

RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Job Title:	Research Assistant
Department:	Global Health and Development
Faculty:	Public Health and Policy
Location:	Tavistock Place, London
FTE:	1.0 FTE
Grade:	G5
Accountable to:	Head of Department through Principal Investigator (Helen Walls)
Job Summary:	<p>We are looking to recruit a Research Assistant to support the GIZ funded “Food systems for sustainable healthy diets in low- and middle-income countries” project that aims to develop evidence to support the discussion and promotion of food system transformation contributing to healthier and more sustainable diets in LMICs.</p> <p>The post holder will also be responsible for developing qualitative evidence to inform this study of how the public health community can address food and beverage industry influence on the healthiness of diets in low- and middle-income countries through the use of human rights and the ‘right to healthy food’. The post holder will be responsible for reviewing evidence related to human rights and legal perspectives on addressing food and beverage industry influence on diets and health, and undertaking a stakeholder mapping and key informant interviews plus related data analysis for a particular low/middle-income country/region to understand stakeholder perspectives of how duty bearers could/should be held accountable. They will undertake this work with the PI and project team and may at times also contribute to other aspects of the wider project using especially realist review methodology.</p>

General Information

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) is renowned for its research, postgraduate studies and continuing education in public and global health.

Our mission is to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice.

We embrace and value the diversity of our staff and student population and seek to promote equity, diversity and inclusion as essential elements in contribution to improving health worldwide. We believe that when people feel respected and included, they can be more creative, successful, and happier at work. While we have more work to do, we are committed to building an inclusive workplace, a community that everyone feels a part of, which is safe, respectful, supportive and enables all to reach their full potential.

History

Founded in 1899 at the London Docks, LSHTM is now based in Bloomsbury, where it has two main sites at Keppel Street and Tavistock Place, and additional sites in The Gambia and Uganda. Today, our staff, students and alumni work in government, academia, international agencies and health services across the world.

Research

Research income has grown to more than £180 million per year from national and international funding sources including UK government and research councils, the European Union, the Wellcome Trust, Gates Foundation and other philanthropic sources.

Our diverse research talents, skills and experience underpin our position as a leader in public and global health. These range from the molecular to the global, the theoretical to the applied, the analytical to the political. Our staff are conducting research in more than 100 countries.

Staff community

We have 3,500 staff based all around the world with core hubs in London and at the MRC Units in The Gambia and Uganda, which joined LSHTM in February 2018. Our outstanding, diverse and committed staff make an impact where it is most needed - deploying research in real time in response to crises, developing innovative programmes for major health threats, or training the next generations of public and global health leaders and researchers.

Partnerships

Working in partnership is central to achieving our mission. Our strategic collaborations in the UK and across high-, middle- and low-income countries deliver health and socioeconomic benefits across the world, especially in the most disadvantaged communities.

LSHTM is also a member of the M8 Alliance of Academic Health Centers, Universities and National Academies, the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region, and the Consortium of Universities for Global Health.

Education

We deliver research-led educational programmes to future health leaders, managers and researchers across the world. We have more than 1,200 face-to-face Master's and Doctoral students, 3,800 studying by distance learning, and 500 each year on short courses and continuous professional development. Our free online courses are studied by more than 300,000 participants globally.

Excellence in research and education

We perform strongly in various global university league tables. In the ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Academic Subjects 2022 we placed 3rd in public health (1st in the UK). In the 2022 CWTS Leiden Ranking LSHTM is ranked 1st in the world for publishing open access research and 1st in the UK for the proportion of academic research with women listed as authors. Our global partnerships are also recognised, with LSHTM placed first position in the UK and 10th in the world for the proportion of our research which includes international collaboration.

In the US News Best Global Universities Ranking 2022, we ranked 2nd in the world for public, environmental & occupational health, 4th in the world for infectious diseases, 14th in the world for social sciences & public health, and 13th best University in the UK overall. We ranked 23rd for medicine in the 2021QS World University Rankings.

In 2017, the inaugural Center for World University Rankings by Subject placed LSHTM first in the world for tropical medicine research, second for parasitology and seventh for infectious diseases, public, environment and occupational health, and social sciences and biomedical.

LSHTM was named University of the Year 2016 by Times Higher Education and awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education in 2017 in recognition of our response to the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa. LSHTM does not appear in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings as universities are excluded if they do not teach undergraduates.

We seek to foster and sustain a creative and supportive working environment based upon an ethos of respect and rigorous scientific enquiry. We embrace and value the diversity of our staff

and student population and seek to promote equality as an essential element in contribution to improving health worldwide.

LSHTM is one of around 20 specialist institutions that receive institution specific funding from the Office for Students (OfS). This funding recognises the additional costs that LSHTM incurs because of its unique range of teaching, specialist facilities, and the scale of its contributions to national and international agencies.

Faculty Information

Faculty of Public Health and Policy

The School is divided into three academic faculties, of which the Faculty of Public Health & Policy is responsible for research and teaching in the policy, planning and evaluation of health programmes and services. Its interests are both national and international, encompassing industrialized and low and middle-income countries. The Faculty has three research departments:

- Global Health and Development
- Health Services Research and Policy
- Public Health, Environments and Society

In the Faculty there are about 50 Professional Services staff members, and 280 academic staff drawn from a variety of disciplines including medicine, statistics, epidemiology, sociology, economics, anthropology, operational research, psychology, nursing and history. Each department is responsible for its own research. The School has adopted a rotating system of management for its academic departments and faculties. The management of a department is under the control of the Department Head, appointed by the Director for a period of three years in the first instance. The Faculty Head is appointed in a similar manner but for an initial period of up to five years.

The Faculty of Public Health and Policy is responsible for organizing a one-year Master's course in Public Health, which allows students to take either a general MSc in Public Health, or to follow one of several more specialised streams: Health Services Management, Health Promotion, Environmental Health or Health Services Research. The Faculty also jointly teaches the MSc Public Health in Developing Countries and MSc Control of Infectious Disease (with the Faculties of Infectious and Tropical Diseases and Epidemiology and Population Health), and MSc Health Policy, Planning and Financing (jointly with the London School of Economics). Master's courses are organized in a modular format across the whole School. One of the growing areas of Faculty teaching is distance-based learning, with MScs in Public Health and Global Health Policy. In 2019/20, over 370 students were registered for our face-to-face Masters programmes and 1367 students were registered for distance learning MScs.

The Faculty has also reorganized and expanded its research degree (MPhil/PhD; DrPH) training. Currently there are about 164 students and 36 staff members registered for a research degree.

Department of Global Health and Development (GHD)

The Department of Global Health and Development (GHD) focuses on novel and policy-relevant research and training to achieve impact at national and global levels. Our work, predominantly concerning low and middle-income countries, spans health policy and systems research, economic evaluation, gender violence and violence in childhood, and medical humanitarianism. There are approximately 150 staff and 100 research degree students in the Department, with total grant funding of over £35m, from a range of funders including research councils, UK and overseas charities, the European Union, the UK government and others. Academic staff come from a wide range of disciplines including economics, epidemiology, mathematics, law, politics, social policy, policy analysis, sociology and anthropology, and are grouped into two Units and a number of thematic research groups.

The portfolio of duties outlined below will vary in accordance with the detailed expectations of the role (attached), which may be varied from time to time, and agreed at your annual Performance and Development Review (PDR).

Job Description

Main Activities and Responsibilities

Knowledge Generation

1. To undertake high quality research as directed by your line manager, including contributing to drafting grant proposals and peer-reviewed and other outputs, and evaluating teaching practice;
2. To support the administration of projects linked to your employment, helping ensure compliance with good practice in relation to the conduct of research, the ethics policy, and other relevant School policies;
3. To review and synthesise evidence related to human rights and legal perspectives on addressing food and beverage industry influence on diets and health.
4. To undertake a stakeholder mapping, identifying key actors, their roles and their influence on global and national levels, and following this with key informant interviews and qualitative data analysis to understand stakeholder perspectives of corporate influence on diets from a human rights perspective.
5. To undertake review and synthesis of evidence related to the wider project such as related to policy and programme recommendations for healthy and sustainable diets in low- and middle-income countries.

Education

1. To participate in some aspects of the School's Education Programme or educational outreach activities;

Internal Contribution

1. To undertake activities that support the Department, Faculty, MRC Unit or the School;
2. To reflect LSHTM's EDI goals in your work and behaviour;
3. To participate in the School's PDR process;

External Contribution

1. To demonstrate good external citizenship by supporting the external academic and practice communities;
2. Undertake, if required, dissemination activities relating to the project, including presentations to funders and key stakeholders

Professional Development and Training

1. To keep up-to-date with the latest research / thinking in your academic field and with changes to pedagogic practice within the School and more generally;
2. For lab-based disciplines: where the length and nature of the position permits, to apply for and, if accepted, undertake a doctoral degree (if not already acquired);
3. To undertake and successfully complete the mandatory training required by the School as appropriate to the role;

General

All academic staff are free within the law to question and test received wisdom, and put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, to enable the School to engage in research and promote learning to the highest possible standards.

All staff at LSHTM are also expected to:

1. Act at all times in the School's best interests;
2. Treat School staff, students and visitors with courtesy and respect at all times;
3. Comply fully with School policies, procedures and administrative processes relevant to the role;
4. Uphold and support the School's values (as set out in the School Strategy);
5. Act as ambassadors for the School when hosting visitors or attending external events;

The above list of duties is not exclusive or exhaustive and the role holder will be required to undertake such tasks as may reasonably be expected within the scope and grading of the role.

Role descriptions should be regularly reviewed to ensure they are an accurate representation of the role.

Person Specification

This form lists the essential and desirable requirements needed by the post holder to be able to perform the job effectively.

Applicants will be shortlisted solely on the extent to which they meet these requirements.

Essential criteria:

1. MSc degree in public health, nutrition or political science either awarded or imminent or equivalent training.
2. Relevant experience in evidence synthesis and undertaking literature reviews
3. Evidence of good organisational skills, including effective time management.
4. Proven ability to work independently, as well as collaboratively, as part of a research team.
5. Evidence of excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
6. Relevant computer/analytical skills including MS Office and nVivo

Desirable Criteria

7. Some experience of teaching
8. Experience of undertaking evidence synthesis relating to nutrition/food systems
9. Experience of developing dissemination materials for a non-academic audience
10. Experience of undertaking stakeholder mapping and semi-structured interviews, preferable in global health or food systems context

Salary and Conditions of Appointment

The post is full-time, 35 hours per week, 1.0 FTE and fixed term until 31 March 2024. The post is funded by the GIZ “Food systems for sustainable healthy diets in low- and middle-income countries” project and is available from 1 April 2023.

The salary will be on the Academic Pathway scale, Grade 5 scale in the range £37,531 - £42,875 per annum (inclusive of London Weighting). The post will be subject to the LSHTM terms and conditions of service. Annual leave entitlement is 30 working days per year, pro rata for part time staff. In addition to this there are discretionary “Wellbeing Days”. Membership of the Pension Scheme is available. The post is based in London at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Applications should be made on-line via our website at <http://jobs.lshtm.ac.uk>. Applications should also include the names and email contacts of 2 referees who can be contacted immediately if appointed. Online applications will be accepted by the automated system until 10pm of the closing date. Any queries regarding the application process may be addressed to jobs@lshtm.ac.uk.

The supporting statement section should set out how your qualifications, experience and training meet each of the selection criteria. Please provide one or more paragraphs addressing each criterion. The supporting statement is an essential part of the selection process and thus a failure to provide this information will mean that the application will not be considered. An answer to any of the criteria such as "Please see attached CV" will not be considered acceptable.

Please note that if you are shortlisted and are unable to attend on the interview date it may not be possible to offer you an alternative date.

Asylum and Immigration Statement

The School will comply with current UKVI legislation, which requires all employees to provide documentary evidence of their legal right to work in this country prior to commencing employment. Candidates will be required to email a copy of their passport (and visa if applicable) to HR prior to their interview and if appointed will be asked to bring the original documents in to be copied and verified before their start date.

Applications from candidates who require sponsorship to work in the UK will be considered alongside other applications. Applicants who do not currently have the right to work in the UK will have to satisfy UK Visas & Immigration regulations before they can be appointed.

Further information about Sponsorship and eligibility to work in the UK, can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-skilled-worker>

Date amended: Sept 2022

Academic Expectations: Research Assistant

Examples of expected types of activities are listed; the selection of activities will vary from year to year and not all activities in each category would necessarily be done in any one year. The statement in each shaded heading summarises the general expectations for contributions in each category. Research Assistants employed on research projects will be expected to focus on Knowledge Generation, in accordance with their job description, but some activity in other areas is required and will support career progression. Research Assistants predominantly employed to support Education will be expected to have more limited contribution to Knowledge Generation, again as reflected in their job description.

Knowledge generation: High quality support for, and contribution to, knowledge generation

Research and scholarship

- Undertaking research, as directed by line manager
- Contributions to funding applications including supporting more senior staff in completing applications
- Contributing to peer-reviewed and other research outputs as expected by the subject area/discipline in terms of types of output
- Poster/oral presentations at conferences
- Social media contributions such as twitter, blogs, web-based media or webinars

Reflective practice and critical enquiry (RPaCE)

- Participating in RPaCE
- Disseminating learning and experiences through presentations to colleagues

Doctoral degree supervision

- None expected though involvement in advisory activities/roles or provision of practical skills training is encouraged where relevant

Research management, leadership and support

- Effective management of own time and activities
- Supporting the administration of projects he/she is employed on, eg taking meeting minutes

Professional development

- Appropriate courses and other development activities, referenced to RDF
- Especially for lab-based disciplines: where the length, nature and funding source of the position permit, to apply for and, if accepted, undertake a doctoral degree (if not already acquired).

Education: Participation in educational activities¹
<p><i>Teaching and assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in some aspects of the School's Education Programme or education outreach activities e.g. contributions to taught courses, research methods training, mentoring school pupils on outreach programmes <p><i>Educational development and innovation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to educational innovations or developments, e.g. helping to update the content or delivery of a course or module <p><i>Educational leadership and management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None expected <p><i>Professional development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal study/training and/or other activities that develop educational knowledge and expertise, referenced to UKPSF; working towards Associate Fellow HEA
Internal contribution: Support to the academic environment in the Department or beyond
<p><i>Internal citizenship including contributing to supportive academic environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Department/Faculty/Centre/School events or special interest groups; organising seminars/lab meetings/journal clubs; group or departmental social organising; support to EDI activities including Athena Swan; support to external partnerships <p><i>General leadership and management roles</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None expected
External contribution: Support to the external academic community
<p><i>External citizenship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in journal or book reviews, if opportunities arise • Sharing examples of good practice (e.g. contributing to discipline-specific interest group or professional bodies) <p><i>Knowledge translation and enterprise: not expected but options include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of evidence of research impact for impact case studies (e.g. policy records, correspondence with policy makers, media highlights) • Engagement with policy/practice/industry/NGO communities and with the general public

¹ it is accepted that some RA roles and/or funding make it difficult to give time to Educational activities, but some degree of engagement is encouraged