



## THE POST

<b>College:</b>	<b>College of Humanities (Archaeology)</b>
<b>Post:</b>	<b>Postdoctoral Research Associate</b>
<b>Reference No:</b>	<b>P60139</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>HERA:</b>	<b>ARF</b>
<b>Reporting To:</b>	<b>Head of Department</b>
<b>Responsible For:</b>	<b>N/A</b>

The above full-time post is available from 1 April 2019 on a fixed-term basis (11 months) in the College of Humanities.

### **Job Description**

#### **Main purpose of the job:**

Easter is the most important event in the Christian calendar, yet astonishingly little is known about the festival's genesis, when it first appeared in Britain, the origins of its component customs - e.g. the gifting of eggs purportedly delivered by the Easter 'bunny' - or how they coalesced to form current practices. Equally obscure are the timing and circumstance by which animals that have come to be associated with the festival - notably the brown hare and the rabbit but also the chicken - arrived in Britain.

The customs, traditions and animals of Easter are all alien to Britain, but they are viewed positively because they arrived in the long-forgotten past. In general, the term 'alien' is attached negatively to introduced animals, people, or religious ideologies, whereas 'native' is perceived as positive and 'natural'. These perceptions are often adopted blindly (and often erroneously) as the foundation for decision-making both at a personal level and more broadly in science and policy, in particular that relating to biodiversity, without recognizing they may be the product of shifting baselines. Easter is therefore an excellent high-profile example to highlight the impact of shifting baselines and challenge negative attitudes to cultural and biological 'aliens'.

Our team on the AHRC-funded project "The Easter E.g. - Shifting Baselines and Changing Perceptions of Biological and Cultural 'Aliens'" is achieving this by integrating evidence from anthropology, (zoo)archaeology, (art) history, evolutionary biology, law, historical linguistics, natural history and religious studies.

The Department of Archaeology is leading the zooarchaeological component of the research and seeks to appoint a PDRA to have specific responsibility for the collection and analysis of ancient and modern lagomorph specimens. The person appointed will be expected to plan and conduct work in close collaboration with the project's geneticists (University of Oxford), linguists (University of Leicester) and wider research network. They will be responsible for writing up their work for publication. The person appointed will be expected to use their initiative and creativity to identify areas for research development and extend their research portfolio.

#### **Main duties and accountabilities:**

1. To undertake research as appropriate to the field of study including:

- Leading an integrated programme of lagomorph-centred analysis, bringing together zooarchaeology, genetics and isotope analysis.
  - Visiting collections of ancient/modern material, both in the UK and abroad, to collect samples and data for the project.
  - Analysing and interpreting the results of own research and generating original ideas based on outcomes;
  - Using new research techniques and methods;
  - Using initiative and creativity to identify areas for research, developing new research methods and extending the research portfolio;
  - Using creativity to analyse and interpret research data and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
  - Writing up research work for publication;
  - Developing research objectives and proposals for own or joint research;
  - Making presentations at national and international conferences and similar events;
  - Dealing with problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines.
2. To contribute to teaching and to be involved in the assessment of student knowledge including assisting in the supervision of student projects and in the development of student research skills.
  3. To work in collaboration with colleagues as appropriate to the field of study including:
    - Contributing to collaborative decision making within the research group;
    - To work collaboratively with the project's PhD student and the PDRA's/Co-Is from the collaborating institutions (in particular the geneticists from Oxford) to produce full-suite analyses on single ancient/modern lagomorph specimens.
    - Contributing to the production of collaborative research reports and publications.
    - Preparing papers and presenting information on research progress and outcomes to bodies supervising research, e.g. steering groups.
  4. To communicate complex information, orally, in writing and electronically.
  5. To prepare proposals and applications to external bodies, e.g. for funding and contractual purposes
  6. To contribute to the planning of research projects.
  7. To use research resources, laboratories and workshops as appropriate and to take responsibility for reducing hazards and for the health and safety of others. Where appropriate, will also be responsible for conducting risk assessments.
  8. To monitor research budgets as appropriate.
  9. To engage in continuous professional development and to be responsible for continually updating knowledge and understanding in field of study or specialism and for developing skills.

This job description summarises the main duties and accountabilities of the post and is not comprehensive: the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties of similar level and responsibility. Please visit the Human Resources website to view the Research Fellow role profiles.

### **Person Specification**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Attainments/Qualifications	PhD (must be completed) or equivalent qualification/experience in a related field of study.	
Skills and Understanding	Proficiency in zooarchaeological analysis. Sufficient knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques to work within established research programmes.	Evidence of research activity and published research. Competency in isotope preparation and analysis Ability to foster a research culture and commitment to learn in others
Prior Experience	Practical experience of applying the specialist skills and	Experience of working within interdisciplinary research teams.

	<p>approaches and techniques required for the role</p> <p>Experience in use of research methodologies and techniques to work within area</p> <p>Understanding of health and safety legislation</p>	<p>Experience of working within a commercial zooarchaeological setting.</p> <p>Experience of undergraduate teaching</p>
Behavioural Characteristics	<p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills.</p> <p>Able to communicate material of a specialist or highly technical nature.</p> <p>Able to manage research and administrative activities and to balance the competing pressures of research and administrative demands and deadlines.</p> <p>Able to liaise with colleagues and students.</p> <p>Able to build contacts and participate in internal and external networks for the exchange of information and collaboration.</p> <p>Able to identify potential sources of funding.</p> <p>Actively participate as a member of a research team</p> <p>Engage in continuous professional development.</p> <p>Understand equal opportunity issues as they may impact on areas of research content</p> <p>Where appropriate to the role, willingness to undergo training in order to conduct risk assessments</p>	
Circumstances	Willing to work flexibly to achieve project demands	

**Informal Enquiries**

Before submitting an application you may wish to discuss the post further by contacting Naomi Sykes, Lawrence Professor of Archaeology, email [N.sykes@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:N.sykes@exeter.ac.uk).