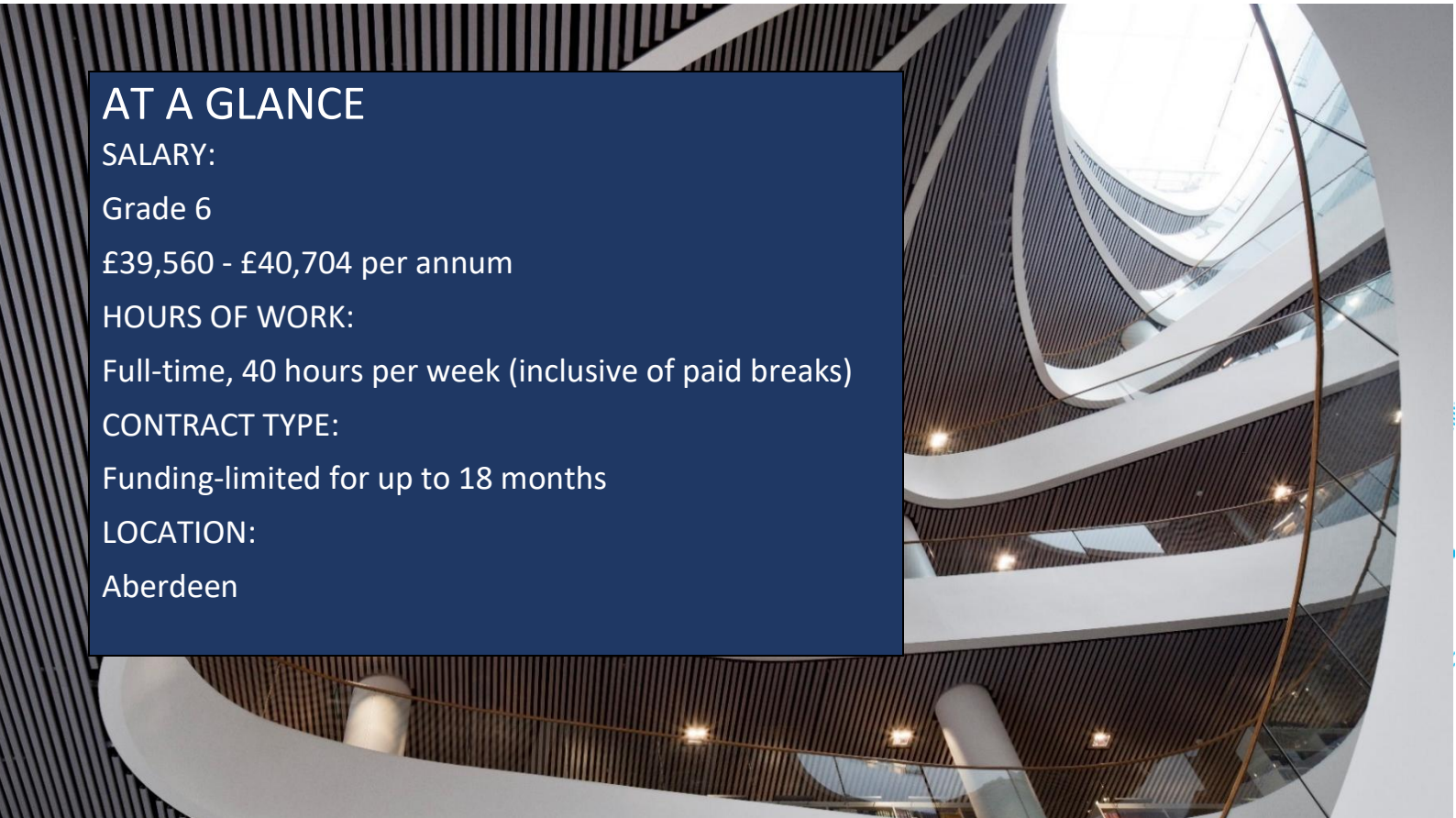
This role is based in the UK and as such the successful candidate will be required to live and work in the UK.

Prior to employment, the successful candidate must be able to demonstrate their right to work in the UK. This role may be eligible for sponsorship under the Skilled Worker route under the UKVI immigration rules but is dependent on factors specific to the candidate and if tradeable points can be used under the rules.

Information on other visa options is available at https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa.

Please do not hesitate to contact Marija Sumetova, HR Adviser (Graduate Trainee) (e-mail: marija.sumetova@abdn.ac.uk) for further information.

The candidate appointed to this post may be eligible for homeworking on an occasional or regular basis. For more information please refer to our Homeworking Policy.



AT A GLANCE

SALARY:

Grade 6

£39,560 - £40,704 per annum

HOURS OF WORK:

Full-time, 40 hours per week (inclusive of paid breaks)

CONTRACT TYPE:

Funding-limited for up to 18 months

LOCATION:

Aberdeen

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Education/Qualifications Academic, technical and professional education and training	• PhD in a relevant field (Political Science; International Relations; Russian Studies; Gender, Conflict and Feminist IR; Peace Studies and Humanitarianism) • Knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods and analysis in Social Sciences	• An emerging track record of articles in peer-reviewed journals in Social Sciences
Work and Other relevant experience (including training) e.g. Specialist knowledge, levels of experience, supervisory experience, research	• Experience of designing and conducting research projects, independently or part of the team • Experience of working with policy-framing documents and collecting and analysing media and social media data • Regional expertise in Russian politics and society	• Moderate to advanced ability to use statistical software and analysis (e.g. Stata, R or Python) • Understanding of data management and research ethics
Personal qualities and abilities e.g. initiative, leadership, ability to work on own or with others, communication skills	• Excellent English-language communication skills, both written and oral. • Able to work independently using own initiative, as well as part of a team. • Ability to work to deadlines, and to deliver high-quality work under pressure.	
Other e.g. special circumstances (if any) appropriate to the role such as unsocial hours, travelling, Gaelic language requirements etc.	• High proficiency in Russian language • Willingness to travel the project's events and present the findings at workshops and seminars	

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open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others

The University of Aberdeen is a broad based, research intensive University, and we put students at the centre of everything we do. Outstanding in a wide range of discipline areas, Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation of research ideas into spin out companies. The University has over 16,000 matriculated students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.



CURRENT CONTEXT

The University continues to uphold the principals of the foundational purpose. We remain committed to delivering positive change both locally and globally. We work together and with our partners in an interdisciplinary way, catalysing world-leading research in our areas of strength: Energy Transition; Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity; Environment and Biodiversity; Data and Artificial Intelligence; and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing. We are investing in our future and have committed £100m to upgrading our campus, including the new fully digitised Science Teaching Hub, the regeneration of the historic King's Quarter and a new Business School building. Our commitment to our students, campus and community has led to us being named a Top 20 UK institution in two major league tables[1] and 4th in the UK for overall student satisfaction[2].

[1] The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023 and the Guardian University Guide 2023
[2] National Student Survey (NSS) 2022

ABERDEEN 2040

On our 525th anniversary as a University we launched **Aberdeen 2040**, our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

- **Inclusive**
  We welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.
- **Interdisciplinary**
  We innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.
- **International**
  We connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.
- **Sustainable**
  We understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances.

  We work responsibly.

OUR EDUCATION

Recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019, we remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research. Our flexible curriculum encourages students to grow as independent learners and therefore to thrive as graduates in the diverse workplaces of the future. Our education is open to all and we are setting ambitious targets to further widen access.

OUR RESEARCH

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen have been at the forefront of innovation and excellence throughout the centuries, generating insights in medicine, science, engineering, law, social sciences, arts and humanities. This research has contributed to five Nobel prizes as well as other awards such as the Queen's Anniversary prize. Our research is intellectually rigorous working within our established areas of excellence as well as new methods of enquiry. We will continue to generate new knowledge addressing economic and societal issues with ambition and imagination, ensuring that it is globally excellent and locally relevant.

INTERNATIONAL

Aberdeen is increasing its international presence, positioning the University as a global organisation and building on established global partnerships around the world, including Qatar, China, North America, Europe. We feature in the top 50 institutions worldwide for international students[3].

[3] Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021



IMPACT

In 2020 the University signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals accord, solidifying our commitment to developing the world in a sustainable way. In 2022 we were listed in the global Top 100 for 8 of these goals[4].

Our highly cited work in zero-carbon technology and global outlooks makes us Scotland's best institution for environmental research[5].

[4] Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2022
5 QS World University Rankings 2022

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THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

The School of Social Science at the University of Aberdeen boasts a rich tradition of teaching and learning, tracing its origins back over 500 years to the University's foundation. It is dedicated to providing high-quality, research-led education at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The School enjoys a growing student population including a healthy postgraduate community.

Comprising three departments—Anthropology, Politics and International Relations, and Sociology—the School of Social Science is supported by over 40 research-active members of staff. This diverse faculty contributes to the vibrant academic environment and innovative research endeavours within the School.

Students hail from across the UK and from various international locations. After graduation, they embark on careers in a wide range of professions, including social work, teaching, the armed forces, journalism, and law. Other career paths followed by graduates include roles such as government officer, international non-governmental officer, lecturer, market researcher, policy advisor, and social researcher.

ABERDEEN AND ABERDEENSHIRE

Scotland's third largest city, Aberdeen sits on the coast between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline. The Aberdeen City region is a can-do place that is actively investing, at scale, in its future.

Renowned as a Global Energy Hub, Aberdeen is a vibrant, entrepreneurial region, home to a unique mix of business opportunities and specialist skills across various sectors including energy, technology, life sciences and food & drink. More than 20% of Scotland's top businesses are located in this region which is taking great strides to ensure that it continues to compete on a world stage. Investments of more than £10 billion of public and private infrastructure is due to be delivered before 2030, marking an exciting time to be part of a genuine world-class location.

Built from sparkling local granite Aberdeen has earned the name of the Silver City. As the energy capital of Europe, Aberdeen nevertheless retains its old-fashioned charm and character making it an attractive place in which to live, work and study. Due to its global business and international energy industry credentials, Aberdeen is well served by local and national transport infrastructure with excellent rail networks that run both North and South of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It also acts as an international travel hub. Flying time to London is just over one hour with regular daily flights and serves international travel to European centres such as Amsterdam (Schiphol) and Paris (Charles de-Gaulle) as well as flights to other European destinations.

The City and the surrounding countryside provide a variety of urban, seaside and country attractions. Aberdeen has first class amenities including His Majesty's Theatre, Music Hall, Art Gallery, the P&J Arena, Museums, and Beach Leisure Centre. The City is framed by its accessible beach front which is within a short walk of the city centre and there are an array of activities available across the region such as hill walking; mountaineering; sailing; surfing; salmon, trout and sea fishing; golf; sailing; surfing and windsurfing. The surrounding countryside, known as Aberdeenshire, is also one of Scotland's most appealing regions. Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms National Park are within easy access of the city, and there are a variety of towns and villages scattered along the coastline.

The city and the surrounding area have ranked consistently highly in nationally recognised quality of life surveys, coming out top 10 as one of the best places to live in Scotland in 2020 in the annual Bank of Scotland survey.

To find out more visit www.visitabdn.com

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University values and celebrates a diverse working and learning environment and recognises the richness this brings, both in terms of contributing to the success of the University and creating safe and inclusive cultures. The University welcomes applications from individuals with diverse lived experiences.

The University supports flexible working, including hybrid working arrangements, and has policies in place to facilitate this where it is appropriate. The policies can be found at https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/flexible-working--5607.php.

The University is committed to progressing gender equality across all its functions and has been a proud member of the Advance HE Athena Swan Charter, achieving an institutional Bronze award, one Silver departmental award for the School of Psychology and eleven departmental Bronze awards. LGBTQ+ equality is championed through the University's membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme, where the University has achieved a Silver award in the Workplace Equality Index. The University is on a continual journey to respond to, and combat, GBV in our community and beyond. We are proud to be working towards the EmilyTest Charter, in partnership with the charity, EmilyTest. We all have a role to play in knowing how to signpost colleagues and students to support for gender-based violence, and training and support is available to all staff on this topic.

The University is signed up to Advance HE's Race Equality Charter, affirming the University's commitment to the Charter's aim of improving the representation, progression and success of staff and students who identify as belonging to a racialised group. The University launched its Antiracism Strategy in 2022, representing a bold framework for progress on race equality. Recognising the importance of addressing the under-representation of racialised groups in the senior team, the University's new Recruitment and Selection Policy embeds specific positive action measures to address this.

The University is delighted to be accredited as a Disability Confident employer and strives to ensure that disabled staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment. The University's Wellbeing Strategy commits it to progressing work to tackle stigma related to mental health and action to promote and improve health and wellbeing for staff and students. Candidates who are British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using contact SCOTLAND-BSL

The University's work on equality, diversity and inclusion is supported by a range of networks and engagement activities, designed to provide safe spaces and raise awareness of the support available and the steps everyone can take to create inclusive campuses.

https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/edi/

How to Apply

Online application forms are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs

The closing date for receipt of applications is **20 November 2026**

Should you wish to make an informal enquiry please contact:

Dr Natasha Danilova
n.danilova@abdn.ac.uk

Please do not send application forms or CVs to Dr Natasha Danilova.

Please include a cover letter with your application.

Please quote reference number SOC091R on all correspondence.