



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Postgraduate Research Fellow, Faculty of Medicine and Health



Salary: Grade 6 (£26,495 - £31,604 p.a.), Grade 7 (£32,548 - £38,833 p.a.)

Reference: MHCTR1124

Closing date: 19 September 2018

Fixed Funding for 32 months (Grade 6) or 24 months (Grade 7)

Postgraduate Research Fellow

School of Medicine, Clinical Trials Research Unit

Are you interested in applying your statistical and/or mathematical training to medicine? Would you like to be involved in a prestigious methodology grant on a clinical trial design to evaluate complex interventions in institutional settings? Would you like to work within a highly successful, 'impressive and inspirational' clinical trials unit, joining a team of over 30 medical statisticians?

We are looking to appoint a highly talented and enthusiastic individual who is keen to pursue a career in medical statistics. You will work on the MRC Methodology Research Programme funded project: "Open-cohort designs for cluster-randomised trials in institutional settings". This programme of statistical research is bolted on to a cluster-randomised trial (DCM-EPIC) evaluating the effectiveness/cost-effectiveness of a quality improvement intervention, directed at staff in care homes, to enable person-centred care for people with dementia and their carers. It aims to develop novel statistical methods to design and analyse clinical trials and consists of 5 work packages: i) literature review, ii) user engagement, iii) statistical development, iv) statistical evaluation and v) practical guidance.

You will be responsible for performing a literature review, proposing statistical models, comparing methods for handling missing data, exploring methods for incorporating length of stay, developing sample size formulae, a simulation study and contributing to practical guidance and research outputs. Specialist methodological expertise will be provided by the Principal Investigator, Dr Rebecca Walwyn (Leeds), Co-Investigators, Dr Andrew Copas (UCL), Professor Amanda Farrin (Leeds) and Professor Claire Surr (Leeds). In addition, you may make a small contribution to the teaching programme, providing specialist advice to medical statisticians in the Clinical Trials Research Unit.

What does the role entail?

As a Grade 6 Research Fellow, you will work closely with the statistical team and your main duties will include:

- Undertaking training to complement your existing postgraduate qualification;
- Attending and preparing reports for regular meetings with other members of the project team to report progress, agree future work and exchange ideas;
- Reviewing the statistical and clinical literatures, updating an existing review, and collating examples of open-cohort cluster-randomised trials;



- Assisting with proposing statistical models, methods for handling missing data, methods for incorporating the effect of length of stay in addition to time-from-randomisation, and developing methods for calculating sample size;
- With guidance, exploring the conditions in which open-cohort designs are superior to closed-cohort and cross-sectional cluster-randomised designs using simulation;
- Under supervision, developing guidance on how to design, analyse and report open-cohort cluster randomised trials;
- Preparing written papers for publication in journals with international standing, as lead/support author, and presentations to disseminate the research findings to statistical and clinical communities at national and international level leading to high quality publications in peer-reviewed journals;
- Contributing to formal teaching programmes and, as the post-holder becomes more experienced, providing informal guidance to colleagues in the Institute;
- Working effectively and positively as a team player to help achieve the broader strategic development of the aims and objectives of the Institute;
- Occasional travel to meet with/work with collaborators in London.

As a Grade 7 Research Fellow your main duties will include:

- Managing aspects of the project, taking responsibility for day-to-day running of your areas of the project and co-ordinating work with other internal and external collaborators;
- Attending and preparing reports for regular meetings with other members of the project team to report progress, agree future work and exchange ideas;
- Reviewing the statistical and clinical literatures, updating an existing review, and collating examples of open-cohort cluster-randomised trials;
- Proposing statistical models, methods for handling missing data, methods for incorporating the effect of length of stay in addition to time from randomisation, and developing methods for calculating sample size;
- Exploring the conditions in which open-cohort designs are superior to closed-cohort and cross-sectional cluster-randomised designs using simulation;
- Developing guidance on how to design, analyse and report open-cohort cluster randomised trials;
- Preparing written papers for publication in journals with international standing, as lead/support author, and presentations to disseminate the research findings to statistical and clinical communities at national and international level leading to high quality publications in peer-reviewed journals;



- Attending relevant training courses;
- Contributing to formal teaching programmes and, as the post-holder becomes more experienced, providing informal guidance to colleagues in the Institute;
- Working effectively and positively as a team player to help achieve the broader strategic development of the aims and objectives of the Institute;
- Occasional travel to meet with/work with collaborators in London.

These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

What will you bring to the role?

As a Grade 6 Research Fellow you will have:

- A postgraduate qualification in a related discipline (e.g. statistics, operational research, applied mathematics) **or** experience in statistics at MSc level;
- Willingness and eligibility to study for a full-time PhD in medical statistics (fees will be waived for staff) **or** undertake a tailored programme of MSc modules and other internally and externally run courses that complement your existing qualifications.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including presentation skills, and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders;
- Familiarity with statistical software packages, such as STATA, R or SAS;
- Ability to write to the standard required for research reports and/or international publications;
- Good time management and organisation skills with the ability to demonstrate initiative and solve problems;
- Ability to work under pressure to tight deadlines and maintain attention to detail;
- The appropriate skills to participate in internal and external networks.

You may also have:

- Knowledge and experience in evaluation of clinical trials;
- Experience of literature reviewing, conducting simulation studies, performing multilevel modelling, handling missing data or calculating sample size;
- Experience of publishing papers in peer-reviewed journals;
- Experience of presenting statistical methods at international conferences.



As a Grade 7 Research Fellow you will have:

- A PhD or equivalent qualification/experience in statistics or a related discipline (e.g. applied mathematics, operational research)
- Experience in medical statistics, including evaluation of clinical trials;
- Experience of conducting literature reviews and simulation studies, multilevel modelling, methods for handling missing data and calculating sample size;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including presentation skills, and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders;
- Familiarity with statistical software packages, such as STATA, R or SAS;
- A proven ability to write to the standard required for research reports and/or international publications (e.g. via peer-reviewed publications);
- Experience of working independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team;
- Good time management and organisation skills with the ability to demonstrate initiative and solve problems;
- Ability to work under pressure to tight deadlines and maintain attention to detail;
- The appropriate skills to develop internal and external networks.

You may also have:

- Relevant work experience in medical statistics;
- Experience of collaborative research or working in a multidisciplinary team;
- Experience of writing papers in the evaluation of complex interventions using cluster-randomised trials;
- Knowledge of the cluster-randomised trial literature, in particular an awareness of the characteristics of the conventional design options;
- Knowledge of the epidemiological literature on open- or dynamic- cohorts;
- The skills to build relationships for future activities, identify funding sources or generate research income; or a national reputation for work in a related area.

How to apply

You can apply for this role online; more guidance can be found on our [How to Apply](#) information. Applications should be submitted by **23.59** (GMT) on the advertised closing date.

Interviews are anticipated to take place on 1 October 2018.



Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, please contact:

Rebecca Walwyn, Principal Statistician

Tel: +44 (0)113 343 5485

Email: R.E.A.Walwyn@leeds.ac.uk

Additional information

Find out more about the [Clinical Trials Research Unit](#).

Find out more about the [Faculty of Medicine and Health](#).

Find out more about [Athena Swan](#) in the Faculty of Medicine and Health.

Working at Leeds

You can find out more about our generous benefits package and more about what it is like to work at the University and live in the Leeds area in our [Working at Leeds](#) information.

Candidates with disabilities

Information for candidates with disabilities, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found in our [Accessibility](#) information or by getting in touch with us at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk.

Criminal record information

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position, however, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.



Any offer of appointment will be accordance with our [Criminal Records policy](#). You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records information](#).

