



THE POST

College:	College of Social Sciences and International Studies
Post:	Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Islamic Studies (Shiism/Islamic legal studies) – ERC Advanced “Law and Learning in Shiite Islam” (LAWALISI) project (two posts both 1.0FTE for 2 years fixed term).
Reference No:	P63743
Grade:	F
Reporting To:	Professor Robert Gleave

The above full-time posts are available on a fixed term basis from 1st April 2019 (or as soon as possible thereafter) for a period of 2 years in the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, College of Social Sciences and International Studies (SSIS) at the University of Exeter.

Combining world-class research with very high levels of student satisfaction the University of Exeter a member of the Russell Group and now have over 19,000 students. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) Exeter was ranked 16th nationally with 98% of its research rated as being of international quality.

The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (IAIS), in which this post is located, has the strongest REF2014 results of any Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies department in the UK, establishing Exeter as the leader in the field in terms of research quality, impact and environment. Our international profile as a pioneering and multidisciplinary institute continues to grow. For details: www.exeter.ac.uk/iais

The Centre for the Study of Islam (CSI), the cluster of Islamic Studies-facing academics in IAIS, has an international reputation for excellence in scholarship and research, and has attracted significant research funding for its projects. Its current director is Professor Sajjad Rizvi.

Job Description

The Law and Learning in Shiite Islam (LAWALISI) is a five-year ERC Advanced project funded through the European Research Council (<http://www.lawalisi.eu>). Professor Robert Gleave, based in the IAIS, is the Principal Investigator on this project, and will lead a team of researchers examining the development of Imami Shi'i legal thinking from the earliest times to the contemporary period. In the first two years of the project, the focus has been on the development of Imami Shi'i legal thinking in the context of the wider development and elaboration of Islamic law, from the earliest time to the fifteenth century CE. These two posts are for the second phase of the project, examining the period from the 15th century to the contemporary period. Whilst research proposals on any topic related to late classical (15th century onwards) Imami jurisprudence are welcome, we particularly welcome proposals which link with the following two research themes:

- 1. Educational Institutions and Imami Shiite Law:** this research theme examines how Imami Shiite educational institutions (in particular the seminary or *hawza*) have taught jurisprudence and law, and how that has contributed to the expertise and authority of legal experts in Shiite communities in the late classical period.
- 2. Law and Politics in late Classical Imami Shiism:** This research theme examines how developments in late classical and contemporary Shiite jurisprudence intersect with, and reflect on, political power; whilst the project does not focus on political contemporary expression of political Shiism, the contribution of Imami Shiite Jurisprudence to the development of political ideas (from the 15th century to the contemporary period) are included in this research theme.

These constitute two of the 5 research themes to be explored in the LAWALISI project. The Research Fellows will coordinate the project's activities in one of these two areas (workshops, conferences, fieldtrips and production of scholarly outputs), creating and consolidating existing international networks of scholars. The overall emphasis of the project is develop a nuanced and sophisticated account of the development of Imami Shi'i law, and place this within the wide developments of Islamic legal thought and practice. The project aims to explore how contemporary scholarship on development of Islamic law and legal institutions can be enriched by increased attention to the history and dynamics of Imami Shi'i legal thinking.

The Research Fellows will be working within Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, working with Professor Gleave, and making a day-to-day contribution to the Institute's research environment. The Research Fellow will play a full role in the Centre for the Study of Islam, attending its seminars and events. Although there are no official teaching duties attached to the post, there may be opportunities to teach undergraduate and postgraduate students. The Research Fellows will, with Professor Gleave, develop a programme of collaborative and individual research within the parameters of the LAWALISI project.

The Research Fellow should have completed a PhD in a relevant field (or demonstrate equivalent postdoctoral standing) before commencing employment (students who are near completion of their PhD may apply, but the thesis needs to be completed before commencement of employment). As a Research Fellow, you will need demonstrate your ability to work both independently and as part of a team; students in the final stages of their doctoral studies may apply, but will need to demonstrate that their doctoral research and thesis preparation will be completed by the time the post starts in October 2018 (or as soon as possible thereafter). The Research Fellow will need to demonstrate appropriate research skills (including proficiency in at least one relevant research language). Researchers in the relevant area of Shi'i law are encouraged to apply; also, since the Project aims to place the history of Shi'i law within the broader Islamic legal studies field, scholars in cognate disciplines of Islamic legal studies are also potential candidates for the position. Researchers should demonstrate in their application an awareness of the Project's intellectual direction, and an enthusiasm to fulfil the Project's aims. A good publications record, appropriate to your career stage, would be an advantage, as would experience of tuition and lecture presentations.

Main purpose of the job:

To carry out research, both collaboratively and independently as part of the LAWALISI project, under the guidance of Professor Robert Gleave, contribute to fulfilling the aims and objectives of the LAWALISI project, and producing high-quality research publications, preferably in one or more of the relevant LAWALISI research themes.

Main duties and accountabilities:

1. To undertake research as appropriate to the field of study including:
 - Conducting individual or collaborative research;
 - Extending, transforming and applying knowledge acquired from scholarship to research and appropriate external activities;
 - Writing or contributing to publications or disseminating research findings using media appropriate to the discipline;
 - Making presentations at conferences or exhibiting work in other appropriate events;
 - Assessing, interpreting and evaluating outcomes of research;
 - Developing new concepts and ideas to extend intellectual understanding;
 - Resolving problems of meeting research objectives and deadlines;
 - Developing research objectives, projects and proposals;
 - Acting as principal investigator on research projects, where appropriate;
 - Identifying sources of funding and contributing to the process of securing funds;
 - Developing ideas for generating income and promoting research area beyond the period of the LAWALISI project;
 - Developing ideas for application of research outcomes;
 - Deciding on research programmes and methodologies, often in collaboration with colleagues and sometimes subject to the approval of the head of the research programme on fundamental issues.
2. To contribute to teaching and learning programmes in the School and to supervise postgraduate research students, as appropriate.
3. To act as research team leader, in time, including:

- Mentoring colleagues with less experience and advising on their professional development;
 - Coaching and supporting colleagues in developing their research techniques;
 - Supervising the work of others, for example in research teams or projects;
 - Developing productive working relationships with other members of staff;
 - Co-ordinating the work of colleagues to ensure equitable access to resources and facilities;
 - Dealing with standard problems and help colleagues to resolve their concerns about progress in research.
4. To routinely communicate complex and conceptual ideas to those with limited knowledge as well as to peers using high level skills and a range of media and to present the results of scientific research to sponsors and at conferences.
5. To plan, co-ordinate and implement research programmes including:
- Managing the use of research resources and ensure that effective use is made of them;
 - Managing research budgets;
 - Helping to plan and implement commercial and consultancy activities;
 - Planning and managing own consultancy assignments.

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

Competency	Essential	Desirable
Attainments/Qualifications	Be a nationally recognised authority in the subject area. PhD (or be nearing completion) or equivalent qualification/experience in a related field of study.	
Skills and Understanding	Possess sufficient specialist knowledge in the discipline to develop research programmes and methodologies. Record of research output in nationally recognised publications.	
Prior Experience	Experience of teaching at undergraduate level. Experience of managing research projects and research teams. Successful in obtaining grant funding.	Experience of postgraduate teaching and supervision. Experience of acting as principal investigator on research projects.
Behavioural Characteristics	Excellent written and verbal communication skills. Able to communicate complex and conceptual ideas to a range of groups. Evidence of the ability to collaborate actively within the Institution and externally to complete research projects and advance thinking. Able to participate in and develop external networks. Able to identify sources of funding, generate income, obtain consultancy projects, or build relationships for future activities.	

	Able to balance the pressures of research, administrative demands and competing deadlines.	
Circumstances		

Applications must completed online through:

1. an accurately completed online form
2. a single PDF attachment, uploaded on consisting of a CV (maximum 4 pages), a letter of application (maximum 2 pages) and a project proposal (maximum 2 pages)

The project proposal should demonstrate how your contribution to the project will facilitate the networking between the network menu.

Informal Enquiries

Before submitting an application, you may wish to discuss the post further by contacting Professor Robert Gleave, Principal Investigator of the LAWALISI project, telephone (01392 264035) email lawalisi@exeter.ac.uk. He can also be contacted via the LAWALISI Research Officer, Ms Sarah Wood (s.a.wood2@exeter.ac.uk)

Terms & Conditions

Our Terms and Conditions of Employment can be viewed [here](#).

Further Information

Please see our [website](#) for further information on working at the University of Exeter.