



OPPORTUNITY

Research Associate (Qualitative)

Reference:	R220621
Grade:	8
Salary:	£35,333 to £37,474 per annum, depending on experience
Contract Type:	Fixed Term for 24 months
Basis:	0.4 FTE for months 0-6, rising to 0.8 FTE for months 7-24

Job description

Job Purpose:

You will join an interdisciplinary, international team conducting groundbreaking methodological development for youth mental health research. You will be based at the prestigious Institute for Health and Neurodevelopment at Aston University. You will carry out recruitment, qualitative data collection, qualitative data analysis, co-production and methodological development work.

You will work under the supervision of Dr Michael Larkin and collaborate with a wide range of people, including the research team, young people, other researchers, funders, and mental health practitioners.

About you:

You will be able to demonstrate good knowledge of, and experience with, qualitative research methods; excellent communication skills; an interest in other people's experiences; an ability to apply the principles of best practice for coproduction and PPI (public and patient involvement in research), and a commitment to improving mental healthcare provision for young people.

About the project:

Across mental health services, research shows that some mental health interactions help young people, and some are harmful. For example, a young person might feel that a conversation with their GP about their mental health went well, but then leave a conversation with a different professional feeling worse. When interactions are harmful, it can disrupt mental health treatment, or may even lead young people to stop seeking help altogether. This can have long lasting negative effects on the young person.

When we carry out research on young people's mental health interactions, it is crucial to understand young people's perspectives on their experiences, and on *what they* want to happen. Young people should thus play a central role in all parts of the research process. While there is a clear need to do this, we currently do not have a research methodology to do this well. A *methodology* is a description of a way of *doing* research, but it is also a way of thinking about *how* to do it fairly, ethically, and meaningfully.

The methodologies that we currently use to explore young people's mental health interactions have been created by researchers without the involvement of young people. They may not capture the things that young people deem to be most important. To combat this issue, we need methods that meaningfully involve young people. Most importantly, we need methodology that actively involves young people in the analysis part of research.

In this MRC-funded project, we will build a new methodology that combines different forms of data collection (research interviews and video-recorded clinical encounters) and analysis (experiential and interactional), whilst involving young people in the process. The new methodology will help us to understand young people's subjective experiences of the mental health system. We will produce a clear guide about how to involve young people with lived experience on mental healthcare in qualitative data analysis.

About us:

We are a group of five academic researchers from psychology, sociology, psychiatry and philosophy, one youth involvement lead from the McPin Foundation, and the young members of an advisory group (YPAG) of people aged 17-26 with experience of using mental health services. McPin is an organisation aiming to help young people to get actively involved in shaping mental health research. We began working together 18 months ago on a UKRI-funded 'Engagement Award.' In that project, we watched and discussed real-life video recordings of young people's interactions with mental health professionals, where young people were seeking support in emergency departments. Together on Zoom, we watched the videos and then analysed them as a team by sharing perspectives. By working closely with our YPAG and involving them in the analysis stage, we learned a lot about improving clinical interactions. Additionally, we learned how to effectively involve young people at the analysis stage - especially when it includes looking at sensitive data. In this new project, we hope to build on, and further extend this work, to produce a methodology which other researchers can adopt.

Main duties and responsibilities

Research

- ▶ To liaise with and between the research team and the young person's advisory group, attending and participating in regular online meetings, and occasional 'in person' events in Birmingham and London.
- ▶ To contribute to the development of the project plan, and to help prepare a University Research Ethics application.
- ▶ To recruit and interview young adults for an interview study on help-seeking experiences
- ▶ To liaise with external transcription services and to implement the Data Management Plan.
- ▶ To support and conduct analytic work using experiential (e.g. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) and interactional (e.g. Conversation Analysis) approaches, with the involvement of the study team.
- ▶ To record and document the methodological, ethical and practical processes involved in the collaboration.
- ▶ To write up and publish the outcomes of research in good quality publications.
- ▶ To present the outcomes of the work at events and conferences.
- ▶ Where appropriate to School/University strategy and subject discipline, to participate in and develop external networks.

External engagement

- ▶ To represent the interests of the subject and School via activities to raise the regional, national and international profile, particularly with the professions, schools and businesses.

Citizenship

- ▶ To participate in events at the Institute for Health and Neurodevelopment, and to support junior colleagues in research.

- ▶ To demonstrate the University's leadership values through own actions and behaviour.
- ▶ To undertake such other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post.

Additional responsibilities

- ▶ Engage in continuous personal and professional development in line with the demands of the role, including undertaking relevant training and development activities to develop themselves and support the development of others.
- ▶ Ensure and promote the personal health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- ▶ Carry out duties in a way which promotes fairness in all matters and which engenders trust.
- ▶ Promote equality of opportunity and support diversity and inclusion as well as working to support the University's environmental sustainability agenda and practices.

Person specification

	Essential	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	<p>A good first degree in Psychology, Linguistics, or related Social Science.</p> <p>A PhD in a relevant subject.</p>	Application form
Experience	<p>Experience and evidence of competence (e.g. peer reviewed publication or a doctoral thesis) with at least one of these qualitative approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiential methods (e.g. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) • interactional methods (e.g. Conversation Analysis) <p>Experience of initiating and conducting research up to doctoral level.</p> <p>Experience of contributing to the write up of research for high quality publications.</p> <p>Experience of collaborative team working in research.</p> <p>Supervising, training or otherwise supporting junior researchers.</p> <p>Experience of developing research ethics applications.</p>	Application form and interview
Aptitude and skills	<p>Ability to collaborate and maintain communication within and between teams.</p> <p>Ability to be respectful and sensitive to other people's experiences.</p> <p>Ability to present data in both a clear and concise manner that is visually appealing.</p> <p>Ability to prepare written communications to a high standard.</p> <p>Ability to apply good working knowledge of principles of good practice for patient and public involvement in research (PPI) and/or coproduction in research.</p>	Application form and interview

	Essential	Method of assessment
	<p>Ability to manage a complex project.</p> <p>Ability to harness IT as a research and communication tool.</p> <p>Willingness to undertake further training as appropriate and to adopt new procedures as and when required.</p>	

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Experience	<p>Experience of seeking support for mental health (we encourage applications from people with lived experience of mental health services).</p> <p>Experience of co-production / co-design work.</p> <p>Experience of patient and public involvement (PPI) work.</p> <p>Experience and evidence of competence (e.g. peer reviewed publication) with both of these qualitative approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiential methods (e.g. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) • interactional methods (e.g. Conversation Analysis) <p>Experience of interdisciplinary work.</p> <p>Experience of methodological development.</p> <p>Experience of working with young people.</p> <p>Experience of mental health research.</p>	Application form and interview
Aptitude and Skills	Using social media (e.g. Tik Tok) to communicate research outputs.	Application form and interview

How to apply

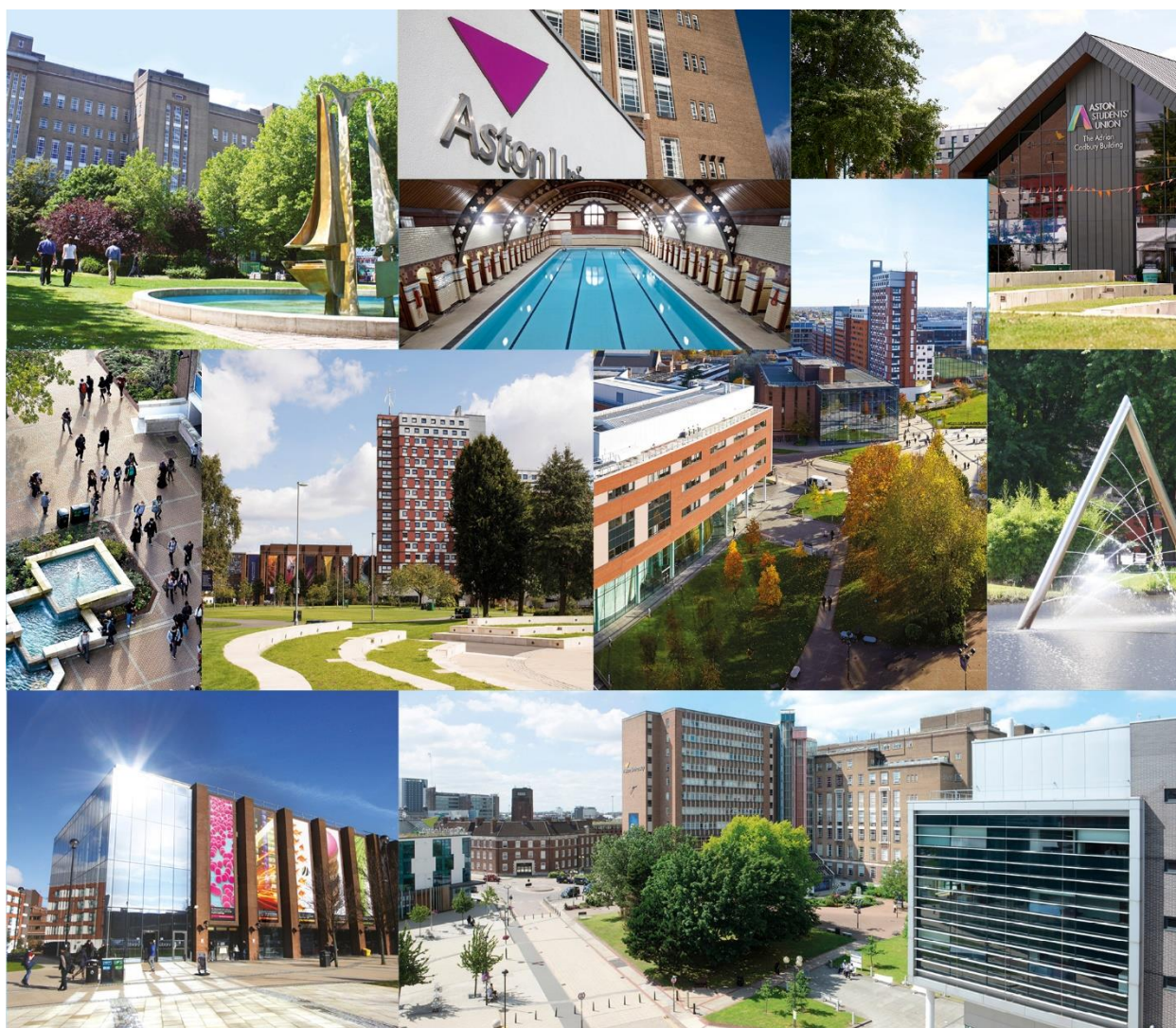
You can apply for this role online via our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs>.

Applications should be submitted by 23.59hrs BST on the advertised closing date.

All applicants must complete an application form, along with your CV.

Any CV sent direct to the Recruitment Team and Recruiting Manager will not be accepted.

If you require a manual application form then please contact the Recruitment Team via jobs@aston.ac.uk.



Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:

Name: Dr Michael Larkin
Job Title: Reader in Psychology
Email: m.larkin@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:

Recruitment Team via jobs@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

Visit our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr> for full details of the salary scales and benefits that Aston University staff enjoy.

Salary scales: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/payroll-and-pensions/salary-scales/index>

Benefits: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/Benefits-and-Rewards/index>

Working in Birmingham: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/birmingham>

Employment of Ex-Offenders: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the positions they applying for is listed an exception under the act.

Eligibility to work in the UK:

Post-Brexit transition period / EU Settlement Scheme

The post-Brexit transition period ended on 31 December 2020. If you are an EU/EEA citizen and you were a resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, you and your family members (including non-EU citizens need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue to live, work and study in the UK beyond 30 June 2021. The deadline for applying to the EU settlement scheme is 30 June 2021. You can apply via the Government webpage <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Irish Nationals do not need to apply for settlement as they retain the right to work in the UK.

New immigration system for EU/EEA and Swiss Nationals who were not resident in the UK before 31 December 2020

A new immigration system has been introduced for people arriving in the UK from EEA countries with effect from 1 January 2021. In addition to those who have always required a visa, EU citizens moving to the UK to work will need to get a visa in advance. You can find more information on the following website. Candidates should check their eligibility to enter or remain in the UK in advance of making any job application via the UKVI website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>. Before applying you should ensure that you meet the requirements, including meeting the English Language requirements. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful.

If you require a visa to work in the UK the most common types of visa are:

Skilled Worker Visa

<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa>

Global Talent Visa

If you are a leader or potential leader in one of the following fields you may be eligible to apply for a Global Talent Visa:

- Academia or Research
- Arts and Culture
- Digital Technology

Please click the following link for further information and to check your eligibility for this visa.

<https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Equal Opportunities: Aston University promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure, through our admissions policies for students, and our staff recruitment and selection processes that we encourage applications from all groups represented in the wider community at a local, national and international level.

The University will endeavour not to discriminate unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, against student or potential students, staff or potential staff. This commitment applies to all functions of the University and to any stage of an individual's career.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is included within the application form. Data you provide on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be included in a general database, for statistical monitoring purposes, enabling the University to monitor the effectiveness of its Policy, Codes of Practice and Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in Employment. Individuals will not be identified by name.

Data Protection: Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) ("GDPR"). The University's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, including the Job Applicant Privacy Notice can be found at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/data-protection>. Your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with the University which will be stored in manual and/or electronic files. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies.

Full details of our terms and conditions of service and associated policies and procedures are available online at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/policies>

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gets real.**