

# Job Description & Person Specification

Last updated: 19/05/2025

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Post title:	<b>Lecturer A – Research Methods and AI Skills</b>		
School/Department:	School of Economic, Social and Political Sciences; Department of Social Statistics and Demography; National Centre for Research Methods		
Faculty:	Social Sciences		
Career pathway:	Education, Research and Enterprise (ERE)*	Level:	4
*ERE category:	Balanced portfolio		
Posts responsible to:	Project Lead of UKRI grant and NCRM Director (ERE7) (Prof Gabriele Durrant)		
Posts responsible for:	n/a		
Post base:	Office-based (Highfield), with hybrid working		

Job purpose
<p>The current post is for a Lecturer A/ Researcher to undertake training and capacity building work and methods research under the UKRI-funded project '<a href="#">New approaches to digital skills development (AI skills)</a>' (Oct 2024-April 2027) and the ESRC-funded <a href="#">National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM)</a>, under the leadership of Prof Gabriele Durrant, and a team at the University of Southampton (including representatives from the Web Science Institute, the Software Sustainability Institute, School of Geography and School of Education), and University College London (UCL). Work will span across three project themes: 1. Large language models (LLM) for (survey) research and data usage and analysis, 2. AI in prediction and in polling data; and 3. Use of AI to support environmental sustainability research.</p> <p>The post will be hosted within the Faculty of Social Sciences and NCRM. The NCRM is a key ESRC infrastructure investment, founded in 2004 and in its fourth funding phase (Jan 2020-Dec 2025). For further information on NCRM see <a href="http://www.ncrm.ac.uk">www.ncrm.ac.uk</a>.</p> <p>The post holder will be required to support (or lead where appropriate) on the training and capacity building programme in AI skills development, including, for example, engagement and co-production with key project partners and stakeholders across sectors and impact and training needs analyses. The post holder will also be required to conduct high-quality research in line with the project's and/or NCRM's remit, with preference for working in survey methodology, quantitative data and/or AI. The postholder will contribute to research and academic dissemination, as well as to the development and organisation of the strategic research and training activities of the project and of NCRM. Project partners and stakeholders include: ESRC/UKRI data investments, such as the UK Data Service (UKDS), digital research infrastructure investments, survey agencies, the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS), Environment Agency (EA), AI investments and initiatives and others.</p>

Key accountabilities/primary responsibilities		% Time
1.	<p>Work with the Project-Lead/Director and Co-Leads/Co-Directors to plan and ensure delivery of the training programme and activities, including for example innovation fora, short courses, online resources, blended learning activities and innovative training events, predominantly in the area of AI, and in accordance with the project themes above. This includes working towards achieving and reporting on indicators of success, where appropriate.</p> <p>Depending on experience and expertise, work could also include teaching contributions to a limited number of training activities (only if desired and only in consultation with the candidate).</p> <p>If and where required, to work with the NCRM IT committee to support the research and training functions of the NCRM portal and with the NCRM Centre Manager/Project TCB Manager.</p>	40 %
2.	Plan and deliver a high-quality programme of methodological research, including publication(s) in peer-reviewed, international journals and research funding application(s), in line with NCRM's focus on research methods and in liaison/in conjunction with the Director and co-investigators of the project and NCRM.	30 %
3.	Develop partnerships and effectively engage with key stakeholders and partners of the project, including leading to co-production, where appropriate.	10 %
4.	Contribute to and/or take the lead, where appropriate, on the development and implementation of strategic activities, including the conduct and writing of training needs and impact assessments as well as high-quality reports, where needed, including those in response to potential ESRC/UKRI queries or funding calls.	10 %
5.	Contribute to and lead on aspects of sustainability and future planning, including identifying further sources of funding and income generating activities.	5 %
6.	Any other duties as allocated or required by the line manager following consultation with the post holder.	5 %

Internal and external relationships
<p>The post holder will work closely and collaboratively with the NCRM and the project team, including the NCRM Director and co-investigators as well as professional and research staff (including for example Centre manager, communications manager, IT staff, e-learning technologist, and training coordinators), mostly based at the University of Southampton.</p> <p>The post holder may also work with other researchers, including those based at the University of Southampton in other related centres, institutes and departments, those who lead on work packages, such as those leading on the development of pedagogic good practice; or with members of staff from the Faculty working on research methods.</p> <p>The post holder will engage, as necessary, with external stakeholders across the UK and to a limited degree internationally, including with other training providers, ESRC/UKRI, other ESRC/UKRI investments, as well as external course presenters and authors, from across a range of sectors, including academia, government, public sector and business and industry.</p>

Special Requirements
<p>The postholder may be required to travel occasionally within the UK, for example to attend NCRM or project meetings or visit UK stakeholders, and occasionally abroad to visit international stakeholders and attend conferences, workshops and meetings. This may extend outside usual office hours, including overnight stays.</p>

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	How to be assessed
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Qualifications, knowledge and experience	<p>Studying for a PhD or having a PhD (or equivalent professional qualifications and experience) in a social science, social statistics, quantitative methods or data science/AI (or closely related) discipline</p> <p>Demonstrable knowledge of or experience and interest in the development and use of quantitative methods and/or AI (in the social sciences)</p> <p>Experience of high-quality report-writing, including e.g. literature reviews</p> <p>Good computing skills, including ability to learn new programmes, where required</p>	<p>Post-doctoral research experience</p> <p>Interests and expertise in areas of quantitative methodological research that intersect with those of the Director and co-investigators, in particular, e.g., survey methodology, online data collection methods, nonresponse research, statistical modelling, AI</p> <p>Experience or knowledge of online learning and/or teaching/training - ideally in the area of research methods/ AI</p> <p>Publication record in methods research</p> <p>Ability to develop innovative research proposals and attract research funding and/or ability to identify income generating activities</p> <p>Experience of conducting assessments of larger-scale projects from start to finish (including, e.g., running online surveys, conducting interviews with stakeholders, writing assessment reports etc.)</p> <p>If lack of experience in research in AI, a strong interest in using AI and exploring opportunities in this emerging field.</p> <p>Experience of undertaking inter-disciplinary research</p> <p>Interest in carrying out policy-relevant applied social research</p>	Application and interview
Planning and organising	<p>Proven ability to work independently</p> <p>Effective time management skills, delivering projects and activities on time; ability to plan and conduct own programme of methodological research alongside other responsibilities</p> <p>Experience of effective project management</p>	<p>Experience of effectively planning and conducting academic meetings, training and capacity building activities, and/or workshops or conferences.</p>	Application and interview
Problem solving and initiative	<p>An appreciation of some of the methodological challenges facing the social science community</p> <p>Ability to pursue a programme of research effectively and independently</p>		Application and interview

Management and teamwork	<p>Able to work constructively with senior academic staff and professional/support/administrative staff; self-motivating</p> <p>Experience of team working</p>	<p>Ability to manage, motivate and coordinate (research) team(s), delegating effectively</p> <p>Ability to monitor and manage resources and budgets</p>	Application, interview and references
Communicating and influencing	<p>Experience of communicating and working effectively with external stakeholders (individuals and/or institutions)</p> <p>Good interpersonal and liaison skills; oral presentation skills</p> <p>Able to persuade and influence at all levels in order to foster and maintain relationships</p> <p>Able to resolve tensions/difficulties as they arise</p>	<p>Track record of presenting research results at group meetings and conferences</p> <p>Able to provide expert guidance to colleagues in own team, other work areas and institutions to develop understanding and resolve complex problems</p>	Application, interview and references
Other skills and behaviours	<p>Compliance with relevant Health &amp; Safety issues</p> <p>Positive attitude to colleagues</p>		<p>Interview</p> <p>Interview and references</p>
Special requirements	<p>Willingness to travel both nationally and internationally for the purpose of Centre coordination and dissemination, including overnight stays.</p>		Application and interview

## JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS

### Is this an office-based post?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	If this post is an office-based job with routine office hazards (eg: use of VDU), no further information needs to be supplied. Do not complete the section below.
<input type="checkbox"/> No	If this post is not office-based or has some hazards other than routine office (eg: more than use of VDU) please complete the analysis below. Hiring managers are asked to complete this section as accurately as possible to ensure the safety of the post-holder.

## - HR will send a full PEHQ to all applicants for this position. Please note, if full health clearance is required for a role, this will apply to all individuals, including existing members of staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES	Occasionally (<30% of time)	Frequently (30-60% of time)	Constantly (> 60% of time)
Outside work			
Extremes of temperature (eg: fridge/ furnace)			
## Potential for exposure to body fluids			
## Noise (greater than 80 dba - 8 hrs twa)			
## Exposure to hazardous substances (eg: solvents, liquids, dust, fumes, biohazards). Specify below:			
Frequent hand washing			
Ionising radiation			
<b>EQUIPMENT/TOOLS/MACHINES USED</b>			
## Food handling			
## Driving university vehicles(eg: car/van/LGV/PCV)			
## Use of latex gloves (prohibited unless specific clinical necessity)			
## Vibrating tools (eg: strimmers, hammer drill, lawnmowers)			
<b>PHYSICAL ABILITIES</b>			
Load manual handling			
Repetitive crouching/kneeling/stooping			
Repetitive pulling/pushing			
Repetitive lifting			
Standing for prolonged periods			
Repetitive climbing (ie: steps, stools, ladders, stairs)			
Fine motor grips (eg: pipetting)			
Gross motor grips			
Repetitive reaching below shoulder height			
Repetitive reaching at shoulder height			
Repetitive reaching above shoulder height			
<b>PSYCHOSOCIAL ISSUES</b>			
Face to face contact with public			
Lone working			
## Shift work/night work/on call duties			