



## Department of Education

### Job Description and Selection Criteria

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Research Assistant</b>
<b>Division</b>	Social Sciences
<b>Department</b>	Education
<b>Location</b>	15 Norham Gardens, Oxford, OX2 6PY
<b>Grade and salary</b>	Grade 6: £34,982 - £40,855 per annum
<b>Hours</b>	Full-time
<b>Contract type</b>	Fixed term for a period of 36 months
<b>Reporting to</b>	Cristina McKean Professor of Child Language Development and Disorders, Senior Academic Research Leader
<b>Vacancy reference</b>	<b>176346</b>
<b>Additional information</b>	
<b>Research topic</b>	<i>Maximising the benefits of intervention research to support language and communication in children</i>
<b>Principal Investigator / supervisor</b>	Professor Cristina McKean
<b>Project team</b>	
<b>Project web site</b>	<a href="https://www.ucc.ie/en/ticld/">https://www.ucc.ie/en/ticld/</a>
<b>Funding partner</b>	The funds supporting this research project are provided by Ireland Health Research Board
<b>Recent publications</b>	Frizelle, P., McKean, C., Eadie, P., Ebbels, S., Fricke, S., Justice, L.M., Kunnari, S., Leitão, S., Morgan, A.T., Munro, N., Murphy, C.-A., Storkel, H.L. and Van Horne, A.O. (2023), Editorial Perspective: Maximising the benefits of intervention research for children and young people with developmental language disorder (DLD) – a call for international consensus on standards of reporting in intervention studies for children with and at risk for DLD. J Child Psychol Psychiatr, 64: 474-479. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/icpp.13694">https://doi.org/10.1111/icpp.13694</a>



## **Job description**

### **Overview of the role**

Reporting to the UK Principal Investigator Professor Cristina McKean. The post holder will join a research group within the international collaborative research study Maximising the benefits of intervention research to support language and communication in children. Specifically, the postholder will support the conduct of a systematic review to identify the nature of participant characteristics reported within intervention studies for children with or at risk of Developmental Language Disorder. Also they will collect stakeholder views on reporting guidelines internationally using qualitative and consensus methods (Work Package 5). The post holder will join a study team at Oxford.

The Irish Health Research Board funded research programme: Maximising the benefits of intervention research to support language and communication in children aims to ensure that interventions to support language and communication deliver maximum benefit for children with or at risk for developmental language disorder (D)LD. As proposed in Frizelle, McKean, Eadie et al 2023, to do this, we aim to develop a set of internationally accepted reporting guidelines that will a) specify the intervention characteristics, participant characteristics and outcomes in children's oral language intervention studies b) reflect the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders c) enable translation of research into practice through comprehensive training d) maximise the potential for meta-analysis and international collaboration.

The post provides an exciting opportunity to participate in an important programme of work, which ultimately aims to improve the experiences and outcomes of children with communication needs and address issues of equity and representation in research; while gaining excellent research experience and opportunities to collaborate with national and international researchers across seven countries.

### **Responsibilities/duties**

To provide research support in the implementation, analysis and write up of a programme of work designed to identify international consensus on participant characteristics for intervention study reporting for children with and risk of DLD through

- Work with the postdoctoral researcher, UK PI and wider research team to identify essential and desirable participant characteristic descriptors in DLD from the perspective of an international sample of people with DLD and their families, clinicians and researchers in the area of DLD.
- Complete participant recruitment.
- Support data-gathering through focus groups and consensus techniques (e.g. Nominal group technique/e-Delphi).
- Make use of techniques to assist in data-analysis and write up.
- Plan and manage own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed project. For example, create and maintain a work plan and daybook, meet agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs.
- Manage personal research/project resources within own control appropriately (any consumables, supplies, equipment) and e.g. under direction co-ordinate the provision of supports/support travel arrangements/refreshments for stakeholder group members.
- Keep appropriate records as directed and in line with funder/university policy.

- Present information on research progress and outcomes to the project steering group and other team members, as agreed with the UK PI.
- Contribute to the design of research materials and make arrangements for data gathering
- Gather, analyse, and present qualitative and/or quantitative data from a variety of sources
- Contribute to research publications, book chapters and reviews
- Responsible for the day-to-day administration of the research project
- Represent the research group at external meetings/seminars, either with other members of the group or alone
- Contribute to discussions and share research findings with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups

## **Selection criteria**

### **Essential**

- Hold a first degree, awarded a 2:1 or higher in either Speech and Language therapy, allied health, psychology, education or social science together with experience of conducting research as part of their degree
- Possess sufficient specialist knowledge in the field of child language development and/or interventions to support children's health, development and educational outcomes to work within the established research programme
- Knowledge and experience of qualitative research methods including conducting qualitative interviewing and/or focus groups
- Experience of working with children and young people
- Ability to manage own research and administrative activities
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to write text that can be published, present data at conferences, and represent the research group at meetings
- Experience of following and adapting methodologies
  - Experience in data gathering for research purposes, data management and/or evidence-synthesis and/or data analysis.
  - Excellent analytical skills and computer skills.
  - Strong team working skills with capability of working effectively within a team to achieve results.
  - Evidence of excellent organisational, interpersonal and communication skills.
  - High levels of initiative are encouraged.

### **Desirable**

- Qualified speech and language therapist

- Knowledge of childhood speech, language and communication needs including DLD (developmental language disorder) and interventions to support children with these needs.

Experience of working with children and young people with communication difficulties

- Experience of contributing to research publications
- Relevant Masters degree
- Experience of working in a research team and contributing ideas for new research projects

## **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. If you have previously worked for the University we will also verify key information such as your dates of employment and reason for leaving your previous role with the department/unit where you worked. 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>

This job includes duties that will require additional security pre-employment checks:

When supporting the development of methods to elicit stakeholder views on reporting guidelines internationally, the work will involve consultation with children and young people. The job will therefore require:

- A satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check due to regulated activity involving children

## **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. Income from external research

contracts in 2014/15 exceeded £522.9m and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 companies created to date. 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: [www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation)

## **Social Sciences Division**

The University's academic departments and faculties are organised into four large groups known as Academic Divisions (Social Sciences, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS), Medical Sciences, and Humanities). The divisions are responsible for academic strategy and operational planning, oversight of the teaching and research of their constituent departments and faculties, and for personnel and resource management. The social sciences at Oxford are distinctive for both their depth and breadth, with over 1,100 academic and research staff working across fifteen departments, faculties and schools. The Head of the Social Sciences Division is Professor Timothy Power.

The Division is a world-leading centre of research and education in the social sciences. The Times Higher Education (THE) University Rankings returned the University of Oxford to the number one spot in the world for Social Sciences in 2024. We have placed first in four of the last five years (2019, 2021, 2022 & 2023).

More than 800 researchers were returned to Main Panel C (Social Sciences) for REF 2021 across a diverse range of subject area 'units of assessment' – from geography and business to archaeology and law. Over 55% of the research submitted from the Division was judged to be world-leading (4\*, the highest score available). More than two-thirds (69%) of the research's impact was also recognised as world-leading (4\*). Research from across the Division was also submitted to subject areas across Panels A (Medicine, health and life sciences), B (Physical sciences, engineering and mathematics), and D (Arts and Humanities), highlighting the enormous breadth and diversity of research expertise across the Division.

Our academic and research staff and students are international thought leaders, generating new evidence, insights and policy tools with which to address some of the major global challenges facing humanity, such as sustainable resource management, poverty and forced migration, effective governance and justice. Particular research highlights in recent years have included COVID-19 and Climate Change. As well as active interdisciplinary links with researchers in other divisions at Oxford, we engage and collaborate extensively with other universities and a wide range of governmental and non-governmental practitioner communities such as law, business, public health and welfare, international development and education around the world. The Division has an extensive portfolio of external funders, partners and supporters, with competitively-awarded external research income exceeding £50 million per year and philanthropic income over £25 million a year.

As part of our commitment to equality of opportunity, thirteen of our departments have achieved Bronze awards under the Athena Swan Charter (a UK accreditation scheme recognising organisations' commitment to equality and diversity, particularly in gender). Our School of Geography and the Environment holds an Athena Swan Silver award. In February 2023, for the first time, the University as a whole was awarded an institutional Athena Swan Silver award, acknowledging the progress that has been made in addressing a number of gender gaps across the University over the last five years.

The Division delivers an exceptional range of high-quality educational programmes all underpinned by the innovative research being undertaken by our academics. The student body

is made up of over 2,000 undergraduate students, nearly 3,000 students studying postgraduate taught programmes and 1,200 postgraduate research students. The programmes we offer are wide-ranging, often interdisciplinary and include professionally-oriented provision in areas such as business, law and education. The Division is home to several of Oxford's most widely recognised teaching programmes, such as Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) at undergraduate level; and at the Masters level programmes such as the Bachelor in Civil Law (BCL), Environmental Change and Management, International Relations, and Social Data Science.

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

## Department of Education

The Department of Education is a research-led Department, carrying out research which is of relevance not only to academics in the field of Education and related disciplines, but also to teachers, teacher educators, other education professionals, and policy makers. Its policy of developing both depth and breadth of research expertise remains central to successfully maintaining and enhancing our position as an internationally recognised centre of outstanding research. The 2021 Research Excellence Framework evaluation placed the department as the leader for education research in the United Kingdom. We have a world class reputation for research, as illustrated by our publication and funding portfolio, indicators of international and national academic leadership, research prizes, and commitment to mobilising research for the improvement of policy and practice and the benefit of children, parents, and communities. The department has a highly fertile research environment, with around 100 books published since 2010 and over 150 research seminars convened each academic year. All full-time members of academic staff are active researchers.

We have approximately 70 full-time and part-time teaching and research staff, 30 full-time and part-time administrative and professional staff, and around 740 students, of whom more than 300 are studying part-time.

Research in the Department is organised around three broad Themes: (i) Language, Cognition and Development; (ii) Policy, Economy and Society; (iii) Knowledge, Learning and Pedagogy. Each Theme consists of a cluster of Research Groups and affiliated Centres. All academic and research staff are attached to one or more research groups and research students are active in the groups. The research groups provide a forum for discussion of research ideas and articles in progress, to obtain critical commentary on current projects, and to plan new studies with colleagues. The externally-funded research centres are formally established units, organised around a coherent research plan and include OUCEA (The Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment), SKOPE (Research Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance), The Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education and EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction). Our doctoral students make an excellent contribution to the research environment; there is an intake of just over 30 students per year.

Over the last 15 years, the Department of Education has grown in size and shape. We currently offer the following courses:

- MSc in Education with 5 different pathways: Comparative and International Education; Higher Education; Child Development; Digital and Social Change; Research Design and Methodology
- MSc in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (ALSLA)
- MSc in Learning and Teaching (MLT)
- MSc in Teacher Education
- MSc in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching (ALLT)
- MSc in Educational Assessment

- MSc in Medical Education
- The Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
- A comprehensive Doctoral (DPhil) programme attracting students from all over the world

The PGCE is a one-year teacher training programme for around 150 graduates delivering secondary trained teachers in eight key subject areas (English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Modern Languages). It is undertaken in close partnership with local secondary schools. The course has an international reputation for the quality of its work and in the most recent Ofsted inspection it was awarded the highest grade (Outstanding) in all categories for every subject and for management and quality assurance. At Masters Level there are two full-time courses: MSc Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition and MSc Education in total admitting around 115 students each year. There are five part-time courses: the MSc in Learning and Teaching (MLT) is a two-year course which offers a combination of face-to-face teaching and online support for serving teachers; it recruits approximately 80 students each year. The Masters in Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching (ALLT) is a two-year part-time distance-learning course for lecturers teaching English within higher education institutions internationally, and the Masters in Teacher Education (MTed) is likewise a two-year part-time distance-learning course, aimed at those employed as academics, teachers, and teacher educators worldwide who are involved in teacher education. The MSc Medical Education began in 2021 and is a two-year course which offers a combination of face-to-face teaching and online support for those involved in medical education.

The doctoral programme (DPhil) has over 150 registered DPhil students, including a number of part-time students, researching in a diverse range of areas. Education is a recognised Pathway in the ESRC Grand Union Social Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP).

Overall the Department is now one of the three largest centres in the UK for full-time postgraduate study in the field of education.

Further information about the Department and its staff, courses and research activities please visit: [www.education.ox.ac.uk/](http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/)

See in particular our Annual Reviews at <http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/about-us/departments-reviews/>

## How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available 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. (Customise this statement to confirm the document(s) you would like the applicant to attach, but make sure that you keep the reference to PDF.

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

If you currently work for the University please note that:

- as part of the referencing process, we will contact your current department to confirm basic employment details including reason for leaving
- although employees may hold multiple part-time posts, they may not hold more than the equivalent of a full time post. If you are offered this post, and accepting it would take you over the equivalent of full-time hours, you will be expected to resign from, or reduce hours in, your other posts(s) before starting work in the new post.

#### **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**

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at:

<https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-faqs>

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly [hr@education.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hr@education.ox.ac.uk). To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: [www.recruit.ox.ac.uk](http://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk).

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

#### **Important information for candidates**

##### **Pre-employment screening**

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This will include right-to-work, proof of identity and references. We advise all applicants to read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at: [www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/).

##### **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 very senior research posts at grade RSIV/D35 and clinical equivalents E62 and E82 of 30 September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at:  
<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>.

For existing employees on these grades, 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 other grades 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, flexible working options, travel discounts including salary sacrifice schemes for bicycles and electric cars and other discounts. Staff can access a huge range of personal and professional development opportunities. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits>

### **Employee Assistance Programme**

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme, available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more <https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap>

### **University Club and sports facilities**

Membership of the University Club is free for University staff. It 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](http://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 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 dependants. See <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

## Family-friendly benefits

We are a family-friendly employer with one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector (see <https://hr.web.ox.ac.uk/family-leave>). Our Childcare Services team provides guidance and support on childcare provision, and offers a range of high-quality childcare options at affordable prices for staff. In addition to 5 University nurseries, we partner with a number of local providers to offer in excess of 450 full time nursery places to our staff. Eligible parents are able to pay for childcare through salary sacrifice, further reducing costs. See <https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/>.

## Supporting disability and health-related issues (inc menopause)

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including those experiencing negative effects of menopause. Information about the University's Staff Disability Advisor, is at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support>. For information about how we support those going through menopause see <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/menopause-guidance>

## Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including for research staff, BME staff, LGBT+ staff, disabled staff network and those going through menopause. Find out more at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks>

## The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is 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](http://www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk).

## Research staff

The Researcher Hub supports all researchers on fixed-term contracts. They aim to help you settle in comfortably, make connections, grow as a person, extend your research expertise and approach your next career step with confidence. Find out more <https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/researcher-hub>  
Oxford's Research Staff Society is a collective voice for our researchers. They also organise social and professional networking activities for researchers. Find out more <https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/connecting-other-researchers/oxford-research-staff-society>