

Job Description

Job title: Research Assistant (Fixed term for 16 months)

Reports to: Dr Simon Dyall

School: Life and Health Sciences

Grade: RU05

FTE: Part time 0.2 FTE

Main purpose of the job:

The position arises from the recent Waterloo Foundation award to Dr Simon Dyall to support the mechanistic sub-study in the COLLABORATE clinical trial. It is expected that the applicants will have an academic background which is complementary to either the project or the subject specialism. We are seeking applications from highly motivated candidates who aspire to developing an academic career.

Main duties and responsibilities:

- contribute to and conduct research and related analysis to support the project
- assist in the dissemination of the research through written and oral means
- take collegiate responsibility for the administration of the project
- evaluate the possible contribution of various research methodologies relevant to the project
- provide assistance to the team and co-ordinate service delivery to project stakeholders
- assist in the organisation of workshops and conferences
- attend project team meetings and contribute to the development of the project
- undertaking any other appropriate duties as requested by the Principal Investigator or Head of Department

Information about the Project

The COLLABORATE Trial is a nationwide multi-centre trial designed to address whether donor human milk (DHM) or preterm formula, when used to supplement insufficient availability of milk from a baby's own mother, affects survival to 34 weeks postmenstrual age without requiring surgery for necrotising enterocolitis. Necrotising enterocolitis is an acquired inflammation of the intestinal tract and a major cause of death and long-term impairment in preterm babies. The trial Includes an embedded sub-study using magnetic resonance imaging to determine whether DHM and preterm formula milk have different effects on brain development and maturation. However, brain development and maturation are strongly influenced by levels of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acid intake. This project will measure the babies blood

levels of these fatty acids to better understand the extent to which they influence brain development. This information will help inform future clinical decisions around the best type of top-up feeds for preterm babies when mother's own milk is not available.

Person Specification

The Person Specification focuses on the knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications required to undertake the role effectively. Please ensure that your application demonstrates how you meet the essential criteria.

Requirements	Criteria
Education and Qualifications	• first degree and Masters in a relevant discipline or equivalent experience
Knowledge and skills	• experience of working within an academic environment • experience of data collection from primary sources • experience of providing support to research projects, ideally in an academic environment • experience of using digital media
Work experience	• experience of collaborative working in an academic/specialist environment • understanding of the specific field of academic research
Communication skills	• the ability to write accurately and clearly for a wide audience • the ability to clearly articulate information that might be complex to a wide audience • excellent communication, organisation and interpersonal skills.
Other requirements	• a methodical approach to work with attention to detail • willingness to undertake CPD and other training as required
Desirable	In addition, the successful candidate may have: • experience of using quantitative/qualitative research • previous experience of project research • experience of working with externally funded research projects • the willingness to develop an academically rounded career.

Additional Information

- The appointment is usually made at the bottom of the range.
- The appointment is offered on a fixed term basis, starting immediately, subject to satisfactory references.
- The annual leave entitlement is 25 days p.a., additionally there are 3 – 4 days when the university closes for Christmas.
- The normal hours of work for full-time staff will be 35 hours per week, plus a lunch break of one hour each day. For part-time staff, hours of work will be pro-rata as specified in the appointment letter.
- Set in a beautiful campus, the University has an attractive range of benefits and you can find out more about them on our website.

Job description prepared by: Simon Dyall
Date: 17 November 2026