Research Assistant/Research Fellow in the Academic Urology Unit

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES,
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES & NUTRITION

Closing date: 22 November 2023
Interview date: To Be Confirmed
Reference number: IHS153R
The main aim of the Academic Urology Unit (AUU) is to establish Aberdeen as a Centre of Excellence for Urological Care and Research. The AUU is a unit within the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS) local with the Health Sciences Building in a multidisciplinary environment consisting of experienced trialists, epidemiologists, health psychologists, health economists and statisticians.

The unit has established an international reputation in the field of evidence synthesis, guideline development, clinical trials, implementation science and cancer survivorship within Urology. It has forged strong collaborations and links, locally with the Health Services Research Unit (HSRU), Centre for Healthcare Randomised Trials (CHaRT) and the Health Economics Research Unit (HERU), nationally with the British Association of Urological Surgeons (BAUS) and cancer charities, and internationally with the European Association of Urology and the Cochrane Collaboration.

Our focus is on three major themes:

- Academic research encompassing quantitative and qualitative methodology;
- Training and education;
- Patient-oriented programmes.

These collaborations have secured funding for the University of Aberdeen through numerous multicentre and international studies totalling more than £9 million.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:**

Research Assistant /Research Fellow (50%; part time) with implementation science is required to on the Innovative Medicine Innovative (IMI-2) funded project, OPTIMA (https://www.optima-oncology.eu/). The project is co-ordinated by the European Association of Urology (EAU) and the academic urology Unit is one of the partners on this project. OPTIMA is a public-private partnership of 36 partners spanning 13 countries that officially launched earlier this week. OPTIMA’s aim is to revolutionise oncology care in Europe by improving broad data access, using AI-driven technology and tools, and strengthening shared decision-making based on dynamic computer-interpretable guidelines. This all originates from OPTIMA’s vision, which says that every patient should have access to the most up-to-date individualised treatments and innovative therapies. OPTIMA focus specifically on breast, lung, and prostate cancer. It is funded by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI). The post is available for 33 months and the post holder will provide research support to work-package 3 of the OPTIMA project.
**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

*Key duties of the role include:*

*If appointed at a Grade 6, duties will include:*

- Responsible for the overall day-to-day management of the OPTIMA project
- Design, organise, conduct, and analyse research activities.
- Develop guidance for research teams based on the findings of the work.
- Responsible for maintaining documentation and writing reports in line with the School’s policies on research governance.
- Responsible for maintaining confidentiality of data including secure management of electronic files of interview transcripts and surveys.

*Lead the writing of papers/preparation of presentations describing the outcomes of the work. Duties of the post outlined above are not exhaustive, and the post holder will be expected to undertake duties as may be reasonably expected*

*If appointed at a grade 5, the post-holder will assist with the key duties listed above.*

*Please refer to the Person Specification at the end of this document for details of essential skills, knowledge, and experience.*

*Applicants should clarify at which Grade (5 or 6) they are applying and those applying at Grade 6 should ensure they evidence how they meet the criteria.*

**CANDIDATE BACKGROUND**

You should have a first degree and a postgraduate degree in a health-related field, ideally health psychology or medical sociology and excellent knowledge and experience of using implementation frameworks. For a Grade 6 appointment a PhD with relevant experience in health-related field is necessary. You should also have qualitative research experience. You should have excellent IT skills and good oral and written communication skills with the ability to prepare and deliver oral presentations and written research reports and papers.
**TERMS OF APPOINTMENT**

Individuals appointed as a Research Assistant will be paid at the appropriate point on the Grade 5 scale, £31,396 - £34,980 per annum, pro rata and negotiable with placement according to qualifications and experience.

Individuals appointed as a Research Fellow will be paid at the appropriate point on the Grade 6 scale, £37,099 per annum, pro rata.

Any appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and probation period.

For further information on various staff benefits and policies please visit www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here

This role is based in the UK and as such the successful candidate will be required to live and work in the UK.

**For Research Fellows:** Should you require a visa to undertake employment in the UK you will be required to fulfil the minimum points criteria to be granted a Certificate of Sponsorship under the requirements of the Skilled Worker visa. At the time an offer of appointment is made, you will be asked to demonstrate that you fulfil the criteria in respect of qualification and competency in English. For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. Please do not hesitate to contact Grant Rae, HR Adviser (e-mail: grant.rae@abdn.ac.uk) for further information.

**For Research Assistants:** This post does not meet the minimum requirements for visa sponsorship under the Skilled Worker Route. We are therefore unable to consider applicants for this post that require sponsorship to work in the UK.

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**AT A GLANCE**

**SALARY:**
Research Assistant: Grade 5 (£31,396 - £34,980 per annum, pro rata)
Research Fellow: Grade 6 (£37,099 per annum, pro rata)

**HOURS OF WORK:**
Part-time, 50% of full-time

**CONTRACT TYPE:**
Funding-limited for 33 months, or to 30 September 2026

**LOCATION:**
Aberdeen
**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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<th>Education/Qualifications</th>
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<th>DESIRABLE</th>
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<td><strong>Academic, technical and professional education and training</strong></td>
<td><strong>For grade 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;• BSc in health-related field and a MSc in health psychology or medical sociology, or health services research, with relevant experience in implementation science</td>
<td>• BSc in psychology or sociology or social sciences</td>
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<td><strong>For grade 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;• PhD in health psychology or medical sociology, or health services research, with relevant experience in implementation science</td>
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<td>Work and Other relevant experience (including training)</td>
<td><strong>For grade 5 or grade 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Experience in using implementation science frameworks as applied to the following related essential skills:&lt;br&gt;• Experience of qualitative research methods&lt;br&gt;• Experience of conducting semi-structured interviews&lt;br&gt;• Experience of analysing interview transcripts</td>
<td>• Knowledge and experience in Silico trials&lt;br&gt;• Knowledge and experience in frameworks assessing technology implementation in clinical settings</td>
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<td>e.g. Specialist knowledge, levels of experience, supervisory experience, research</td>
<td><strong>For grade 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;• including the grade 5 criteria, plus:&lt;br&gt;• PhD or MSc in health services research, health psychology, medical sociology, or related subject&lt;br&gt;• Experience in implementation intervention development&lt;br&gt;• Experience in designing and running implementation studies (such as implementation RCTs or interrupted time series)</td>
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| **Personal qualities and abilities**  
| e.g. initiative, leadership, ability to work on own or with others, communication skills | **ESSENTIAL**  
|  | • Good oral and written communication skills  
|  | • Ability to work effectively within a multidisciplinary team and with a broad range of people  
|  | • Ability to work, without close supervision, to tight deadlines and be able to prioritise effectively  
|  | • Flexibility in day to day working tasks  
| **Other**  
| e.g. special circumstances (if any) appropriate to the role such as unsocial hours, travelling, Gaelic language requirements etc. | **DESIRABLE**  
|  | • Ability to travel within Europe, which may involve unsocial hours and nights away from home  
|  | • Willingness to work in an open plan office |
The University of Aberdeen is a broad based, research intensive University, and we put students at the centre of everything we do. Outstanding in a wide range of discipline areas, Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation of research ideas into spin out companies. The University has over 16,000 matriculated students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.

CURRENT CONTEXT
The University continues to uphold the principals of the foundational purpose. We remain committed to delivering positive change both locally and globally. We work together and with our partners in an interdisciplinary way, catalysing world-leading research in our areas of strength: Energy Transition; Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity; Environment and Biodiversity; Data and Artificial Intelligence; and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing. We are investing in our future and have committed £100m to upgrading our campus, including the new fully digitised Science Teaching Hub, the regeneration of the historic King’s Quarter and a new Business School building. Our commitment to our students, campus and community has led to us being named a Top 20 UK institution in two major league tables¹ and 4th in the UK for overall student satisfaction².

¹ The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023 and the Guardian University Guide 2023
² National Student Survey (NSS) 2022

Updated October 2022
ABERDEEN 2040

On our 525th anniversary as a University we launched Aberdeen 2040, our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

- **Inclusive**
  We welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.

- **Interdisciplinary**
  We innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.

- **International**
  We connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.

- **Sustainable**
  We understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances.
  
  We work responsibly.

**OUR EDUCATION**

Recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019, we remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research. Our flexible curriculum encourages students to grow as independent learners and therefore to thrive as graduates in the diverse workplaces of the future. Our education is open to all and we are setting ambitious targets to further widen access.

**OUR RESEARCH**

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen have been at the forefront of innovation and excellence throughout the centuries, generating insights in medicine, science, engineering, law, social sciences, arts and humanities. This research has contributed to five Nobel prizes as well as other awards such as the Queen’s Anniversary prize. Our research is intellectually rigorous working within our established areas of excellence as well as new methods of enquiry. We will continue to generate new knowledge addressing economic and societal issues with ambition and imagination, ensuring that it is globally excellent and locally relevant.

**INTERNATIONAL**

Aberdeen is increasing its international presence, positioning the University as a global organisation and building on established global partnerships around the world, including Qatar, China, North America, Europe. We feature in the top 50 institutions worldwide for international students.

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3 Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021

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IMPACT

In 2020 the University signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals accord, solidifying our commitment to developing the world in a sustainable way. In 2022 we were listed in the global Top 100 for 8 of these goals⁴.

Our highly cited work in zero-carbon technology and global outlooks makes us Scotland’s best institution for environmental research⁵.

⁴ Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2022
⁵ QS World University Rankings 2022

Updated October 2022
The School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition

The School (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/smmssn/index.php) encompasses all of the disciplines that underpin today’s medicine, including biomedical sciences, health sciences, nutrition and medical, medical science and dental education and these are organised into five Institutes. The largest school in the University, the SMMSN has five Institutes: the Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS), the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS), the Rowett Institute, the Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences (IEHMS) and the Institute of Dentistry, comprising all of our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and our own graduate entry Dental School.

Staff are line managed and research opportunities are supported through our institutes which work together in an integrated and coordinated way to deliver research and teaching across the School, details of which can be found on their websites as below.

- The Institute of Applied Health Sciences https://www.abdn.ac.uk/iahs/
- The Institute of Medical Sciences http://www.abdn.ac.uk/ims/
- The Rowett Institute http://www.abdn.ac.uk/rowett/
- The Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences https://www.abdn.ac.uk/IEHMS/
- The Institute of Dentistry https://www.abdn.ac.uk/dental/ https://www.abdn.ac.uk/dental/

Within the IMS, our scientists are working towards the creation of effective therapies for patients with a range of debilitating and life-threatening conditions. Current research areas include: arthritis and musculoskeletal medicine; cell developmental and cancer biology; immunity, infection and inflammation; metabolic and cardiovascular health; microbiology and translational neuroscience.

Within the IAHS, research is focused on improving health and health care delivery. It is home to a multidisciplinary grouping of around 100 university academic staff who conduct population and clinically-orientated health research and hosts the Health Services Research Unit (HSRU) and Health Economics Research Unit (HERU), both funded by the Chief Scientist’s Office (CSO) of the Scottish Government.

As well as being the organisational home to the teaching scholarship staff and responsible for oversight of the UG and PGT programmes offered by the School, the IEHMS promotes and supports excellence in medical education through research and development, with a focus on conceptually and theoretically robust research and development which has strong potential for reaching international recognition. The highly regarded University of Aberdeen MBChB programme and several postgraduate programmes including a Masters in Clinical Education are delivered by IEHMS.

The Dental Institute runs an undergraduate BDS programme and a growing suite of masters programmes for professional development.

We have a number of specialist Centres representing areas of particular research strength and capacity within the School all of which are willing to support colleagues on projects in their areas. More information is available at the following websites.
The Centre for Healthcare Education Research and Innovation (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/cheri/)
The Centre for Health Data Science (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/achds/)
The Aberdeen Cardiovascular & Diabetes Centre (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/acdc/) and
The Aberdeen Centre for Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Health (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/acamh/)

The School is home to over 800 staff and 2000fte students. It is located on the Foresterhill site, shared with our main clinical partner, NHS Grampian, with whom we work in close collaboration at primary and secondary care levels.

This is one of the largest integrated healthcare delivery, training and research sites in Europe and has rich assets including state-of-the-art academic (research and teaching) and clinical buildings. Excellent infrastructure is also provided through core facilities for biomedical science including flow cytometry, proteomics, microscopy and genome sequencing, support for data health science projects and clinical trials.

The last major academic capital development was the opening of the Rowett Institute, occupied in March 2016, whose staff undertakes nutrition research to help improve people’s lives through the prevention of ill-health and disease. Their new £40M building has provided the University of Aberdeen with a facility with unique capabilities for human nutrition and metabolic research.
Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire

Scotland’s third largest city, Aberdeen sits on the coast between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline. The Aberdeen City region is a can-do place that is actively investing, at scale, in its future.

Renowned as a Global Energy Hub, Aberdeen is a vibrant, entrepreneurial region, home to a unique mix of business opportunities and specialist skills across various sectors including energy, technology, life sciences and food & drink. More than 20% of Scotland’s top businesses are located in this region which is taking great strides to ensure that it continues to compete on a world stage. Investments of more than £10 billion of public and private infrastructure is due to be delivered before 2030, marking an exciting time to be part of a genuine world-class location.

Built from sparkling local granite Aberdeen has earned the name of the Silver City. As the energy capital of Europe, Aberdeen nevertheless retains its old-fashioned charm and character making it an attractive place in which to live, work and study. Due to its global business and international energy industry credentials, Aberdeen is well served by local and national transport infrastructure with excellent rail networks that run both North and South of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It also acts as an international travel hub. Flying time to London is just over one hour with regular daily flights and serves international travel to European centres such as Amsterdam (Schiphol) and Paris (Charles de-Gaulle) as well as flights to other European destinations.

The City and the surrounding countryside provide a variety of urban, seaside and country attractions. Aberdeen has first class amenities including His Majesty’s Theatre, Music Hall, Art Gallery, the P&J Arena, Museums, and Beach Leisure Centre. The City is framed by its accessible beach front which is within a short walk of the city centre and there are an array of activities available across the region such as hill walking; mountaineering; sailing; surfing; salmon, trout and sea fishing; golf; sailing; surfing and windsurfing. The surrounding countryside, known as Aberdeenshire, is also one of Scotland’s most appealing regions. Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms National Park are within easy access of the city, and there are a variety of towns and villages scattered along the coastline.

The city and the surrounding area have ranked consistently highly in nationally recognised quality of life surveys, coming out top 10 as one of the best places to live in Scotland in 2020 in the annual Bank of Scotland survey.

To find out more visit www.visitabdn.com
QUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University values and celebrates a diverse working and learning environment and recognises the richness this brings, both in terms of contributing to the success of the University and creating safe and inclusive cultures. The University welcomes applications from individuals with diverse lived experiences.

The University supports flexible working, including hybrid working arrangements, and has policies in place to facilitate this where it is appropriate. The policies can be found at https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/flexible-working--5607.php.

The University is committed to progressing gender equality across all its functions and has been a proud member of the Advance HE Athena Swan Charter, achieving an institutional Bronze award, one Silver departmental award for the School of Psychology and eleven departmental Bronze awards. LGBTQ+ equality is championed through the University’s membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme, where the University has achieved a Silver award in the Workplace Equality Index. The University is on a continual journey to respond to, and combat, GBV in our community and beyond. We are proud to be working towards the EmilyTest Charter, in partnership with the charity, EmilyTest. We all have a role to play in knowing how to signpost colleagues and students to support for gender-based violence, and training and support is available to all staff on this topic.

The University is signed up to Advance HE’s Race Equality Charter, affirming the University’s commitment to the Charter’s aim of improving the representation, progression and success of staff and students who identify as belonging to a racialised group. The University launched its Antiracism Strategy in 2022, representing a bold framework for progress on race equality. Recognising the importance of addressing the under-representation of racialised groups in the senior team, the University’s new Recruitment and Selection Policy embeds specific positive action measures to address this.

The University is delighted to be accredited as a Disability Confident employer and strives to ensure that disabled staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment. The University’s Wellbeing Strategy commits it to progressing work to tackle stigma related to mental health and action to promote and improve health and wellbeing for staff and students. Candidates who are British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using contact SCOTLAND-BSL.

The University’s work on equality, diversity and inclusion is supported by a range of networks and engagement activities, designed to provide safe spaces and raise awareness of the support available and the steps everyone can take to create inclusive campuses.

www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/equality-and-diversity-277

Updated October 2022
HOW TO APPLY

Online application forms are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs

The closing date for receipt of applications is **22 November 2023**

Should you wish to make an informal enquiry please contact:

Dr Steven MacLennan, Senior Research Fellow
Steven.maclennan@abdn.ac.uk

Please do not send application forms or CVs to Dr MacLennan.

**Please quote reference number IHS153R on all correspondence**