



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

**Aviation Assurance Manager, National Centre for Atmospheric Science,
Faculty of Environment**



Salary: Grade 8 (£47,874 – £56,921 p.a. depending on experience)

Reporting to: Alan Woolley

Reference: ENVNC1032

Interviews are expected to take place from 15 May 2025

Location: FAAM Airborne Laboratory, Cranfield University (with scope for hybrid working)

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements.

Aviation Assurance Manager, National Centre for Atmospheric Science, Faculty of Environment

Overview of the Role

Do you have experience working in quality assurance? Are you looking for an exciting opportunity to play a central role in developing and implementing new approaches to quality assurance? Would you relish the chance to contribute to the successful operation of a unique atmospheric science research facility? If so, we want to hear from you!

The [FAAM Airborne Laboratory](#) (FAAM) is a world-class research facility dedicated to the advancement of atmospheric science. We operate a specially adapted research aircraft managed by a unique team of scientists, engineers, flight technicians and project managers, providing a complete package of support for the scientific community.

The capabilities are extensively reliant on state-of-the-art scientific instrumentation, often uniquely customised for use on the aircraft, which is deployed throughout the world. All the science instrumentation and electronics is certified under CAA regulations to be safe for aviation applications in a safety-critical environment.

We operate within a complex contractual and regulatory environment. The aircraft is owned by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI); funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC); leased by the University of Leeds; certified, maintained and operated by a commercial organisation; and managed on behalf of all parties by the National Centre for Atmospheric Science (NCAS). FAAM is currently undertaking a £49m Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU) to deliver a range of upgrades and enhancements to the aircraft, instrumentation, ground-based infrastructure and team, extending its useful operating life to 2040.

As FAAM Aviation Assurance Manager, you will lead and further develop the assurance of the FAAM Enterprise. Working closely with the Head of FAAM and supported by NERC-appointed aviation safety and assurance specialists, you will provide assurance to the aircraft owners and funders, aircraft leaseholder, and users. You will work with commercial partners including the type certificate holders, maintenance providers and aircraft operators. You will be a key member of the FAAM leadership team and will work with colleagues who specialise in operations,



instrumentation, technical coordination, safety and environmental sustainability, to develop and manage assurance in every aspect of FAAM operations, including the £49m Mid-Life Upgrade Project.

The role provides an exciting opportunity for an experienced quality assurance professional to identify, develop and implement quality assurance systems, processes and standards across all areas of FAAM operations. You will have excellent facilitation, diplomacy and communication skills, and will be adept at nurturing and maintaining a complex network of stakeholders. In return, we offer a friendly and supportive working environment where you will be actively encouraged to develop your professional skills and competencies.

Although the role will be employed by the University of Leeds, it will be wholly embedded within the FAAM team based at Cranfield University.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Representing the FAAM Enterprise at the UKRI-NERC Aviation Assurance Panel (AAP), leading FAAM's submission including written documentation, presentations and verbal delivery to a range of senior stakeholders;
- Ensuring that assurance and quality management is embedded across all areas of FAAM operations;
- With support from NERC appointed aviation safety and assurance specialists, lead the management, development and presentation of FAAM assurance, based on a safety case methodology, addressing all aspects of FAAM;
- Work with enterprise stakeholders to develop and record structures and processes that meet the needs and expectations of the UKRI-NERC AAP;
- Developing and conducting internal audits to all areas of FAAM operations from an assurance perspective, making recommendations and supporting colleagues in delivering on those recommendations;
- Delivering a summary of FAAM assurance to NCAS and the University of Leeds to ensure their understanding and confidence of FAAM and its assurance processes;
- Working with NERC appointed aviation safety and assurance specialists to continually update and evaluate assurance activities and provision for FAAM operation in the changing aviation and research environment;
- Leading the annual UKRI-NERC assurance reporting process, demonstrating delivery against agreed targets as a part of NERC's large research infrastructure;



- Understanding and monitoring the legal and regulatory framework that FAAM operates the aircraft within;
- Assuring FAAM staff competence against a pre-determined framework, including ensuring all new starters receive appropriate induction training.

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.

Qualifications and skills

Essential

- Proven experience as a quality assurance manager or relevant role;
- Thorough knowledge of methods of quality assurance and standards (e.g., ISO9001, ISO45001);
- Understanding of risk management principles and techniques to support an operations safety case;
- A background in aviation, aviation related industry or other highly regulated industry requiring high levels of assurance;
- The ability to be firm in conviction, promote a “just and fair culture” and advance an open and non-punitive atmosphere for reporting, promoting a culture of respect through effective use of support and challenge;
- Excellent facilitation, diplomacy and communication skills, with a proven ability to work well both individually and in a team including working with a variety of complex stakeholders.

Desirable

- Lead auditor (or equivalent) qualification (e.g., IRCA certified);
- Sound knowledge of UK CAA aviation regulatory frameworks, including aircraft certification and flight test;
- Qualification/experience as a risk/safety manager, especially with an operations/safety case focus.

Additional information

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, from 1 January 2021 you will require permission to work in the UK. This will normally be in the form of a visa but, if you are an EEA/Swiss citizen and resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, this may be your passport or status under the EU Settlement Scheme.



Please note that this post may be suitable for sponsorship under the Skilled Worker visa route but first-time applicants might need to qualify for salary concessions. For more information please visit: www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa

For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Find out more about the [FAAM Airborne Laboratory](#)

Find out more about the [National Centre for Atmospheric Science](#) and [its relationship with the School of Earth and Environment](#)

Find out more about the [School of Earth and Environment](#)

Find out more about the [Faculty of Environment](#)

Find out more about our [Research and associated facilities](#).

Find out more about [Equality](#) in the Faculty.

Working at Leeds

We are a campus-based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life and from across the world. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education. Within the Faculty of Environment, we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people; people who identify as LGBT+; and people with disabilities. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

We are keen to improve the diversity of our workforce and especially want to hear from candidates including women and those from minoritised communities.



Please let us know if you have any accessibility requirements that we can provide support with to enable you to fully participate in the recruitment process.

The Faculty of Environment has received a prestigious Athena SWAN silver award from [Advance HE](#), the national body that promotes equality in the higher education sector. This award represents the combined efforts of all schools in the Faculty and shows the positive actions we have taken to ensure that our policies, processes and ethos all promote an equal and inclusive environment for work and study.

Candidates with disabilities

Information for candidates with disabilities, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found on our [Accessibility](#) information page or by getting in touch with us at foehr@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 in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information page.

