

Job Description

Position:	Research Systems and Projects Officer
School/Service:	Standards & Enhancements Office
Reference:	0142-26
Grade:	7
Status:	Permanent
Hours:	36.25
Reporting to:	Assistant Vice Chancellors (REF & Quality)

Main Function of the Position:

To provide a high-quality, specialist research administration service across three key areas: the Research Excellence Framework (REF); the pre-award costing and bid development and post-award administration of externally funded grants and research projects; and the management of the University's internal research funding initiatives. The post-holder will work closely with academic staff, research leads, finance colleagues, and external funding bodies to ensure compliance, accuracy, and timely delivery across all areas of responsibility.

Working with a high degree of autonomy, the post-holder will exercise independent professional judgement in interpreting and applying complex funder regulations, University financial procedures, and REF assessment requirements.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Co-ordinate the collation of REF outputs for submission, checking documentation against REF eligibility rules and formatting requirements, and liaising with the library to verify open access compliance.
2. Act as system administrator for the REF online submission database; run validation reports and conduct pre-submission quality checks to ensure data integrity and compliance with UKRI guidelines.
3. Monitor and log staff output forms throughout the REF cycle, chasing outstanding submissions and maintaining accurate records.
4. Organise and despatch physical outputs to the REF assessment warehouse by specified deadlines, ensuring correct referencing in accordance with REF rules.
5. Respond to post-submission REF audit queries and maintain associated records to audit standard.
6. Provide secretariat support to the REF Strategy Group and REF Outputs Sub-Committee, including scheduling meetings, preparing agendas, taking and circulating minutes, and following up actions.

7. Participate in project management meetings to provide budget information as required.
8. Provide basic financial training to all project account holders, as required, covering the financial aspects and conditions of funding.
9. Administer externally funded research projects from award to close-out, ensuring expenditure is eligible and compliant with funder guidelines. Current and previous funders include UKRI (Research Councils), Innovate UK, the EU Commission, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), the British Academy, the Royal Society, and a range of industrial and charitable funders.
10. Compile and submit financial claims to external funders within specified deadlines, using online portals (e.g. Innovate UK, UKRI/JeS, EU Commission), in accordance with funder and University regulations.
11. Maintain University portal accounts and named-contact registrations for external funding bodies; act as LEAR for EU Commission submissions.
12. Set up and maintain project budgets in line with grant offer letters and stakeholder agreements; liaise with Finance to provide cost codes and project numbers as required.
13. Provide budget holders with accurate financial data, spend analyses, and regulatory guidance on both mainstream and project accounts, on a regular and ad hoc basis.
14. Keep project records to audit standard and respond to external audit queries.
15. Liaise with industrial and organisational partners to establish collaboration agreements, invoice schedules, and reporting arrangements.
16. Maintain invoice schedules and provide requisitioners with the information needed to raise invoices accurately and on time.
17. Compile the financial sections of funding applications and bids, including full economic costing (fEC), salary and on-cost calculations, and eligible overhead rates in accordance with individual funder regulations.
18. Provide guidance to academic staff on funding body requirements, cost eligibility, and bid regulations.
19. Manage the internal sign-off process, circulating bids to the required University signatories (Head of School, Associate Vice-Chancellor, Director of Research, Finance Office) prior to submission.
20. Submit bids and applications via the appropriate online portals (e.g. UKRI/JeS, Innovate UK) or directly to funders.
21. Compile and issue quotations for external income-generating activity, such as testing and consultancy services.

22. Administer the University's internal research award schemes (e.g. Jenkinson, Harrison, ECR, SPRE, and Ryley Awards), including setting up budgets, monitoring spend, and providing financial reports to award holders.
23. Co-ordinate the Ryley Internship scheme: set up time-allocation records for each award, receive and verify timesheets, monitor hours against individual allocations, ensure appropriate approvals are in place, and upload records to the HR SharePoint site for payment processing.
24. Provide secretariat support to internal award panels, including scheduling, preparation of papers, minute-taking, and following up post-meeting actions.
25. Act as officer in attendance (secretary) to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and other relevant research governance groups, preparing agendas and papers, taking and circulating minutes, and maintaining action logs.
26. Maintain accurate and up-to-date records in support of the University's research governance and compliance obligations.
27. Contribute to the continuous improvement of research administration processes, systems, and guidance documentation.
28. Maintain up-to-date knowledge of developments in funder requirements, REF rules, and University research policies through relevant training and professional development.
29. Carry out any other duties commensurate with the grade and nature of the post as reasonably required by the line manager.
30. Ensure a safe working environment and abide by university health and safety policies and practices and to observe the University's Equal Opportunities policy and Dignity at Work policy at all times.
31. Awareness of environmental and sustainability issues and a commitment to the University's associated strategy with respect to the performance / delivery of key responsibilities of the role.
32. Ensure and maintain integrity and confidentiality of data and associated data protection requirements in line with statutory and corporate requirements.

Note:

This is a description of the position requirements as it is presently constituted. It is the University's practice to periodically review job descriptions to ensure that they accurately reflect the position requirements to be performed and if necessary update to incorporate changes were appropriate. The review process will be conducted by the relevant manager in consultation with the post holder.

Please note that this appointment may be subject to Disclosure and Barring Clearance.

Person Specification

Position: Research Systems Officer		Reference: 0142-26	
School/Service: Standards & Enhancements Office		Priority	
Criteria		(1/2)	Method of Assessment
1	Qualifications		
1 a)	Educated to degree level or equivalent, OR a demonstrable equivalent level of knowledge and expertise gained through substantial relevant work experience.	Priority 1	Application Form / Documentation
1 b)	A relevant professional qualification in research administration, finance, or project management (e.g. ARMA membership, AAT, PRINCE2, or similar).	Priority 2	Application Form / Documentation
1 c)	Evidence of continuing professional development relevant to research administration or higher education finance.	Priority 2	Application Form / Documentation
2	Knowledge and Experience		
2 a)	Substantial experience of research administration or research finance within a higher education, public sector, or research organisation.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 b)	Demonstrable working knowledge of major UK research funding bodies and their requirements, including UKRI Research Councils, Innovate UK, and/or the British Academy.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 c)	Experience of compiling, submitting, and managing financial claims to external funders via online portals (e.g. UKRI/JeS, Innovate UK, EU Commission).	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 d)	Experience of setting up and maintaining project budgets and providing financial guidance to budget holders.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 e)	Working knowledge of full economic costing (fEC) methodology and its application in research bid development.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 f)	Experience of or familiarity with the Research Excellence Framework (REF), including submission processes, eligibility rules, and open access requirements.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 g)	Experience of providing secretariat or committee support, including agenda preparation, minute-taking, and action tracking.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
2 h)	Experience of administering internal funding or award schemes, including budget management and payment	Priority 2	Application Form / Interview
2 i)	Knowledge of EU-funded research project administration and relevant compliance requirements (e.g. Horizon, H2020 or successor programmes).	Priority 2	Application Form / Interview
2 j)	Experience of working with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) or other collaborative industry-facing research projects.	Priority 2	Application Form / Interview
2 k)	Familiarity with UKRI's research information systems, including the Funding Service or Je-S portal.	Priority 2	Application Form / Interview
3	Skills and Abilities		

3 a)	Excellent written and oral communication skills, with the ability to convey complex financial and regulatory information clearly to both academic and non-specialist audiences.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview / Task
3 b)	High level of numeracy and financial literacy, with the ability to interpret budgets, produce accurate financial reports, and identify and resolve discrepancies.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview / Task
3 c)	Strong organisational skills, with demonstrable ability to manage a varied workload, prioritise competing demands, and meet multiple deadlines simultaneously.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
3 d)	Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications, particularly Excel (including formulas, pivot tables, and data validation) and Outlook.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview / Task
3 e)	Ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail, maintaining records to audit standard.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
3 f)	Ability to interpret and apply complex regulatory frameworks, funder terms and conditions, and University policies, exercising sound independent judgement.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
3 g)	Experience of using a university finance or management information system (e.g. Agresso, Unit4, Oracle, SAP).	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
3 h)	Ability to work effectively as part of a team, build positive working relationships with a wide range of colleagues and external stakeholders, and represent the University professionally in external meetings.	Priority 1	Application Form / Interview
3 i)	Competence in preparing and maintaining data on shared platforms such as SharePoint or equivalent.	Priority 2	Application Form / Interview
3 j)	Ability to draft clear procedural guidance or process documentation for colleagues and academic staff.	Priority 2	Application Form / Interview / Task
4	Personal Qualities		
4 a)	Self-motivated and able to work proactively with minimal supervision, taking ownership of areas of responsibility and using initiative to resolve problems.	Priority 1	Interview
4 b)	Committed to accuracy, quality, and compliance, with an appreciation of the importance of maintaining audit trails and institutional reputation.	Priority 1	Interview
4 c)	Resilient and adaptable, able to respond constructively to changing priorities, tight deadlines, and evolving funder requirements.	Priority 1	Interview
4 d)	A collaborative and collegiate approach, willing to support colleagues across the research administration team and the wider University.	Priority 1	Interview
4 d)	Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and an ability to work sensitively and effectively with staff at all levels.	Priority 1	Interview
4 d)	Willingness to undertake further training and professional development as required by the role.	Priority 1	Interview

4 d)	An interest in the broader research and academic environment, and an appreciation of the contribution research administration makes to institutional success.	Priority 2	Interview
5	Other		
5 a)	Willing to undertake staff development, which may take place outside the University	Priority 1	Interview
5 b)	Awareness of the principles of the Data Protection Act, Health and Safety, Freedom of Information Act, Prevent and the Bribery Act	Priority 1	Interview
5 c)	Commitment to the University's policy on equal opportunities and diversity	Priority 1	Interview
5 d)	Available to work flexibly and travel as appropriate in order to meet the needs of the services	Priority 1	Interview

Note:

1. **Priority 1** indicates **essential** criterion – an applicant would be unsuccessful if unable to satisfy all Priority 1 criterion.
2. **Priority 2** indicates **desirable** criterion - applicants failing to satisfy a number of these are unlikely to be successful.
3. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure any professional accreditation/membership remains current
4. Employees are expected to have access to suitable IT equipment and broadband internet access at home to work remotely if required