



Job Description



Summary

Job title	Research Contracts Specialist
Division	University Administration and Services
Department	Research Services
Location	5 Worcester Street, Oxford, OX1 2BX
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024 - £44, 263 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Multiple posts (permanent)
Reporting to	Research Contracts Manager
Vacancy reference	167951

The role

The Research Contracts Specialist will be part of the Research Funding and Contracts team. The team is responsible for negotiating and managing research-related contractual arrangements (such as research funding, research collaboration, studentships, confidentiality, materials transfer, amongst others), for departments across the University. Information about Research Services can be found further down in this document.

Research Contracts Specialists play an important research facilitation role by assisting in enabling research activities and securing research funding. You will be responsible for putting in place contractual arrangements appropriate for specific situations by liaising with departmental administrators, researchers and external collaborators/funders and acquiring the necessary information to understand the context of a situation and to assess potential requirements. As a result, you will then, review and/or draft the appropriate contracts and carry out the negotiation, if needed, in order to ensure that the terms fall within the University's legal, policy and risk management framework and protect the researcher's interests.

You will be responsible for taking decisions and making judgments based on your assessment of the circumstances with a view to justifying the contractual terms you have agreed with a counterparty to University authorised signatories.

You will need to develop and maintain good personal networks with counterparts in organisations with which Oxford collaborates, including Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, universities worldwide, 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 learning from senior colleagues in the team and assisting with their day to day duties, as well as undertaking training in the legal, theoretical and practical aspects of the work.



On the job training amongst your peers will be an important element of the first few months' experience. However, once you have acquired sufficient experience and knowledge of University policy in this area, you will be expected to very quickly take responsibility for independently negotiating and managing your own contracts portfolio, reporting back as necessary.

You will be line managed by, and report to, a Research Contracts Manager within the team.

The team is based in 5 Worcester Street, central Oxford, and operates a hybrid working policy based on 50% on-site working.

Responsibilities

1. Reviewing and drafting research contracts on behalf of the University. This will include working with contracts proposed by third parties or the appropriate standard templates, and proposing changes, when required, to comply with the University's policies. When necessary, working with the Legal Services Office on complex drafting of contractual language to meet the needs of particular negotiations and/or with Oxford University Innovation Limited, the University's technology transfer company, for the effective management of Intellectual Property.
2. Conducting negotiations with third parties either by email exchange, over the phone or face to face to seek, clarify or defend the required changes to the contract. Discussing and seeking advice from senior colleagues during the negotiation process, when necessary.
3. Liaising with researchers and department administrators to gather the information required, keep them informed throughout the contractual life-cycle and advise them on the risks and benefits (in relation, for example, to publication provisions, intellectual property arrangements, confidentiality, termination and financial risks, etc.). Answering enquiries about the University's research related policies and procedures.
4. Keeping comprehensive records of each stage of the negotiations and all information related to the specific case. Preparing the final briefing note requesting signature of agreements by a University authorised signatory, setting out the terms agreed and the risks or issues.
5. Liaising with Research Funding Specialists on questions relating to research grant applications and the terms/conditions set down by funding agencies.
6. Handling the set-up of awards on the University's financial system, working with Research Accounts as appropriate on post-award issues.
7. Taking part in regular meetings with your line manager to review cases and monitor caseload.
8. Contributing to the development of University policy or practice as it relates to externally funded research, and drafting briefing notes and/or papers for senior officers.
9. Other duties as assigned by the Director, the Deputy Director, the Head of the Divisional team, or Research Contracts Managers when the need arises.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

1. University degree (or equivalent).
2. An ability to analyse, interpret and respond effectively and accurately to detailed legal, contractual and other written documentation; you must be able to present a reasoned and coherent argument and convey complex information to a non-specialist audience.
3. Persuasiveness, decisiveness, patience and an organised, unflappable, yet flexible approach to working to deadlines under pressure.
4. Ability to communicate very effectively, in writing and orally, with team members, researchers and academics and colleagues of all levels of seniority within University and representatives of external organisations, such as multi-national companies which sponsor research at the University.
5. Proven ability to manage and prioritise a heavy and varied workload and to keep track of a large volume of ongoing projects.
6. An ability to solve problems in a timely and flexible manner.
7. An ability to work well as part of a small close-knit team but also independently and proactively as appropriate.
8. Sound IT skills.

Desirable selection criteria

1. 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.
2. A legal background or at least an awareness of legal principles of relevance to contracts governing research conducted in the University sector.
3. A scientific background or qualification, preferably at the post-graduate level.

Pre-employment screening

Standard checks

If you are offered the post, the offer will be subject to standard pre-employment checks. You will be asked to provide: proof of your right-to-work in the UK; proof of your identity; and (if we haven't done so already) we will contact the referees you have nominated. You will also be asked to complete a health declaration so that you can tell us about any health conditions or disabilities for which you may need us to make appropriate adjustments.

Please read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures at:

<https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks>

About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

Oxford is world-famous for research excellence and home to some of the most talented people from across the globe. For the past five years we have ranked number 1 in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, both overall and specifically for research.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. We are currently the most successful UK university in securing external funding for research (£634m in 2019/20) as well as for research funding from industry (£108m in 2019/20). We are a leading institution for the commercialisation of our research, having spun-out more than 200 companies, again more than any UK institution.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

Research Services

Research Services is part of the University Administration and Services Division and works in partnership with the academic divisions and their departments and faculties to support Oxford's researchers. Our role is to facilitate excellence in research, engagement and innovation at Oxford. Our vision is to be a trusted provider of expertise, strategic insight, internal and external influence and excellent professional support to Oxford's research, engagement and innovation community.

Research Services is a large team of over 140 research support professionals, with a wide-ranging remit including:

- Supporting the acquisition of external research funding, funder engagement and strategic research initiatives
- comprehensive funding, contracts and research development support
- Negotiating research-related contracts
- Supporting institutional research strategy, policy and planning
- Facilitating knowledge exchange, innovation and engagement and coordinating the development and delivery of knowledge exchange strategy and policy
- Promoting the responsible conduct of research and compliance with regulatory and research governance requirements
- Leading the continuous improvement of research administration at Oxford

Our values and commitments govern the way we work with others within Research Services, the University and externally, including our commitment to professionalism, consultation, teamwork and continuous improvement. You can read more about our values and commitments [here](#).

For more information please visit: researchsupport.admin.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/>

How to apply

Applications are made through our e-recruitment system and you will find all the information you need about how to apply on our Jobs website <https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply>.

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

As part of your application you will be asked to provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will be asked to upload a CV and a supporting statement. The supporting statement must explain how you meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants)

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename

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

Information for priority candidates

A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment because they have 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 department(s).

If you are a priority candidate, please ensure that you attach your redeployment letter to your application (or email it to the contact address on the advert if the application form used for the vacancy does not allow attachments).

If you need help

Help and support is available from: <https://hrsystems.admin.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support>

If you require any further assistance please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk.

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our e-recruitment system to confirm receipt of your application. **Please check your spam/junk mail** if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to the University as part of the job application process will be processed in accordance with the GDPR and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the University's Privacy Notice for Job Applicants at: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy>. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy>.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for all academic posts and some academic-related posts. The University has adopted an EJRA of 30 September before the 69th birthday for all academic and academic-related staff in posts at **grade 8 and above**. The justification for this is explained at: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>

For **existing** employees, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at **grades 1–7** have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. No applicant or member of staff shall be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, travel discounts, and a variety of professional development opportunities. Our range of other employee benefits and discounts also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits>

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for all University staff. The University Club offers social, sporting, and hospitality facilities. Staff can also use the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool. See www.club.ox.ac.uk and <https://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/>.

Information for staff new to Oxford

If you are relocating to Oxfordshire from overseas or elsewhere in the UK, the University's Welcome Service website includes practical information about settling in the area, including advice on relocation, accommodation, and local schools. See <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/>

There is also a visa loan scheme to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependents. See <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

Family-friendly benefits

With one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector, and a range of flexible working options, Oxford aims to be a family-friendly employer. We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities. The service offers a free telephone advice line, and the ability to book emergency back-up care for children, adult dependents and elderly relatives. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care>

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries.

For full details, including how to apply and the costs, see <https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. For further details, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, see <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support>

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including the Oxford Research Staff Society, BME staff network, LGBT+ staff network and a disabled staff network. You can find more information at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks>

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is an organisation run by volunteers that aims to assist the partners of new staff settle into Oxford, and provides them with an opportunity to meet people and make connections in the local area. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.