Research Associate
Social Policy and Social Work

Closing date: 26 April 2019
Interview date: 9 May 2019
Vacancy reference: 7459
INTRODUCTION

A qualitative research post in the Social Policy Research Unit has become available to take a key role in the delivery of a qualitative study on risk and protective factors associated with mental health and behaviour difficulties in adolescents with autism. The study compliments a cohort study on this topic being carried out by the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London (KCL). Together, the two studies comprise a work package within a wider programme of work on improving mental health outcomes for people with autism spectrum disorders led by Professor Emily Simonoff (KCL) and funded by the National Institute for Health Research’s Programme Grants for Applied Research. Expertise and experience in the following is essential: autism, qualitative research (depth and semi-structured interviewing, face-to-face and telephone data collection, data analysis and associated software (e.g. InVivo)), the measurement of mental health/behaviour problems using standardised measures, doing research with service users/family members, and carrying out research on sensitive topics. In addition, the post requires the ability to lead on the preparation of research reports and academic articles. The study is being led by Professor Beresford, and she will directly supervise this post.
**Condition of appointment**

This role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Consequently, all applicants will be asked to declare both unspent and spent convictions on their application form.

Appointment of the successful candidate will be conditional on a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

**Main purpose of the role**

- To conduct research under the supervision of senior colleagues and to contribute to the production of research
- To assist in the identification and development of potential areas of 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 individual and collaborative research projects, duties to include: analysis and interpretation of research data; use of appropriate research techniques and methods; writing up of research results and dissemination through publications, seminar and conference presentations and public engagement and outreach activities; contributing to the identification of possible new areas of research
- To contribute to the preparation of research proposals and applications to external bodies
- To undertake appropriate organisational and administrative activities connected to the research project, including conference organisation, and the development of promotional or educational material including website maintenance and development
- 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 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.
- Specific responsibilities of the post:
  - Oversee day to day management and delivery of all aspects of the project
  - To liaise with researchers at Kings College London to create a sampling pool, oversee and manage recruitment to the study.
  - Conduct qualitative interviews with parents of adolescents with autism.
  - Lead on all aspects of the analysis of these interviews.
  - Lead on consultation with the Programme’s two User Advisory Panels.
  - Lead on writing contribution for the Programme’s final report to NIHR and academic papers associated with the study.
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>First degree in social science</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>PhD in social science or equivalent experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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**Knowledge**

- Has research expertise in an area that will complement and enhance the department’s research strategy and goals. **Essential**
- Knowledge and interest in issues related to the management, care and support of people with autism, including children and families. **Essential**
- Knowledge of the issues associated with conducting sensitive research **Essential**

**Skills, abilities and competencies**

- Skilled in the conduct of unstructured and semi-structured interviews. **Essential**
- Skilled in approaches to qualitative data analysis and use of software to support such analyses **Essential**
- Highly developed communication skills to engage effectively with a wide ranging audience, both orally and in writing, using a range of media **Essential**
- Ability to write up research work for publication in high profile journals and engage in public dissemination **Essential**
- Ability to develop research objectives, projects and proposals for own and joint research, with the assistance of a mentor if required **Essential**
- Competency to conduct individual and collaborative research projects **Essential**
- Ability to identify sources of funding and contribute to the process of securing funds, with collaborators if required **Essential**
- Competency to make presentations at conferences or exhibit work in other appropriate events **Essential**
- Able to manage time effectively, and prioritise tasks **Essential**
- Team player **Essential**
- Excellent communication skills **Essential**
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Experience

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<tr>
<td>Experience of carrying out both independent and collaborative research</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of writing up research work for publication, including peer-reviewed journals</td>
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<td>Ability to work as part of a team and also to work independently using own initiative</td>
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<td>Experience of measurement of mental health, particularly standardised measures used in child populations.</td>
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<td>Experience of a range of qualitative research techniques and methodologies</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience and understanding of observational cohort study design.</td>
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<td>Experience and understanding of childhood mental health and factors affecting their emergence or development.</td>
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<td>Experience and understanding of mixed methods research design.</td>
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<td>Experience of leading on the preparation of research reports and academic articles</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of conducting research on sensitive topics which may cause interviewee distress</td>
<td>Essential</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>Positive attitude to colleagues and students</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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<td>Ability to plan and prioritise own work in order to meet deadlines, including using initiative to plan research programmes</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment to personal development and updating of knowledge and skills</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 Politics, Sociology, Education, Economics, Health Sciences, Law and Management 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 recently 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 sense of ambition of the University and the Department to make the University of York one of the world’s leading centres for social science and 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 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 & CHP), staff working in all parts of the Department are actively engaged in
THE DEPARTMENT

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, and the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research. Academics in the Department also work closely with the University of York’s active research networks and Centres, such as York’s Africa Research Network, York CrimNet, the newly founded Interdisciplinary Global Development Centre (IGDC), the Centre for Women’s Studies (CWS), the Centre for Urban Studies (CURB), as well as regional and global networks, such as the White Rose University Consortium and the World University Network. As this indicates, our work addresses a wide range of themes, including: crime and applied criminal justice; comparative, global and international social policy; families and children; housing; health and social care; welfare, employment and citizenship.

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, such as BA (Hons) Applied Social Science, BA (Hons) Social Policy, Crime & Criminal Justice, BA (Hons) Social Policy, and two jointly taught programmes, such as BA (Hons) Criminology (with the Department of Sociology). We currently offer fourteen taught postgraduate degrees, such as MA Comparative and International Social Policy, MA Global Crime and Justice, MA Social Policy and MPA Master of Public Administration - International Development. We contribute to the jointly taught MA in Social Research (delivered through the Research Centre for Social Sciences) and have two major 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 2019 it is the home of more than 18,000 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 one of just six post-war universities to have appeared in the world top 100. We were rated 22nd in the 2019 Times & Sunday Times league table. 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 multiple 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 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 7459
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 26 April 2019

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 Bryony Beresford via email at bryony.beresford@york.ac.uk

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

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