



## THE POST

<b>College:</b>	<b>College of Medicine &amp; Health</b>
<b>Post:</b>	<b>Postdoctoral Research Associate / Graduate Research Assistant</b>
<b>Reference No:</b>	<b>P70030</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>E (for PDRA, from sp26)</b>
<b>HERA:</b>	<b>ARF</b>
<b>Reporting To:</b>	<b>Prof Rob Anderson</b>
<b>Responsible For:</b>	<b>N/A</b>

The above post is available from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 for 40 months (until end of May 2024) in the College of Medicine and Health, and may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis.

### **Job Description**

We are seeking up to 1.0 FTE experienced systematic reviewers to join a small, focussed team that conducts responsive, high quality systematic reviews to address NHS priorities relating to the organisation and delivery of health and social care services. These reviews are directly commissioned by the NIHR's Health Services and Delivery Research programme. This work represents an exciting opportunity to conduct innovative evidence syntheses which will directly influence NHS or social care and/or inform the research that is commissioned by the National Institute of Health Research.

See: <http://medicine.exeter.ac.uk/esmi/workstreams/exeterhsdrevidencesynthesiscentre/>

The Exeter HS&DR Evidence Synthesis Centre is co-led by Prof. Rob Anderson, and Prof. Jo Thompson Coon. As well as working closely with other members of the HS&DR review Centre within ESMI, the job will involve close collaboration with health service, social care and other topic experts and methods advisers in the South West and nationally. Each review will be conducted by a team of two reviewers, an information specialist, a senior academic lead plus methods or topic specialist advisers where needed. We will produce up to five HS&DR reviews/scoping reports each year. The reviews are likely to require the synthesis of both quantitative and qualitative evidence, and both published research studies, 'grey literature' and other non-research evidence and therefore may present the opportunity to develop and use innovative methods.

### **ESMI Research Group:**

The post will be based within the Medical School's established systematic review and evidence synthesis research group – ESMI - which has been conducting systematic reviews, health technology assessments, and model-based cost-effectiveness analyses for NICE and other national policy makers since 2001. ESMI – *Evidence Synthesis & Modelling for Health Improvement* - is a vibrant and multidisciplinary research group of experienced systematic reviewers, mathematical modellers, information specialists and health economists. We are internationally recognised pioneers in applying realist review methods to different health care topics (see the Realist Hive blog: <http://medicine.exeter.ac.uk/esmi/workstreams/realisthive/>) and also hosts one of two national (NIHR) [Policy Research Programme Evidence Review Facilities](#)

### **Institute of Health Research and PenARC**

The ESMI research group sits within the Medical School's highly successful and growing Institute of Health Research (<http://medicine.exeter.ac.uk/research/healthresearch/>). The research groups within the Institute focus on research that reflects the needs of patients and of health service and social care providers, based on partnership with the NHS and other public bodies and a strong commitment to public involvement. Much of the research within the Institute has links to or is supported by the ARC South West Peninsula (PenARC). PenARC undertakes high-quality applied health research focused on the needs of patients and supports the translation of research evidence into practice in the NHS. This includes evidence synthesis on topics identified by clinicians, NHS managers or others in the South West (these are conducted by the Evidence Synthesis Team based within ESMI).

**Main purpose of the job:**

- To design and conduct systematic reviews to high (publishable) standards and to agreed deadlines, in order to inform national health policy and NHS service design and management, working closely with other members of the HS&DR evidence synthesis team within ESMI;
- To act as lead reviewer or second reviewer, working closely with the information specialist, service topic/content experts, NHS managers/staff, and methods experts where necessary;
- To write up the systematic reviews clearly for a variety of audiences – HS&DR programme, NHS, academic (i.e. journal articles), policy makers, and the general public;
- To present the findings of the reviews, or the required innovations in review methods, at academic conferences or to other relevant audiences or stakeholders; and
- To organise expert stakeholder/adviser engagement meetings or other complementary engagement activities where necessary.

**Other duties and accountabilities which may be required at PDRA level of appointment:**

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

**Other duties and accountabilities which may be required at GRA level of appointment:**

1. To support research activity under the direction of the principal investigator as appropriate to the research project. Responsibilities may include:
  - Undertaking a broad range of basic research activity according to the nature of the programme of research. For example, protocol development, screening data extraction and study quality assessment, conducting stakeholder or patient engagement, developing creative dissemination materials, or presenting to policy makers and health or social care commissioners;
  - Maintaining databases, keeping accurate written and computerised records and ensuring data is stored securely and managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act;
  - Conducting literature and database searches as required;
  - Writing up the results of own research;
  - Contributing to the production of research reports and publications;
  - Presenting information on research progress and outcomes to bodies supervising research, e.g. steering groups, sponsors or members of research groups;
  - Assisting in the preparation of papers or reports for steering groups and other bodies;
  - Providing administrative support to the principal investigator and other project researchers as required;
  - Making use of standard research techniques and methods;
  - Analysing and interpreting the results of own research and generating original ideas based on outcomes;
  - Contributing to the planning of future research projects.
2. To support teaching activity by assisting in the supervision of student projects and providing limited supervision or instruction to classes, if required.
3. To liaise with members of the research team and other colleagues as appropriate to the research project.
4. To establish internal and external contacts to develop knowledge and understanding and form networks for future collaboration.
5. To plan own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed programme of research and co-ordinate own work with that of others in the group to avoid conflict or duplication of effort.
6. To use research resources, laboratories and workshops as appropriate and to adhere to safety procedures as appropriate. This may include wearing personal protective equipment, conducting risk assessments, reducing hazards and being responsible for the health and safety of others.
7. To engage in continuous professional development and to be responsible for continually updating own knowledge and understanding in field of study or specialism and for developing own 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.

**Person Specification for those applying to PDRA level appointment**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Attainments/Qualifications	PhD (or nearing completion) or equivalent qualification/experience in a related field of study.	Research-related Masters degree in a health-related or social science/business/management subject.

<p>Skills and Understanding</p>	<p>Sufficient knowledge and skills in the conduct and successful delivery of high quality systematic reviews.</p> <p>Knowledge of applied research relating to the analysis of health, health care, health policy or management.</p>	<p>Understanding of the current organisation, commissioning and/or policies affecting the NHS.</p> <p>Understanding of issues relating to management and service design/change in health and/or social care.</p> <p>Evidence of research activity and published research.</p> <p>Understanding of health and safety legislation</p>
<p>Prior Experience</p>	<p>Experience of completing and publishing high quality systematic review(s) (including contributing to searching, screening, data extraction, quality assessment, and synthesis)</p> <p>Understanding of health and safety legislation</p>	<p>Experience of leading systematic review teams and projects.</p> <p>Experience of conducting applied health care or health services/management/policy research projects</p> <p>Experience of undergraduate teaching</p>
<p>Behavioural Characteristics</p>	<p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills.</p> <p>Able to use and/or learn IT tools for online or remote working and meetings</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> <p>Able to actively participate as a member of a research team</p> <p>An understanding of the importance of equality and diversity within an organisation and a commitment to helping create an inclusive culture.</p>	
Circumstances	Willing to work flexibly to achieve project demands	

**Person Specification for those applying to GRA level appointment**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Attainments/Qualifications	Educated to first degree level in a in a health-related or social science subject, or equivalent experience.	Research-related Masters degree in a health-related or social science subject.
Skills and Understanding	Possess sufficient breadth or depth of knowledge in the conduct and delivery of systematic reviews, and of health research methods.	An understanding of key issues that shape the organisation or delivery health care or social care
Prior Experience	<p>Experience conducting at least one systematic review to a high standard</p> <p>Understanding of health and safety legislation.</p>	An understanding of the value and nature of both quantitative and qualitative research method.
Behavioural Characteristics	<p>Ability to maintain accurate records.</p> <p>Ability to organise and prioritise own research work within the project framework.</p> <p>Good written and verbal communication skills.</p> <p>Computer literate, including able to use and/or learn IT tools for online or remote working and meetings</p> <p>Good analytical skills.</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>Actively participate as a member of a research team</p> <p>Engage in continuous professional</p>	

	<p>development.</p> <p>Understand equal opportunity issues as they may impact on areas of research content</p> <p>An understanding of the importance of equality and diversity within an organisation and a commitment to helping create an inclusive culture.</p>	
Circumstances	<p>Willing to work flexibly to achieve project demands.</p> <p>Willingness to gain an understanding of health and safety legislation.</p>	

**Informal Enquiries**

Before submitting an application you may wish to discuss the post further by contacting Prof. Rob Anderson, telephone 01392 726085, email [r.anderson@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:r.anderson@exeter.ac.uk)) or Prof Jo Thompson Coon (e-mail [J.Thompson-Coon@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.Thompson-Coon@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.