



## Job Description

### Research Assistant

**The roll is 0.6 of full-time and is available for 6-months in the first instance**

**Department of Psychology and Human Development**

#### **About the UCL Institute of Education (IOE)**

The UCL Institute of Education is a world-leading centre for research and teaching in social science and education. In both the 2014 and 2015 QS World University Rankings, the Institute was ranked number one for education worldwide. It was shortlisted for the 'University of the Year' title in the 2014 Times Higher Education (THE) awards. In January 2014, the Institute secured 'outstanding' grades from Ofsted on every criterion for its initial teacher training across primary, secondary and further education programme. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework, 94% of the Institute's research was judged to be world class. Founded in 1902, the Institute currently has more than 8,000 students and 800 staff, and attracts students from over a hundred countries around the world. Since December 2014, the Institute has been a school of University College London, formally called the UCL Institute of Education. [www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe)

#### **About UCL (University College London)**

Founded in 1826, UCL was the first English university established after Oxford and Cambridge, the first to admit students regardless of race, class, religion or gender, and the first to provide systematic teaching of law, architecture and medicine. We are among the world's top universities, as reflected by performance in a range of international rankings and tables. UCL currently has over 35,000 students from 150 countries and over 11,000 employees. Our annual income is over £1bn.





## Department of Psychology and Human Development

You will be a member of the Department of Psychology and Human Development, which brings together staff with research and teaching interests in psychological approaches to learning, development and teaching from early childhood to adulthood.

Members of the Department specialise in research on learning, development and teaching in formal and informal settings, such as schools and homes. They also contribute to understanding of and provision for children and adults with neurodevelopmental disorder and special educational needs.

## The Project

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is the most prevalent neurodevelopmental disorder during childhood. Despite evidence of a co-occurring motor impairment in this group, little is known about the motor system in ADHD. Using a cross-syndrome comparison with Williams syndrome (WS), who also show impaired attention and motor skills, we will detail the syndrome-specific motor profile of ADHD. We will also address the developmental consequences of impaired motor skills by establishing the relationship between the motor system and navigation (assessed using virtual reality) in ADHD. We predict that navigation will be impaired in both ADHD and WS, but that developmental pathways will differ for each group. This highlights the importance of understanding the interacting processes involved in building developmental pathways. A better understanding of the motor systems in ADHD and WS will enable a tailored approach to motor skills training for these groups.

You will run studies with participants with ADHD, WS, and typically developing participants to compare motor development, spatial navigation, and their associations across these three groups and you will be part of a strong team of experts in neurodevelopmental disorders. Emily Farran has a strong track record in research on spatial abilities, including virtual reality navigation. Annette Karmiloff-Smith is an internationally acclaimed scholar who is one of the most influential leaders in the field. Elisabeth Hill is an internationally recognised expert in motor development.

## **The Role and its Responsibilities**

You will assess participants' abilities using questionnaire measures, standardized measures of IQ and motor performance, additional motor measures, and our portable virtual reality system for measuring navigation performance (the required virtual environments have already been built).

You will be required to:

1. Contribute to the day-to-day management of the project, in line with the agreed objectives of the project to ensure that goals are achieved.
2. Recruit participants from charities, schools and parent groups and schedule their testing sessions.
3. Assess participants' IQ and motor performance using questionnaire and standardized measures and assess navigation performance using our portable virtual reality system.
4. Create excel and spss spreadsheets of dependent variables (scores, response times and other variables of interest), and analyse appropriately.
5. Draft parent news reports.

As participants will live in many parts of the UK, you may be required to travel long distances when necessary. A driving license will be an advantage.

## **Selection Criteria**

### **Essential**

1. A degree or equivalent qualification in Psychology or a related subject.
2. Experience in conducting Psychology-based studies and standard data coding.
3. Experience of statistical analysis using SPSS.
4. The ability to write clearly and concisely.

5. The ability to work independently, as well as proven ability to work collaboratively as part of a team.

## **Desirable**

6. Experience of working sensitively with special populations and their families.
7. Experience of reporting findings of assessments to parents and in parent-friendly publications.
8. Experience in conducting standardised assessments and other cognitive measures.
9. Experience of working with individuals with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and / or individuals with Williams syndrome specifically.
10. A PhD or equivalent qualification in Psychology or a related subject (this would bring the appointment to a Grade 7 appointment).

You will be responsible to Prof. Emily Farran in the Department of Psychology and Human Development (PHD) at the UCL Institute of Education (UCL IOE), Professor Annette Karmiloff-Smith at Birkbeck, University of London, Professor Elisabeth Hill, Goldsmith's University and ultimately, to the Director of the IOE.

You are welcome to contact Prof. Emily Farran e-mail [e.farran@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:e.farran@ioe.ac.uk) if you would like to have further information or would like to discuss the post.

## **The Appointment**

In view of the nature of the work involved, any offer of appointment will be conditional on a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The appointment is 0.6 of full-time and is for 6 months in the first instance.

Annual salary will be on Grade 6, in the range pro-rata (0.6) of £24,298 to £28,982 plus £2,948 London Allowance per annum.

If you meet the desirable selection criterion of holding a PhD or equivalent qualification in Psychology or a related subject this would bring the appointment to a Grade 7 salary range.

## **The Appointment Process**

There is no application form. Candidates are asked to provide an up to date curriculum vitae and a statement of how their qualifications and experience fit the role description and person specification for the post.

Applications should be emailed to Prof Emily Farran at [e.farran@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:e.farran@ucl.ac.uk) by 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

## **Interviews**

It is hoped to hold interviews on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

Please note that if you are shortlisted and are unable to attend on the interview date, regrettably it will normally not be possible to offer you an alternative date.

1<sup>st</sup> April 2016