

UHI | **NORTH, WEST AND HEBRIDES
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Recruitment Pack

Research Assistant (Sick cover)

July 2026

Summary

Job title:	Research Assistant (Sick cover)
Location:	ERI, Thurso
Salary:	Research Assistant (£32,891- £36,754), UCEA18-23
Term:	This is fixed-term, part-time position for sick cover (subject to review)
Pension:	Local Government Superannuation Scheme
Annual leave:	33 days + 12 days public holidays
Section:	Environmental Research Institute (ERI), UHI North, West and Hebrides
Responsible to:	Prof Roxane Andersen, Peatland Theme Leader

The successful candidate will:

- + Assist within a research team and work on an established research programme under general supervision.
- + Manage their own activities and prioritising their own workload within agreed objectives to ensure that all activities are completed to deadlines.
- + Assist 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.

By joining ERI's Peatland Research and KE Team, you will help the team provide underpinning evidence that can drive changes in policy and practice to ensure a resilient future for the peatlands of the Highlands and Islands region, and a just transition for its people.



The Environmental Research Institute

The Environmental Research Institute (ERI) is based in Thurso, Scotland and is part of the University of the Highlands and Islands, North Highlands. Since 1999 our multidisciplinary team has sought to transcend scientific boundaries to undertake and promote high-calibre research, innovation, and education in the environmental sciences that ‘makes a difference’. We aspire to excellence in all we do.

We seek to advance scientific understanding of contemporary environmental issues using our proximity to outstanding natural resources combined with state-of-the-art facilities. We advance our goals through development of networks with strong, strategic partnerships and collaborations with academic, commercial and stakeholder organisations within regional, national and international contexts.

We aim to ensure that our work has tangible value to society, helping address new societal, economic and policy challenges related to use and management of the natural environment and its resources, and responding to changes in the environmental, organisational, financial and political landscapes. In doing so, we seek to contribute to the University mission of having a transformational impact on the region’s economy, people and communities.



Our vision is a natural environment that is healthy, sustainable, and valued by all.

We strive to provide dynamic leadership in research, innovation and education that advances understanding and informs management of our natural environment.



The ERI has four Research and KE priorities:

- + **Energy:** Sustainable energy transitions and environmental interactions.
- + **Pollution:** Investigating Environmental Contamination and Developing Sustainable Solutions.
- + **Peatlands:** Studying peatland resilience across scales and discipline boundaries.
- + **Society:** Connecting Environment, Economy and Wellbeing to environmental change

The following websites may be useful in providing further information.

- + The University of the Highlands and Islands: <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/>
- + UHI North, West and Hebrides: [Home - UHI North, West and Hebrides](#)
- + The Environmental Research Institute (ERI): [Environmental Research Institute](#)

ERI Peatlands Theme

The ERI Peatland team benefits from unrivalled access to The Flow Country peatlands of Caithness and Sutherland: covering 4000 km², they represent largest expanse of blanket bog in Europe and a site of global significance, inscribed since 2024 as the world's first and only UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Flow Country is also a changing landscape where large-scale restoration and infrastructure development are rolled out at pace, and where climate extremes like wildfires and droughts have become more frequent.

Our research seeks to provide underpinning evidence that can drive changes in policy and practice to ensure a resilient future for the Flow Country peatlands and rivers, and a just transition for its people. The Peatland theme also facilitates access to the Flow Country for researchers from across the UK and abroad and coordinates the Flow Country Research Hub, a network of >60 organisations and stakeholders with an interest in the Flow Country peatlands.

Current Priorities

- + Peatland resilience in a changing world
- + The fate of organic matter from source to sink
- + Sustainable land use and thriving communities



Specification

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

Key Terms 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.
Holidays:	33 days in a full year plus 12 public/general holidays, pro-rata for part-time workers
Duration	This is a fixed-term, temporary post for sick cover (subject to review).
Salary:	Research Assistant £32,891-£36,754 (UCEA18-23)
Location:	The position will be based primarily at our ERI Campus in Thurso, Caithness, 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 on joining.
References:	For external candidates' appointment will be subject to references and a PVG check, which will be taken up after an offer has been made.

Working environment

ERI offers an excellent research environment within the University of the Highlands and Islands, combining academic excellence with the opportunity to work in one of Europe's most distinctive natural and cultural landscapes. Researchers benefit from:

- + Access to unique field sites and laboratory facilities.
- + A collaborative, interdisciplinary research culture.
- + Strong links to government, industry, and community partners.
- + A commitment to equality, diversity, and career development.

Our researchers are encouraged to pursue innovative, high-impact research that connects local action with global sustainability goals.



Making an application

Completing your application

Your application should include the following:

- + **Completed Application Form (both parts):** Please read the form carefully and complete it electronically. Make sure all sections are fully completed. If you need more space for any answers, use a continuation sheet and attach it to the form. Your personal statement/further information should provide clear evidence of how you meet each of the selection criteria set out in the job description.
References: Please give the name, address, telephone number and email address (if known) of two referees, including your existing or last employer, to whom reference may be made in support of your application concerning your professional ability and performance at work. References will only be taken up for short-listed candidates. Please note that any offer of employment will be conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references from your current/last employer or academic institution, unless advised otherwise.
- + **Current CV:** Please include an up-to-date CV outlining your relevant experience and qualifications.
- + **Optional Covering Letter:** You may also include a covering letter to highlight your motivation and suitability for the role.

The information that you provide in your application form & other supporting information is the only information we will use in deciding whether or not you will be short listed for interview. Your application will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Submitting your application

Completed applications must be returned by the closing by e-mail to recruitment.nwh@uhi.ac.uk

Or: Human Resources, UHI North, West and Hebrides, Ormlie Road, Thurso, Caithness, Scotland KW14 7EE. We will acknowledge receipt of completed applications by e-mail.

Written acknowledgement of completed applications will only be provided where requested and where a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed with your application for this purpose. We will contact you concerning your application once shortlisting has been completed

Timeline

Closing date for applications: 06th August 2026

Interviews: Form mid-August 2026 (in person)

Start date: August 2026 onwards (subject to receipt of satisfactory references and securing PVG Scheme membership via Disclosure Scotland).

For further information on this position:

Please contact Prof. Roxane Andersen (roxane.andersen@uhi.ac.uk), Peatlands Theme leader

About the area

The North Highlands is home to Scotland's most famous drive - the North Coast 500, and to one of our most famous destinations - John O'Groats. The landscape is breathtaking, featuring iconic mountains and flat rolling moorlands. High tech companies sit side-by-side with vibrant, innovative SMEs. At the centre of offshore wind, wave and tidal stream renewable energy developments, the area also hosts Rolls Royce, Subsea 7 and BT among the global companies investing in employment in the far north of Scotland.

The area is a draw for outdoor sports enthusiasts and hosts the internationally recognised surf spot around the Thurso East reef. With beautiful beaches and bays, wildlife, high hills and big skies, the region of Caithness and Sutherland has much to offer. Thurso (population c. 8000) has origins dating back to Viking times when it was an important Norse settlement (its name comes from the Norse *Thorsa* meaning Thor's River). Thurso later grew to become a market town and was noted for its trade with Scandinavian and Baltic ports from as early as the 14th century.

Situated on the Pentland Firth in the beautiful, sheltered Thurso Bay it is the most northerly town on the Scottish mainland. Thurso has a fine harbour, beach and looks out over the Firth to the Islands. Just west of Thurso lies Scrabster, the main ferry port for Orkney.

For a town of its size, Thurso has numerous amenities including:

- + A vibrant local shopping centre, three primary schools and one secondary school
- + Several hotels, lively bars and restaurants, leisure facilities including gyms, a swimming pool, tennis & squash courts, yoga studio, and a cinema
- + Clubs and societies including dancing, drama, walking, kayaking, surfing, sailing, music, community greenhouse, etc.
- + Railway, bus, ferry connections and Wick airport within 30 minutes

Explore the area:

[Caithness and Sutherland | HIE](#)

[Things to do | Venture North](#)

[Things to Do & Tourist Guide, North Caithness | Venture North](#)

Click these links to view these videos on YouTube:

[Venture North Discovery: Summer in Caithness & Sutherland](#)

[Venture North to Caithness & Sutherland](#)

