# Job description and selection criteria

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| Job title | Research Contracts Specialist (Medical Sciences) |
| Division | University Administration and Services |
| Department  | Research Services  |
| Location | Joint Research Office, Churchill Hospital, Headington |
| Grade and salary | Grade 7: £29,249 - £35,938 per annum |
| Hours | Full time  |
| Contract type | 3 permanent posts and 1 fixed-term post (3 years) |
| Reporting to | **Head of Research Services, Medical Sciences** |
| Vacancy reference | 103036 |
| Additional information |  |

## Introduction

### The University

The University of Oxford is a complex and stimulating organisation, which enjoys an international reputation as a world-class centre of excellence in research and teaching. It employs over 10,000 staff and has a student population of over 21,000.

Most staff are directly appointed and managed by one of the University’s 130 departments or other units within a highly devolved operational structure - this includes 5,900 ‘academic-related’ staff (postgraduate research, computing, senior library, and administrative staff) and 2,820 ‘support’ staff (including clerical, library, technical, and manual staff). There are also over 1,600 academic staff (professors, readers, lecturers), whose appointments are in the main overseen by a combination of broader divisional and local faculty board/departmental structures. Academics are generally all also employed by one of the 38 constituent colleges of the University as well as by the central University itself.

Our annual income in 2009/10 was £879.8m. Oxford is one of Europe's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities: income from external research contracts exceeds £367m p.a., and more than 60 spin-off companies have been created.

For more information please visit [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)

### University Administration and Services

University Administration and Services (UAS) is the collective term for the central administrative departments of the University. UAS comprises structures to:

* support the University’s core academic purposes of teaching, learning and research;
* ensure the University can meet the requirements of government, funding bodies and other external agencies; and
* facilitate the attainment of the objectives set out in the University’s Strategic Plan.

The offices of the UAS sections are spread across the city centre, with the main University Offices located in Wellington Square.

For more information please visit: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

### Research Services Department

Research Services works in partnership with academic divisions, Departments/faculties, University Administration and Services (UAS) and Isis Innovation Ltd to support Oxford’s researchers and facilitate world-class research and knowledge exchange.

The Medical Sciences divisional team, based at the University’s Old Road Campus site, is the largest within Research Services. In 2009/10 Research Services supported the Medical Sciences Division to attract more than £230m in external research income and researchers to lodge in excess of 1064 grant applications; accept 831 awards (grants and contracts) and negotiate almost 1800 research-related contracts.

Teamwork is the key to Research Services’ success, not only internally but also in partnership with researchers and Divisional/Department administrators and with colleagues in Research Accounts (in the Finance Division). The scale, complexity, and growth of research in the Medical Sciences Division provides an exciting and challenging environment for the Research Services divisional team.

For more information please visit [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/rso](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/rso)

## Job Description

### Overview of the role

The Research Contracts Specialist (Medical Sciences) will be part of a team involved in negotiating research related contracts (such as agreements covering clinical trials, research funding, collaboration, studentships, consultancy, confidentiality, software, materials transfer etc.).

You will review agreements drafted by third parties and propose changes, where necessary, to ensure the terms fall within the University’s legal, policy and risk management framework, liaising with researchers and department administrators throughout this process to keep them informed and seek their advice as to risks and benefits; provide advice to researchers, department administrators and others on contractual issues associated with research and the exploitation of intellectual property; and contribute to ongoing improvements in customer service. You will develop and maintain good personal networks with counterparts in organisations with which Oxford collaborates, including other UK universities, US universities, research councils and industry, problem solve with them, and use, where appropriate, template or customised agreements or clauses to expedite contract execution.

Initially, you will spend a large part of your time assisting senior colleagues in the section with their day to day duties associated with research contracts administration, as well as training in the theoretical and practical aspects of the work. On the job training amongst the research contracts officers will be an important element of the first few months’ experience. However, once you have acquired sufficient experience and knowledge of University policy and practices in this area, you will be expected very quickly to take responsibility for negotiating and managing contracts for a specific portfolio of Clinical Departments, reporting back to your line manager and senior colleagues as necessary.

You will report to a Senior Research Contracts Specialist, Research Services, Medical Sciences Division and be based in the Joint Research Office (JRO), established by the University and the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust to bring together the teams responsible for the central administrative functions required to facilitate successful biomedical and translational research. The JRO is at the Churchill Hospital, Headington, Oxford.

### Responsibilities/duties

### A list of core duties follows. Research contract management (items 1 and 2) will form a substantial part of the work of the postholder, but other responsibilities (items 3 to 9) may be assigned to the appointees, depending upon their aptitude and experience.

1. Scrutinising and negotiating research related contracts on behalf of the University. Liaising with researchers and department administrators to keep them informed and seek their advice as to risks and benefits. Where appropriate, working with the Legal Services Office on the drafting of contractual language to meet the needs of particular negotiations or seeking advice on particular issues. Keeping comprehensive records of each stage of the negotiations. Seeking advice from senior colleagues where appropriate. Taking part in regular team meetings to review cases, and monitor caseload and completion times. Preparing the final briefing note requesting signature of agreements, setting out key terms and any risks or issues.

2. Answering enquiries about the University’s research related policies and procedures, and providing advice to researchers, departmental administrators and sponsors on funding and contractual matters (in relation, for example, to the costing and pricing of research at Oxford, IP management, etc).

3. Liaising with the Research Grants specialists on questions relating to research grant applications and the terms/conditions set down by funding agencies.

4. Handling the set-up of awards on the University’s financial system, working with Research Accounts as appropriate on post-award issues.

5. Following procedures for the effective management of IP arising out of research contracts, and liaising with Isis Innovation Limited, the University’s technology transfer company, in connection with the commercialisation of the University’s research.

6. Arranging meetings, preparing agenda papers, recording minutes and producing action notes in connection with the work of the office.

7. Dealing with enquiries and requests for information and preparing draft correspondence on behalf of the Director (or his deputies) or the Head of Research Services, Medical Sciences as required.

8. Contributing to the development of University policy as it relates to the external funding of research, and drafting briefing notes for senior officers and/or papers for the University’s governing bodies in this area.

9. Other duties as assigned by the Director (or his deputies) or the Head of Research Services, Medical Sciences when the need arises.

## Selection criteria

The experience and skills for the post needs to be demonstrated in the context of the background and role description above.

**Essential**

The person appointed must demonstrate that they have:

1. University degree (or equivalent)
2. An ability to analyse, interpret and respond effectively to detailed written documentation.
3. An organized, unflappable, yet flexible approach to working to deadlines under pressure.
4. Ability to communicate very effectively to team members, clients and senior colleagues in writing and orally in English to a very high standard and to present a coherent argument (much of the work will involve correspondence with academics and with representatives of external organizations, such as multi‑national companies which sponsor research at the University).
5. Proven ability to prioritise a heavy and varied workload and to keep track of a large volume of ongoing projects.
6. An aptitude for solving problems.
7. An ability to work well as part of a small close-knit team.
8. Sound IT skills are required, and the successful applicant should be able to use email, word processing packages, spreadsheets, the internet, and computer databases. Training will be given in the specific packages to be used (e.g. MATRIX, RESOLVE) but applicants must have the flexibility and willingness to gain new IT skills.
9. Some prior administrative experience.

**Desirable**

1. A scientific background or qualification in the Life or Medical Sciences.
2. Knowledge of Higher Education administration, including an understanding of research grant funding in UK universities and ideally experience in the administration of research grants or contracts
3. Experience of working with budgets and (following training) the facility to cost and price research using Full Economic Costing methodologies.

## Working at the University of Oxford

For further information about working at Oxford, please see: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/professionalandmanagement/>

Subject to HMRC regulation and the availability of funding, a relocation allowance may be available.

## How to apply

If you consider that you meet the selection criteria, click on the **Apply Now** button on the ‘Job Details’ page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a user. You will then be required to complete a number of screens with your application details, relating to your skills and experience. When prompted, please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them at this stage. You will also be required to upload a CV and supporting statement. The supporting statement should describe what you have been doing over at least the last 10 years.  This may have been employment, education, or you may have taken time away from these activities in order to raise a family, care for a dependant, or travel for example.  Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that that you meet the selection criteria outlined above and we are happy to consider evidence of transferable skills or experience which you may have gained outside the context of paid employment or education.

Please save all uploaded documents to show your name and the document type.

All applications must be received by **midday** on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk

To return to the online application at any stage, please click on the following link [www.recruit.ox.ac.uk](http://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk)

Please note that you will be notified of the progress of your application by automatic e-mails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail regularly to ensure that you receive all e-mails**

**Information for Priority Candidates***A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment owing to the fact that he or she has been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing departments and this letter* ***must*** *be attached to any application they submit.*

**The priority application date for this post is** 16 July 2012

**Full details of the priority application process are available at:** [**http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/red/redproc/prioritycandidate**](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/red/redproc/prioritycandidate)

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