

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Research Assistant (Sick cover)	Approved By:	Roxane Andersen
Report To:	Roxane Andersen	Date:	July 2026
Grade:	UCEA 18-23	Location:	Thurso

PURPOSE

To assist with the maintenance of field-based equipment and associated data download, and with field-based activities (surveys, sampling) for a range of projects. To assist with the development and delivery of projects and outputs aligned with the Peatland strategic priorities.

KEY AREAS

The post holder will be accountable for:

- Assisting within a research team and working on an established research programme under general supervision.
- Managing their own activities and prioritising their own workload within agreed objectives to ensure that all activities are completed to deadlines.
- Assisting within a research project, by, for example, undertaking literature reviews, collecting and collating data and undertaking and recording the outcomes of experiments.
- Assisting with the supervision of student projects and the delivery of introductory classes.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following duties and responsibilities are intended to give a broad indication of the variety of tasks the post holder may be asked to undertake. It should be noted that a job description is not an exhaustive list of activities, and staff may be asked to carry out other duties commensurate with the level of the post. The job description may also be amended to take account of changed circumstances, and staff will be consulted when this is necessary.

RESEARCH

- Prepare, set up, conduct and record the outcome of experiments and field work.
- Develop questionnaires and conduct surveys.
- Conduct literature and database searches.
- Contribute to data analysis and interpretation.
- Continue to update knowledge and develop skills.

TEACHING & LEARNING

- Contribute to learning and teaching activity
- Assist in the supervision of student projects

COMMUNICATION

- Liaise with colleagues and students and externals as deemed necessary by line manager.
- Make relevant contacts and develop knowledge and to foster good working relationships for future collaboration.
- Write up results of own research.
- Contribute to the production of research reports and publications.
- Present information on research progress and outcomes to bodies supervising research, e.g. steering groups.

PLANNING & MANAGING

- Plan own day-to-day activity within the framework of the agreed research programme, with guidance if required.
- Contribute to the planning of research programmes.
- Co-ordinate own work with that of others to avoid conflict or duplication of effort.
- Provide guidance as required to support staff and any student, who may be assisting with research.

TEAMWORK

- Actively participate as a member of a research team.
- Attend and contribute to relevant meetings.

INITIATIVE, PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

- Deal with problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines.
- Contribute to decisions affecting the work of the team.
- Make use of standard research techniques and methods.
- Analyse and interpret the results of own research and generate original ideas based on outcomes.

GENERAL

- Proactively contribute to own personal development and supporting the wider sustainability of UHI North, West and Hebrides.
- Contribute to UHI's climate, biodiversity, and sustainability goals, including net-zero by 2040.
- Ensure consistency and equality at all times.
- Ensure compliance with data protection requirements and all college policies as required, including appropriate responsibility to ensure the health and safety of self and others.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to ensure a whole college focus and approach.

CONTEXT

- UHI North, West, and Hebrides (UHI NWH) Research and Knowledge Exchange (KE) is committed to making a meaningful impact on our local communities by addressing key challenges and opportunities facing the Highlands and Islands. Through research and KE activities, we contribute significantly to the UHI portfolio, enhancing its capacity to drive positive change, support regional development, and foster innovation with global reach.
- This role is integral to achieving these objectives. The post holder will be expected to take a proactive approach, demonstrating strong organisational skills and the ability to engage effectively with research, KE, teaching, and support staff at all levels, as well as external stakeholders. They will play a role in delivering and/or supporting research excellence, advancing innovation, and facilitating knowledge exchange to maximise the impact of our work.

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- A commitment to upholding the highest professional standards and contributing to a culture of research and KE excellence is essential. Due to the nature of this position, the post holder will have access to highly confidential and sensitive information. They will be required to handle such matters with discretion, professionalism, and sound judgment at all times.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria	Essential
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postholders will have a degree and may have some previous relevant work experience.
Skills and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline to effectively contribute to the research programme. Knowledge of appropriate research methods including, for example, carrying out literature searches, developing questionnaires, conducting field surveys and carrying out analyses and tests. The ability to organise own research workload with general supervision from senior colleagues.
Quality indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in continuing professional development through developing further skills and knowledge of research methods and techniques. Relate positively and professionally to students, colleagues and/or clients. Knowledge of, and adherence to, the University's Policies such as Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities policies. Delivery – Completes work on time and to agreed standards with the Line Manager. Teamwork – Makes a meaningful contribution to internal and external teams, providing mentoring or supervision where applicable. Communication – Engages effectively with all relevant stakeholders through clear written and verbal communication in reports, presentations, and collaboration. Customer Service – Delivers high-quality service to key stakeholders, including funders, students, and partners. Time Management – Priorities tasks effectively and, where appropriate, manages projects efficiently. Systems – Demonstrates competence in relevant software, systems, and processes. Adaptability – Embraces change, adopts new methods, and engages in continuous professional development. Ethics & Integrity – Upholds ethical research practices and academic integrity. Technical Proficiency – Applies appropriate research methods, data analysis, and tools effectively. Policy - Knowledge of, and adherence to the Institutions policy environment.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be willing to work flexible hours when necessary to meet requirements of the post. Be willing to travel on College business, between UHI centres, as required. Commitment to support the achievement of UHI's Sustainability Policy and Strategy objectives.

KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Hours of Work	This post is for 28 hours per week, but you may be required to work additional hours to meet service requirements. The normal full-time working week is one of 35 hours.
Duration	This a part-time, temporary post for sick cover.
Salary	The salary for this post will be UCEA 18-23 Research (£32,891 - £35,754) per annum, pro-rata.
Holidays	33 days in a full year plus 12 public/general holidays, pro-rata for part-time workers.
Location	The position will be based primarily at our Thurso Campus (ERI Castle Street), but you may be required to work in any campus of UHI North, West and Hebrides.
Pension	You will be contractually enrolled into the Local Government Superannuation Scheme. Further details are available upon appointment.
References/Medical Assessment/PVG Check	For external candidates' appointment will be subject to references and a PVG check, which will be taken up after an offer has been made.

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