

# Job description

Job title	Postdoctoral Epidemiologist
Division	Medical Sciences Division
Department	Oxford Population Health (Nuffield Department of Population Health, University of Oxford)
Location	Old Road Campus, Headington, Oxford, OX3 7LF
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024 - £44,263 per annum.
Hours	Full time (part time considered)
Contract type	Fixed-term – 3 years
Reporting to	Dr Tammy Tong
Vacancy reference	172792



## Cancer Epidemiology Unit

The main emphasis of research in the Cancer Epidemiology Unit (Director: Professor Gillian Reeves; Deputy Director Professor Tim Key) is on providing large-scale reliable evidence on the relationships between common exposures (such as obesity, diet, smoking, alcohol, the use of oral contraceptives and hormone replacement therapy, endogenous hormones, shift-work), as well as molecular and genetic factors, with the risks for common conditions of public health importance such as breast, prostate, and colorectal cancers, cardiovascular disease and fractures. Much of this work centres on large scale cohort studies (EPIC, the Million Women Study, UK Biobank), and on the several International Collaborative Groups based in the Unit. Current research areas also include work on statistical and epidemiological methodology, and a programme of work related to the National Health Service screening programmes for breast and bowel cancers.

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

## About Oxford Population Health

Oxford Population Health (the Nuffield Department of Population Health) provides an excellent environment for multi-disciplinary research and teaching and for professional and support staff. We work together to answer some of the most important questions about the causes, prevention and treatment of disease.

The Department has around 900 staff, students and academic visitors working in a number of world-renowned population health research groups, including the Clinical Trial Service Unit and Epidemiological Studies Unit (CTSU), the Cancer Epidemiology Unit (CEU), the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit (NPEU) and other groups working on public health, health economics, ethics and health record linkage. It is also a key partner in the Oxford University's Big Data Institute.

In the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF), 96% of the research submitted to Unit of Assessment 2: Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care, was ranked either 4\* (world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour) or 3\* (internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour). This comprised research from Oxford Population Health and research from the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences. We scored particularly well for having an environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality and enabling outstanding impact, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.

In addition to its research activities, the Department is home to the [\*\*MSc in Global Health Science and Epidemiology\*\*](#), the [\*\*MSc in Clinical Trials\*\*](#), and a variety of short courses. Students also come to undertake research for [\*\*DPhil degrees\*\*](#). Teaching is provided for undergraduates reading for Medicine and for public health doctors in specialist training.

For more information please visit the [\*\*Oxford Population Health website\*\*](#).

## About the Medical Sciences Division

The Medical Sciences Division is an internationally recognised centre of excellence for biomedical and clinical research and teaching, and the largest academic division in the University of Oxford.

World-leading programmes, housed in state-of-the-art facilities, cover the full range of

scientific endeavour from the molecule to the population. With our NHS partners we also foster the highest possible standards in patient care.

For more information please visit the [Medical Sciences Division website](#).

## 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.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, and in recent years we have spun out 15-20 new companies every year. We are also recognised as leaders in support for social enterprise.

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 the [Oxford University website](#).

## The Role

We are seeking a postdoctoral epidemiologist with experience of epidemiological data analyses to work as part of a team and in close collaboration with epidemiologists from the Unit. The post is funded by Dr Tong's UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship. The overall objectives of the project are to assess how dietary proteins and associated indicators, including circulating proteins found in the blood, may influence the development of common age-related diseases such as different subtypes of stroke, hip fractures and vascular dementia, with the aim to identify future prevention and treatment strategies.

The successful candidate will be responsible for designing and implementing statistical analyses in large prospective cohorts including EPIC, UK Biobank and other datasets to assess dietary factors, -omics and other biomarkers, in relation to the bone and vascular conditions of interest. The post holder will work in close collaboration with the principal investigator, other epidemiologists in the Unit and in other collaborating centres in the UK, Europe and US. They will prepare reports and articles for publication in peer-reviewed journals, and have the opportunity to attend national and international symposia, conferences and working group meetings relevant to the project. They will also be encouraged to develop their own research interests in line with the overall objectives of the project/research group, and have dedicated time for individual career development activities. The post will be based in the Cancer Epidemiology Unit, University of Oxford.

## Responsibilities

Working under the supervision of the PI, the post holder will analyse data and prepare results and manuscripts for discussion and publication. The post holder will be required to work both independently leading analyses and manuscript preparation, and as a member of teams or working groups on related projects.

### **The main duties of the post are:**

- Managing own research and administrative activities. This involves small scale project management, to co-ordinate multiple aspects of work to meet deadlines
- Adapting existing and developing new research methodologies and materials
- Planning and implementing appropriate data analyses (including prospective cohort analyses e.g. Cox regression and cross-sectional analyses) and writing scientific reports on research assessing dietary factors, circulating proteins and other biomarkers with health
- Determine and develop well-structured and documented statistical and data analyses code that maximises reuse (for efficiency)
- Contributing to data analyses and drafting manuscripts in joint publications
- Carry out collaborative projects with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups
- Contributing ideas for new research projects, and develop ideas for generating research income
- Attending relevant academic meetings and conferences to present scientific findings, to represent the group at external meetings, and as part of continuing professional development
- Contributing to or leading public engagement activities
- Contributing to the Unit's other projects, and teaching, where appropriate
- Contributing, as required, to the wider academic activities of the Nuffield Department of Population Health and to participate in appropriate training and quality assurance processes for such roles

The above list is not exhaustive and the role-holder is required to undertake such duties as may reasonably be requested within the scope of the post. All staff are required to act in a professional, cooperative and flexible manner, in line with the requirements of the post.

## **Selection criteria**

### **Essential**

- Hold, or be close to completion of, a PhD/DPhil in epidemiology, nutritional epidemiology, molecular epidemiology, medical statistics or other relevant subject
- Experience of analysing and interpreting nutritional and/or biomarker data from epidemiological studies, preferably including prospective studies
- Demonstrated understanding and experience of a range of epidemiological and statistical concepts and techniques (e.g. prospective and cross-sectional study designs, and linear, logistic and Cox regression models)

- Programming skills in a statistical language, including STATA or R
- Experience of drafting manuscripts for publication
- Good presentation and communication skills, and experience of presenting findings using graphs, tables, charts and diagrams, ideally to both scientific and non-scientific audiences
- Excellent organisational, time management and planning skills, with the ability to work on multiple tasks and prioritise work effectively
- Ability to assimilate the current literature on a topic and address investigations accordingly
- An ability to work well independently and as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- Proven ability to attend to detail

## Desirable

- Experience of analysing dietary exposures or biomarkers in relation to risk of non-communicable diseases
- Experience of epidemiological analyses on cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders, or neurological conditions
- Experience working with omics data
- Experience of Mendelian Randomisation analyses

## 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.

## 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](#).

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 your CV and supporting statement **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 departments.

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 the [HR Systems Recruitment support webpage](#). If you require any further assistance please [email the Recruitment Support team](#).

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to the [University's recruitment website](#). 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](#). The University's Policy on Data Protection is available on the [University's Compliance webpages](#).

### 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.

## 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 Offley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool.

## 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. There is also a [visa loan scheme](#) to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependents.

## 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.

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 the [Childcare Services webpages](#).

## 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 the [Disability Support webpages](#).

## 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 on the [Equality and Diversity at Oxford webpages](#).

## 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.