Research Associate

Department of Social Policy and Social Work

Closing date: 17 June 2018

Interview date: To be confirmed

Vacancy reference: 6659
We are seeking to appoint an experienced mixed-methods researcher to join an exciting new research programme in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work. The programme, funded under the Department of Education’s Children’s Social Care Innovation Programme, is being conducted by SPSW in collaboration with Oxford University’s Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education.

The research, which will be conducted across multiple sites in England, will involve evaluating innovative approaches to supporting young people in contact with children’s social care. Initially you will be attached to three mixed-methods studies to evaluate a range of interventions for young people on the edge of care, living in care and leaving care, which focus on improving outcomes for young people, including their social networks, support, wellbeing, housing circumstances and participation in education, employment and training.

You will be involved in all aspects of the 24-month research, including contributing to:

- recruitment of participants;
- surveys, interviews and focus groups with practitioners and service-users;
- data entry, analysis and dissemination;
- writing the final report in collaboration with members of the team.

You will join a team of experienced children’s social care researchers within the Child Welfare Research Group at the University of York. You will be based mainly at the University of York and will be expected to travel to conduct research across the North, Midlands, and possibly London. You will have a wide range of inter-personal and research skills, and research experience with young people and/or vulnerable adults. You will be supervised by the principle investigator and supported by a research and participation worker, project manager and project administrator. You will jointly supervise the work of the research and participation worker.

The role is offered on a part-time basis, with opportunities to increase hours at points throughout, should you wish. Job share will be considered.
Main purpose of the role

- To conduct research under the supervision of senior colleagues and to contribute to the production and completion of research
- To assist in the identification and development of potential areas of future research and the development of proposals for independent or collaborative research projects

Key responsibilities

(Role holders will be required to undertake some or all of the duties below)

- To conduct collaborative research projects, duties to include: management of data collection; carrying out interviews, analysis and interpretation of research data; use of appropriate research methods; writing up of research results and dissemination through publications, seminar and conference presentations and public engagement activities;
- To undertake appropriate organisational and administrative activities connected to the research project, including progress reporting and the development of promotional, information or educational material related to the research;
- To develop and initiate collaborative working internally and externally, duties to include: the building of internal contacts and participation in internal networks; collaboration with colleagues on joint projects as required; participation in and identification of external networks in order to share information and identify potential opportunities for collaboration and possible sources of funding; attendance at and contribution to relevant meetings;
- To contribute to the identification of possible new areas of research and assist with the preparation of research proposals and applications to external bodies;
- To provide guidance to other staff and students, as required, as well as coordinating the work of small research teams;
- To assist with undergraduate teaching in own area of expertise.

JOB DESCRIPTION

At a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>£31,604—£38,832 a year (reduced pro rata)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours of work</td>
<td>Part time, 29.60 hours a week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract type</td>
<td>Fixed term for 22 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Based at</td>
<td>Heslington Campus West</td>
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# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First degree in a social or health science subject</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD in relevant subject or equivalent research experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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## Knowledge

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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of a range of qualitative and/or quantitative research methodologies</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of UK social care systems (e.g. social work with children, young people and/or adults)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of issues affecting care experienced or vulnerable young people</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Knowledge of housing policy in relation to vulnerable groups</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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## Skills, abilities and competencies

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<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work collaboratively with service users, practitioners and other researchers</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to work as part of a team and also to work independently using own initiative</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highly developed communication skills to engage effectively with a wide ranging audience, both orally and in writing, using a range of media</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to carry out interviews and focus groups with range of research participants</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skilled in a range of computer packages for data processing and analysis (e.g. SPSS, NVIVO, Atlas Ti, Qualtrics, Excel, ACCESS or equivalents)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to develop research objectives, projects and proposals for own and joint research, with the assistance of a mentor if required</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has research expertise in an area that will complement and enhance the department’s research strategy and goals</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency to conduct individual and collaborative research projects (with supervision)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to manage own workload as well as oversee work of junior/other members of the team</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Ability to oversee/manage data collection procedures (including a team of area based interviewers)</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Ability to write up research work for publication in high profile journals and engage in public dissemination</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Competency to make presentations at conferences or exhibit work in other appropriate events</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of carrying out independent and/or collaborative research</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of designing and/or piloting data collection tools (e.g. surveys, questionnaires, interviews, topic guides etc.)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of conducting research involving children, young people and/or vulnerable adults</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of writing/co-writing up research work for publication</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Experience of co-production or other participatory methods (such as peer research)</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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## Personal attributes

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<tr>
<td>Attention to detail and commitment to high quality</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative ethos</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest in and enthusiasm for the subject matter of the project(s)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Willingness to work proactively with colleagues in other work areas/institutions</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to plan and prioritise own work in order to meet deadlines, including using initiative to plan research</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment to personal development and updating of knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to travel throughout England as required by the project</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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THE DEPARTMENT

Department of Social Policy and Social Work

The Department of Social Policy & Social Work was established in 1966 and has grown over this period to become one of the largest in the world of its type. We currently have 71 (64 FTE) academic staff and a further 26 (19 FTE) staff in managerial, professional and administrative roles. The Department is broken into three constituent parts: the Research and Teaching Unit (RTU) that is responsible for the delivery of degree programmes in Social Policy, Social Work and Public Management; the Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU); and, the Centre for Housing Policy (CHP).

The Department has been fully supported by the University in its aspirations to maintain and develop its research excellence and global reputation, playing an important role in the University as one of nine departments in the Faculty of Social Science. The social sciences at York have a world class standing, and, as noted by the previous Chief Executive of ESRC, bring together one of the greatest concentrations of social science researchers in the UK, one of a handful of social science groupings which has secured two Queen’s Anniversary Prize Awards, one of which was awarded to the Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) in recognition of the pioneering and high impact work it has lead since its formation in 1973. There are excellent connections between Social Policy & Social Work and other Social Science departments such as, Education, Economics, Health Sciences, Law, Management, Politics and Sociology as well as with the Sciences and Humanities.

We are a collegiate and research-intensive Department that also takes teaching and administration very seriously. We celebrated our 50th anniversary in the last academic year and the University has invested considerably in new appointments at all levels over recent years as we look to build on our reputation and expertise in key areas for the next 50 years. This reflects the shared of ambition of the University and the Department to make the University of York one of the world’s leading centres for social policy teaching and research.

Research

The Department has a strong research profile. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) we were placed 3rd overall for Social Work and Social Policy and equal first for research impact, with 54% of our research activity rated as world leading. We were ranked 24th in the world for Social Policy in the 2017 QS World University Rankings. Research income generated by the Department is in excess of £2 million per annum.

Alongside the two major Research Centres (SPRU and CHP), staff working in all parts of the Department are actively engaged in research and scholarship and we have more recently established a number of thematic research centres which operate across the Department including the Centre for Research in Comparative and Global Social Policy (CRCG), the Centre for Childhood, Youth and Family Research, the Child Welfare Research Group, and the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research. As this indicates, our work addresses a wide range of themes, including: children and young people; comparative, global and international social
THE DEPARTMENT

policy; families and children; housing; health and social care; social work; social security; welfare, employment and citizenship. In addition, the Department also works closely with the University of York’s Institute for Effective Education (IEE), Centre for Women’s Studies (CWS), Centre for Urban Studies (CURB) and York Environmental Sustainability Institute (YESI).

Degree Programmes

Although we are a research intensive Department we take our teaching very seriously. We are currently responsible for around 700 FTE students, of whom around half are postgraduates. We currently offer six undergraduate degrees within the Department:

- BA (Hons) Applied Social Science
- BA (Hons) Social Policy, Children & Young People
- BA (Hons) Social Policy, Crime & Criminal Justice
- BA (Hons) Social Policy
- BA (Hons) Social Work
- MSocW (Hons) Social Work

In addition, we contribute to two jointly taught programmes:

- BA (Hons) Criminology (with the Department of Sociology)
- BA (Hons) Social and Political Sciences (with the departments of Politics and Sociology)

We currently offer fourteen taught post-graduate degrees:

- MA Comparative and International Social Policy
- MA in Comparative and International Social Work
- MPA Comparative Applied Social and Public Policy, Evaluation and Research
- MA Global Crime and Justice
- MA Global Social Policy
- MA Public Policy and Management
- MPA Master of Public Administration
- MPA Master of Public Administration - International Development
- MA Social Policy
- MA Social and Public Policy
- MA Social Work
- MA Social Work Practice (Think Ahead)
- MRes Social Policy
- MRes Social Work

In addition, we contribute to the following jointly taught programmes:

- MA in Social Research (delivered through the Research Centre for Social Sciences)

Research degrees:

- MPhil and PhD in Social Policy & Social Work

The delivery of our programmes is underpinned by a number of key partnerships, including the Yorkshire Urban and Rural Teaching Partnership and the White Rose Social Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership.
THE UNIVERSITY

Founded on principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University of York opened in 1963 with just 230 students. In 2018 it is the home of more than 17,000 students across more than 30 academic departments and research centres. Since opening over fifty years ago, we have become one of the world's leading universities and a member of the prestigious Russell Group.

We are consistently recognised as one of the leading Higher Education Institutes and are ranked 16th in the Times & Sunday Times league table (2017). The University of York has won six Times Higher Education (THE) Awards and five Queen’s Anniversary Prizes.

The University is proud of its association with Athena SWAN, holding 12 awards in support of gender equality, representation and success for all, with gold awards for Chemistry and Biology and a University-wide bronze award.

Of 154 universities that took part in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, The University of York ranked 14th overall and 10th for the impact of our research. The University is consistently in the top ten UK research universities and attracts over £60m a year of funding from research alone.

Our vision is to make the University of York a world leader in the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research, the sharing of knowledge by teaching students from varied backgrounds and the application of knowledge for the health, prosperity and well-being of people and society.
Attractive workplace

Centred around the picturesque village of Heslington on the edge of the city of York, our colleges are set in an attractive landscaped campus. York enjoys a safe, friendly atmosphere with facilities including bars, shops, theatres and concert halls all within easy walking distance.

The University has undergone an unprecedented period of expansion and renewal since 2000. We have invested in twenty new buildings on the original campus and have completed the first and second phases of a £750m campus expansion. Our investment in new colleges, teaching and learning spaces, laboratories, research facilities and a new sports village mean there has never been a better time to join us.

During this period of change we’ve worked hard to retain our friendly, informal and collegiate atmosphere, which is important to our core values of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity.

We have a thriving international community and are committed to providing staff moving to York with as much support as possible through our Relocation Package and Welcome Officers.

The University is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community - a place where we can all be ourselves and succeed on merit. We offer a range of family friendly, inclusive employment policies, flexible working arrangements, staff engagement forums, campus facilities and services to support staff from different backgrounds.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages.
THE CITY AND THE REGION

The City of York

Internationally acclaimed for its rich heritage and historic architecture, York’s bustling streets are filled with visitors from all over the world. Within its medieval walls you will find the iconic gothic Minster, Clifford’s Tower and the Shambles – just a few of the many attractions.

But York isn’t just a great place to visit - it’s also a great place to live and work. While nourishing a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, York still maintains the friendly sense of community unique to a small city.

Visit www.visityork.org for more information on the city of York

Shopping, culture and entertainment

York boasts specialist and unique boutiques but also all the high street stores on its busy shopping streets. Alongside them you will find cinemas, theatres, an opera house, art galleries, a vast range of restaurants, live music venues and clubs. York is particularly renowned for its multitude of pubs and bars, from the modern to the medieval.

Housing and schools

Whether you choose to live close to the city, in one of the surrounding villages or further afield, you will find a wide range of housing within comfortable distance of York and the University. For families, the area has a range of excellent schools both in the state and independent sector.

Great location

York is one of Britain’s best-connected cities. Halfway between London and Edinburgh on the East Coast mainline, on intercity trains you can reach London King’s Cross in less than two hours and Edinburgh in two and a half hours. York is also well served by road links, and it is easily accessible from the A1, M1 and the M62.

For those travelling from overseas, Manchester Airport is two hours away and Heathrow Airport just three and a half. Flights from nearby Leeds Bradford Airport provide easy access to mainland Europe. By Eurostar from London St Pancras, Paris is just over six hours away.

Yorkshire

The Lonely Planet guide recently declared Yorkshire the third best region in the world to visit. There is something to cater to every taste, whether it be the rugged landscapes of the Moors or the Dales, the picturesque seaside towns of Scarborough and Robin Hoods Bay, the gothic architecture of Whitby or the vibrancy of cosmopolitan Leeds.
Apply online

- Go to https://jobs.york.ac.uk
- Find this job using reference 6659
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 17 June 2018

What will I need?

You will need to upload:
- your CV
- a letter describing how you meet the requirements of the job

You will also need details of 2 referees.

Help and assistance

Direct any informal queries to jo.dixon@york.ac.uk

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:

recruitment@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324835