1. JOB TITLE: Research Assistant

2: HRMS REFERENCE NUMBER: HR15108

3. ROLE CODE: FINRA02

4. DEPARTMENT: Psychology

5. ORGANISATION CHART:

   Prof. Ros Bramwell (Head of Department)
   Dr Suzanne Stewart (Line Manager; Project Supervisor)
   Post-holder

6. JOB PURPOSE:
To undertake research-related tasks, including preparing, setting up, conducting and recording the outcome of experiments and field work, the development of questionnaires and conducting surveys, to the standards and objectives of the research project set by the Principal Investigator.

7. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
The post is attached to the research project “Do individual differences in theory of mind, emotional intelligence and cognitive functioning predict accuracy in detecting deception?” Falling victim to deception is a common, and potentially hazardous, experience; yet some people are better able to detect lies than others. Research demonstrates that (1) observers vary in their ability to detect high-stakes lies, and (2) that verbal behaviour and subtle expressions of emotion in nonverbal behaviour differentiate liars and truth-tellers. Although it is theoretically plausible that individual differences in the ability to detect such expressions should lead to the variation observed in high-stakes lie detection, little is known about the processes involved. Some empirical evidence suggests that the higher levels of understanding and sympathy represented by greater emotional intelligence (EI) contribute to greater success in lie detection, while other research evidence suggests that greater EI leads individuals to being “taken in” by the lie and, thus, failing to detect deception. In addition, theory of mind (ToM) is likely to play a role despite a dearth of published work showing how individuals use ToM to determine whether they are being deceived. Similarly, although cognitive resources are required to process complex social messages, there has been little investigation of the contribution of cognitive functioning to the ability to detect deception. Thus, the proposed work will investigate the following overarching research question: do certain individual differences contribute to better powers of deception detection in a high stakes context (when the liar is
highly motivated to succeed)? Our participants will watch news videos of individuals making real-life pleas for missing/murdered relatives and judge the pleaders’ honesty. We will also measure their EI, affective and cognitive ToM, and executive functioning and attention.

The post will be situated in the Department of Psychology, which is a vibrant and friendly workplace. The Department prides itself on an active research environment which complements its strengths in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. The research in the department spans a number of areas, notably research into recognition of emotion, understanding social behaviour, cognitive functioning using experimental methods, forensic psychology, developmental and educational psychology, and health psychology.

8. WORK PERFORMED AND/OR KEY RESULT AREAS:

8.1 Communicating Effectively
- Write up results of 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 and other bodies.
- Prepare papers for steering groups and other bodies.

8.2 Leadership and Working Collaboratively
- Actively participate as a member of the research team.
- Provide guidance as required to support staff and any student who may be assisting in the research.
- Attend regular research meetings with the PI and other colleagues involved.

8.3 Liaison and Networking
- Liaise with research colleagues and support staff on routine matters.
- Attend and contribute to relevant meetings.
- Effectively working with staff in the department to attain the research goals on time.

8.4 Delivering a High Quality Standard of Service
- Undertake research-related tasks to the standards and objectives of the research project set by the Principal Investigator.
- Managing the recruitment and testing of participants in an efficient and timely manner so that the research proceeds on schedule.

8.5 Effective Decision Making
- To make independent decisions on the recruitment and management of participants in the project, and the use of standard research techniques and methods when undertaking research.
- Contribute to decisions affecting the work of the team.
- May provide advice, as appropriate, to colleagues on matters affecting the research.
8.6 Planning and Organising Self and Others
- To take responsibility for planning own day to day research activity within the framework of the agreed programme.
- Co-ordinate own work with that of others.
- Contribute to the planning of research projects, as an active member of the project team.
- Meeting target recruitment goals by effectively planning time to recruit participants online, approach potential participants face-to-face across the University campus, and using available means (as approved by the ethics committee) to encourage participants to attend scheduled sessions.

8.7 Innovation and Improvement (Effective Problem Solving)
- Deal with day-to-day problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines, referring to Research Supervisor for advice and guidance.
- Problems which are outside the remit of the role should be referred to the Research Supervisor.

8.8 Analysis and Research
- Conduct literature and database surveys.
- Be responsible for effective participant recruitment online and face-to-face.
- Manage the schedule of participant appointments.
- Undertake research-related tasks, including preparing, setting up, conducting and recording the outcome of experiments and field work, the development of questionnaires and conducting surveys, using existing methodology and through discussion with the Research Supervisor.
- Continue to update knowledge and develop skills.
- Analyse and interpret the results of research and generate original ideas based on outcomes.

8.9 Sensory and Physical Demands
- Sensory and physical demands will mainly include light physical effort, but may vary depending on the project or working environment.
- The project will require frequent working on a PC.

8.10 Work Environment
- The working environment will vary depending on the nature of the work.
- The work may involve visiting other University of Chester campuses (e.g., Riverside) in order to recruit and test participants.

8.11 Pastoral Care and Welfare
- Show consideration to others.

8.12 Team Development
- Assist in the induction of new staff if required.
8.13 Teaching and Learning Support
- May contribute to teaching, learning and research activities in the department.

8.14 Knowledge and Experience
- Please see person specification

8.15 General
- To undertake any other duties commensurate with your grade, and/or hours of work, as may reasonably be required of you.
- To take responsibility for upholding and complying with the University’s Equality and Diversity policies and for behaving in ways that are consistent with fair and equal treatment for all.
- To comply with all University Health and Safety policies.
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<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Essential/Desirable</th>
<th>Method of Identification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifications:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Masters degree or equivalent in Psychology or a related discipline or be within 12 months of completion (merit or distinction classification)</td>
<td>Essential (Desirable)</td>
<td>Application/Certificates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelors degree or equivalent in Psychology or a related discipline</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Application/Certificates</td>
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<td><strong>Proven Experience:</strong></td>
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<td>Experience of independent research, gained through Masters-level study or equivalent</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Application/Interview</td>
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<td>Possess sufficient knowledge or expertise to work on research issues without direct or continuous reference to others</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Application/Interview</td>
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<td>Excellent computer literacy, including Microsoft Office packages</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Application/Interview</td>
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<td>Excellent ability to communicate professionally and effectively in person, on the telephone, via email and social media</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Experience of using research-related software such as SPSS and E-Prime</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Application/Interview</td>
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<td><strong>Delivering academic and service excellence:</strong></td>
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<td>Possess sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline and develop further skills in and knowledge of research methods and techniques</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Conduct duties abiding by British Psychological Society ethical guidelines, and with commensurate research integrity and professionalism</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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### Managing self and inspiring others:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to develop further skills in and knowledge of research methods and techniques</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to approach a large number of potential participants in a time-effective manner, face-to-face and via online methods and manage the schedule of participant sessions</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Excellent organisational and time management skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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### Working together:

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<td>Ability to work effectively with the PI as supervisor, and contribute to team decisions with the PI and other staff involved</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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### Organisational and stakeholder awareness:

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<td>Abide by the University’s relevant policies and procedures</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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**Essential Requirements** are those, without which, a candidate would not be able to do the job. Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.

**Desirable Requirements** are those that would be useful for the post holder to possess and will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.

**Method of identification** is where the selection panel will match the candidate’s skills and abilities to the required criteria outlined (i.e. application form, interview, test).
UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

PSYCHOLOGY
RESEARCH ASSISTANT (18.25 HOURS PER WEEK)
FIXED TERM CONTRACT UNTIL 1ST JULY 2016

SALARY SCALE
University Scale 0S5, points 15-18, £20,400 - £22,249 per annum, pro rata, payable monthly in arrears.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT
It is a requirement of this post that within 12 months of appointment, the post-holder should live within a 30 mile radius or within a one hour travelling time by public transport from the University.

HOURS OF WORK
Monday to Thursday 9.00am - 5.30pm
Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm (less one hour lunch break each day)
A flexible approach to work will be required as there may be occasions when it would be necessary for you to work additional hours as dictated by the workload.

HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT
22 days per annum (pro-rata during the commencement and cessation years), rising to 27 days after five years' continuous service. Two extra statutory days per annum during the Christmas period.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION
Successful candidates will be required to complete an Occupational Health questionnaire, and may be required to undergo a medical examination.

ESSENTIAL CERTIFICATES
Short-listed candidates will be asked to bring to interview, proof of qualifications as outlined on the Job Description and Person Specification provided. Upon appointment, copies of essential certificates will be required by HRM Services.

PENSION SCHEME
The University operates two pension schemes for support staff:
  • The default scheme is the Higher Education Defined Contribution Scheme (HEDCS), which is administered by Friends Life.
  • The Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme, to which the University is an admitted body.
All support staff are entitled to participate in one of these schemes. Some staff will be automatically enrolled into a scheme, depending on their age and earnings, but if they do not wish to remain a member of the scheme, they will be entitled to opt out after enrolment.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
The University has a policy of equal opportunity aimed at treating all applicants for employment fairly.

SMOKING POLICY
The University operates a No-Smoking policy.
PROBATIONARY PERIOD
A nine months’ probationary period applies to all University posts.

CLOSING DATE
Candidates should apply for this vacancy via our online recruitment website (https://jobs.chester.ac.uk/wrl/) by 13th December 2015 quoting reference number HR15108.