

Student transition to study at UoB – Research Assistants Job Advertisement

Job Family:	Research and Teaching
Grade	Grade H – Graduate Teacher Level 2
Salary	£17.77 per hour
Hours of work	Flexible
Funder	BILT
Contract type	Fixed term

Background to the project

Throughout their Higher Education journeys all undergraduate and postgraduate students experience multiple transition points, including arriving at university, transitioning through different years, and moving out of the institution into work or further education. All transitions are important, but the first transitional experience at any academic institution will influence students' engagement and retention with their programme. Arriving at a university is accompanied by multiple stressors including living away from home, making new friends, and developing self-care responsibilities. Another key stressor is adapting to new ways of studying and learning in an academic environment. These stressors are experienced by students at all degree levels and are compounded for postgraduate taught students on one-year programmes.

Many students will thrive when faced with these new challenges whereas others will be overwhelmed, fearful and fail to adapt to this unfamiliar environment. This project aims to investigate what transitional issues need to be addressed by the University of Bristol. Over the course of this study, funded by the Bristol Institute of Learning and Teaching (BILT) we will examine the challenges and enablers to a successful transition to university study. Using a combination of focus groups and 1:1 interviews, we will address what, if any, transitional issues our students report since starting their course at the University. These may include explorations of what students believe academic skills are, determining what skills they had prior to arriving in Bristol, what skills gained over their first term, where these skills came from and what skills they believe they are lacking and looking to progress. Despite successful transitions being multifaceted, this research will take a focus on academic skills rather than wellbeing. The study will allow us to explore what academic factors enable or inhibit successful transitions into programmes at the University of Bristol.

The role

This is an opportunity for current postgraduate research students from any discipline to facilitate and record short focus groups and semi-structured interviews as Research Assistants

to the project. Each RA will be allocated one or more small groups of students studying on a one-year Masters course. The students will be from a different faculty/school from the RA to avoid any conflict of interest. The focus groups and interviews will follow a pre-arranged structure and initial instruction will be provided. RAs will be expected to promote discussion and investigate areas of interest as they arise. Every session will be audio recorded and auto-transcribed. RAs will briefly sense-check transcriptions but will not be required to analyse the data generated.

Requirements

This project would be suitable for anyone with an interest in educational research, teaching and learning and student support.

Prospective RAs will need to be keen to work with students on the project and be available for work in early July.

Required attributes

- You will be required to be in Bristol for various dates in July to run focus groups and interviews.
- You are enthusiastic about learning about students' experiences of university life.
- You are proactive, have effective communication skills and can conduct yourself in a professional manner.
- Able to manage your own time successfully to complete a project within a given timeframe.

How to apply

To apply you should complete the online form available here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/PXbeNYLqek>

Closing date for applications: 12pm Monday 13th June

Applicants will be informed of the outcome by Friday 17th June

We welcome applications from all members of our community and are particularly encouraging those from diverse groups, such as members of the LGBT+ and BAME communities, to join us.