

RECRUITMENT PACK

This document includes the following information:

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Additional information

Making an application:

Please complete the short on-line application form and attach the following 4 documents:

- a) A covering letter setting out how you meet the requirements of the role as set out in the person specification.
- b) Full curriculum vitae (CV) including any publications. You should specify your 4 most significant papers published within the past 5 years (or an equivalent number appropriate to being an early career researcher). Applicants from within the UK should indicate which publications have been submitted to the REF 2014 and any assessment of the rating for each piece of work; For more information about the REF visit www.ref.ac.uk
- c) For posts at salary grade 9-11, a research statement of no more than two sides of A4 providing details of your research plans for the next three years. This should include details of books, chapters or papers in progress together with planned publication dates. For journal articles please provide details of target journals and planned submission dates. If you have papers that are currently under review please detail the stage these have reached and the timescale you expect those papers to be accepted for publication. If you have papers that have been accepted for publication but not yet published please provide the date the paper was accepted for publication.
- d) For posts at salary grade 9-11, please include a document of no more than two sides of A4 setting out your three year plan for generating external funding to support your research.

Shortlisting is undertaken by a panel after the closing date on the basis of information provided and failure to upload the requested documents will result in an application being rejected.

The University of Essex is proud to be part of the Disability Confident scheme and is committed to supporting diversity and equality, representative of our inclusive community. As part of our commitment to this scheme any candidate who has a disability and meets all the essential criteria for the role will be offered an interview. We also work in partnership with national disability organisation DisabledGo who provide detailed online access guides to many of our campus buildings and facilities which you may find useful.

Please note: We are only accepting on-line applications for this post. However, if you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to provide us with information in this way, please contact the Resourcing Team (01206-874588/873521) for help.

Closing Date: 20 August 2017

Interviews are planned for: 21 September 2017



JOB DESCRIPTION – Job ref REQ00755

Job Title and Grade:	Health Research Officer (Senior Research Officer) Grade 8
Contract:	Fixed-term, Full-time. This post is fixed-term for 15 months to cover the maternity leave of a current member of staff.
Hours:	A notional minimum of 36 hours per week (see additional information)
Salary:	£32,004 - £38,183 per annum (pro-rata for part-time)
Department/Section:	Institute for Social & Economic Research
Responsible to:	<i>Understanding Society</i> Director
Reports on a day to day basis to:	Professor of Social and Biological Epidemiology (health lead, <i>Understanding Society</i>)
Purpose of job:	To support the management of the biological resource for <i>Understanding Society</i> through design and implementation of a health innovation panel, funded by ESRC.

Background and purpose of the job

Understanding Society is a major longitudinal survey initially covering 40,000 households across the UK (<http://www.understandingsociety.org.uk>), it has also been designed to be a key biological-social resource for research. We wish to appoint a senior research officer to join the *Understanding Society* team to oversee the development of this world leading resource. As the Health Research Officer the successful applicant would help to oversee the development, collection, management and promotion of this unique resource. Specifically, s/he would assist in the management of the tissue bank, oversee an application for health record linkage, assist in the sharing of genetic, epigenetic and other specialised health data, administer the competition to develop experiments designed to develop new ways of collecting biological data in a social survey.

The main activity of this post in *Understanding Society* over the next 15 months will be to design and implement a health innovation panel which has been funded by ESRC and will go into the field in 2019. The appointee will assist the health lead in *Understanding Society* with the following activities: organising a call for external researchers to contribute experiments to the IP; overseeing the design of the questionnaire and experiments, liaising with the fieldwork agency, internal survey and data teams and external researchers, commissioning biological laboratories to undertake necessary analyses, obtaining ethics approval and health record linkage; liaise with various governing and advisory bodies who oversee the study, and leading on the analysis and writing up of publications that report both the design and outcome of experiments.

The post is open to researchers from a biomedical/human sciences background but candidates must have strong administrative skills and an understanding or experience of any of the following: applications for health record linkage; liaising with laboratories and/or fieldwork agencies, working with researchers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds will be an advantage. Applicants must have quantitative skills and a keen interest in studying the health of the population, and the ways in which people's health can be measured and investigated in longitudinal social surveys. In addition candidates should have an understanding of experimental design issues, ethics and good

governance, good project management skills, and excellent interpersonal skills in order to negotiate and co-ordinate activities with scientific collaborators from multiple disciplines, internal colleagues and external suppliers involved in the project.

Duties of the Post:

The main duties of the post will include:

1. Support the management of the biological resource for *Understanding Society*.
2. Obtain ethics approval and health data linkage approval for the health Innovation Panel data collection.
3. Work with relevant governance groups and suppliers to review and process applications for the use of genetics and epigenetics data, and, when appropriate, tissue samples.
4. Work with colleagues to produce and supply approved bespoke data files for external researchers.
5. Advise and support *Understanding Society* data users in appropriate ways to analyse combined social and biological data.
6. Develop and implement experiments to improve the measurement of health via biomarkers in social survey setting.
7. Support negotiations with third party agencies that provide fieldwork, lab and storage services for the biological data on *Understanding Society*.
8. Develop and deliver capacity building materials and workshops and produce value added resources (e.g. derived variables, datasets for wider sharing, user guides, online courses) related to the biological resource for *Understanding Society*.
9. Participate, like all ISER staff members, in various institute-level activities appropriate to seniority.

Any other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the *Understanding Society* Director.

These duties are a guide to the work that the post holder will initially be required to undertake. They may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances.

ISER is ISO27001:2013 certified. All ISER employees have a responsibility to adhere to the Institute's information security policies and procedures. This post may hold specific duties with regards to information security and may therefore be subject to a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check, including verification of identity; nationality and immigration status; employment history (past 3 years) and criminal record.

Terms of Appointment:

For a full description of the terms of appointment for this post please visit:

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/current-staff/terms.aspx#>

July 2017

PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Health Research Officer (Senior Research Officer)

Qualifications /Training

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A PhD in a biomedical/human sciences discipline or equivalent experience 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Experience/Knowledge

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of conducting research using biological, genetics or epigenetics data 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of design of primary data collection in large-scale survey and/or biological experiments 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of the ethical issues associated with collecting biological samples of the general population 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of obtaining health record linkage data 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demonstrable understanding of the ways in which people's social and economic circumstances may influence their health, and vice versa 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of analysing (or managing analysis of) biological samples 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of using statistical analysis software level for data management and statistical analysis 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of engaging in capacity building and resource development to support the use of biomarker and genetics data in social science research 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of using longitudinal survey data for analysis 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of working in a multi-disciplinary team 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of negotiating supply contracts and managing MTAs, data sharing agreements 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Skills/Abilities

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent quantitative analysis skills, including the ability to analyse large complex genetics and/or social datasets 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good project management skills 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven ability to write clearly and concisely 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A flexible approach and ability to manage a diverse workload and competing priorities 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven ability to present findings and methods to a wide range of audiences 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-motivation and proven ability to work independently 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An aptitude for team and collaborative working 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Other

	Essential	Desirable
▪ Ability to meet the requirements of UK 'right to work' legislation*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* The University has a responsibility under the Asylum, Immigration and Nationality Act 2006 to ensure that all employees are eligible to work in the UK. Prior to commencing employment, the successful candidate will be asked to provide documentary evidence to this effect. The University may be able to offer Tier 2 Sponsorship for this role. For further information about UK immigration requirements please follow this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

July 2017

Additional Information

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)

ISER, founded over 25 years ago, is a research department in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Essex. It has a worldwide reputation as a multidisciplinary centre of quantitative social science research and as a producer of household panel data of the highest quality ('*Understanding Society*' the UK Household Longitudinal Study and its predecessor the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)). ISER is also home to the long-running ESRC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC) and EUROMOD, the tax-benefit micro-simulation model for the European Union. ISER's research excellence is demonstrated by its outstanding publication record and substantial research funding. ISER employs scholars of international prominence publishing in the top journals in their fields.

An excellent record of high-quality research

ISER's research currently addresses topics including: income distribution and poverty; employment and self-employment dynamics; the family and intergenerational transmission processes; health and ageing across the lifecourse; social behaviour, beliefs and values; education, labour markets, and skill formation; social policy; social stratification and disadvantage; risky behaviour; ethnicity and migration; neighbourhood influences on individual outcomes; cross-national comparative research; the measurement and use of data on individuals' expectations; analysis methods; and survey methodology.

ISER has a strong publication record, with regular contributions to top-five journals in Economics and to leading journals in Sociology such as *European Sociological Review* and *American Journal of Sociology*. We have strong links with the University's departments of Economics and Sociology, both of which are recognised as being among the strongest in the country. ISER contributes to these two Units of Assessment in the REF, and in future is likely to support two more. ISER has its own seminar series and also runs joint seminars with Economics and Sociology and for health researchers across the University. It operates an active Working Paper Series providing an outlet for papers prior to publication: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/publications>.

Substantial research funding

ISER is currently one of the largest single recipients of research and resource funding from the ESRC, with quinquennial core funding currently supporting our two primary activities: the Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC) for substantive research, and the UK Household Longitudinal Study. With its unique combination of research and resource functions, and a core focus on the use of advanced quantitative techniques applied to micro-data usually on individuals, families or households, ISER offers quantitative social scientists an ideal research environment.

The MiSoC research centre (<https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/misoc/>) has enjoyed continuous ESRC funding from its inception in 1989. The 2014-2019 research programme, "Understanding individual and family behaviours in a new era of uncertainty and change", is organised in three main strands:

- Vulnerability, social insurance, and the dynamics of family finances, employment and health;
- New members of society: the formation of capabilities in children and young adults, and social mobility and integration amongst immigrants;
- Values, preferences and expectations.

A cross-cutting strand will focus on advancing statistical methods to improve our ability to obtain robust empirical evidence from data analyses with statistical and econometric methods. It is directed by Professor Mike Brewer, with co-Directors of Professors Sonia Bhalotra, Paul Clarke, Emilia Del Bono, Adeline Delavande, Steve Pudney and David Voas.

'*Understanding Society*' <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/> is a flagship ESRC initiative, which started with a sample of 40,000 households across the four countries of the UK and includes the former BHPS sample. The BHPS is one of the most heavily used social science data sets in the UK,

and recognized as one of the world's highest quality longitudinal surveys. Unique features of *Understanding Society* are the *Innovation Panel* which is reserved for experimentation, immigrant and ethnic minority boost samples and the collection of objective health measures including biomarkers, direct physical measures and genetic data. The Study is underpinned by survey methodological research which is world leading. There is an extensive programme of data linkage to a wide range of administrative records. The Study also has its own Policy Unit which works directly with government departments to undertake research and share findings.

The EUROMOD micro-simulation project (<https://www.euromod.ac.uk/>), funded by the European Union, provides a major resource for European comparative tax-benefit policy research. As well as calculating the effects of actual policies it is also used to evaluate the effects of tax-benefit policy reforms and other changes on poverty, inequality, incentives and government budgets. EUROMOD is a unique resource for cross-national research, designed to produce results that are comparable across countries and meaningful when aggregated to the EU level.

In addition to our substantial funding from the ESRC, ISER has a strong track record of success in securing funding from other sources including the European Union, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Leverhulme Trust, the Nuffield Foundation, government departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Education, and the Home Office, and organisations such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Low Pay Commission, the Financial Services Authority, and the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Research with impact

ISER has a very good record at communicating and disseminating its research, and our key audiences include policy-makers, government departments, opinion formers, data providers, the third and private sectors, national and international organisations, the media and funding bodies. Its research also has impact at the highest level (research from ISER underpinned 7 Impact Case studies submitted to the 2014 REF, for example). This is all achieved through a professional communications and web team, the Understanding Society Policy Unit, and activities that are part of the MiSoC and EUROMOD research programmes, working alongside University and Faculty staff.

A top research environment in a leading university

ISER is a flagship social science department within the University of Essex, internationally recognised as a centre of excellence and expertise in the analysis of longitudinal data and providing a stimulating and innovative research environment. The University of Essex is one of the leading universities in Europe for social science research: the results of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) put it in the top 5 in the UK for social science, and the University is ranked 7th in the UK for economics. ISER makes a major contribution to the University's success. The University also appeared in the top 100 of The Times's World Social Science University Rankings ([World University Rankings in the Social Sciences](#)).

ISER contributes to three Masters' degrees run jointly with the departments of Economics and Sociology. Each has ESRC '1+3' recognition status.

ISER occupies a modern purpose-built building on the University campus. The building provides spacious office accommodation for all ISER staff and PhD students, meeting and seminar rooms, a common room, and a specialist research library. There are excellent IT facilities in ISER and throughout the university. The University's Albert Sloman Library is widely acknowledged to have excellent holdings in the social sciences. ISER's two weekly multidisciplinary seminar series are regularly attended by some 30-40 researchers from ISER and other departments, and researchers from ISER also regularly engage in departmental seminars in other departments in the Faculty.

ISER has about 80 staff in total, including researchers from several disciplines (mainly economics, sociology, health sciences and survey methods), survey specialists, and computing and support staff. There are over 30 part- and full-time PhD students and ISER hosts a large number of visitors from

around the world. Forty external Research Associates are actively engaged in collaborative research with ISER staff.

The ISER senior management team consists of the ISER Director (Nick Buck), the Director of MiSoC (Mike Brewer), the Research Director (Adeline Delavande), the Director of EUROMOD (Holly Sutherland) and the Director of Understanding Society (Michaela Benzeval).

Strategic planning and management are organised by senior staff. There are six Research Groups with a strategic role of promoting collaboration in our main areas of research interest: Work; Family and education; Policy, incomes and welfare; Ethnicity and migration; Health; and Methods. These groups also have a strategic role in planning research funding initiatives.

Further information about ISER, its staff, and its activities, is available from our website: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk>. Information about the University of Essex is available from <http://www.essex.ac.uk>.

People Supporting Strategy

Please find a link to the People Supporting Strategy.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/people-oct15.pdf>

General Information

For informal enquiries about this post, please contact the *Understanding Society* Director, Michaela Benzeval (e-mail: mbenzeval@essex.ac.uk).

However, applications for the post must be made online.

You should note that should the permanent member of staff choose to return to her post earlier than the end date of this contract then a notice period of 1 month, instead of 3 months, shall apply to the ending of this appointment.

Please note that part-time working could be considered at a minimum of 0.6 FTE, however in this instance the University will not be able to issue a Tier 2 Certificate of Sponsorship for this post.

Removal and Relocation

Due to the short term nature of this post a relocation allowance is not available.

Staff Vetting Procedures for Government Contracts

The University of Essex has Government contracts, some of which require it to access UK government systems, information or data. We have a duty to protect these assets and this obligation extends to our employees.

Due to the nature of the work in the Institute for Social and Economic Research, some job roles require a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check before appointment is confirmed. Applicants who are offered employment to qualifying roles will be subject to a vetting procedure to enable the University to verify the following for the successful candidate:

- Identity
- Employment history (for a minimum of the past 3 years)
- Nationality and immigration status

- Criminal Record (unspent convictions only)

Information Security

Information is the lifeblood of ISER. All ISER staff and students are responsible for its security to the organisations and individuals who provide it. ISER is ISO27001:2013 certified and all ISER staff and students have a responsibility to adhere to the Institute's information security policies and procedures.

Benefits

Our staff and students are members of the University for life. We believe a person's potential is not simply defined by grades or backgrounds, but by willingness to question, to collaborate and to push at the edges of knowledge and their own potential.

As an employer we offer a range of benefits and a commitment to career development and equal opportunities in an environment that both reflects and creates a rich interaction of people, disciplines and ideas.

- Pension scheme
- Generous holiday entitlement
- Competitive salaries
- Training and development Family Friendly policies
- On campus childcare facilities, for more information visit www.wivenhoeParkdaynursery.co.uk
- Childcare vouchers
- Relocation package for qualifying staff
- Interest free season ticket loan
- Range of optional salary exchange tax benefits (pension, childcare and bicycle schemes)

No smoking policy

The University has a no smoking policy.

This document is produced by:

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