Aston University
BIRMINGHAM UK

Research Data & Systems Manager

OPPORTUNITY
Where change gets real.

Reference: 0541-24

Grade: 9

Salary: £46,485 to £55,295 per annum, depending on experience

Contract Type: Permanent

Basis: Full Time

Job description

Job Purpose:

The Research Data and Systems Manager is a strategic leadership role in the development, optimisation and implementation of research management systems, data management, development of dashboards and reporting to underpin the development of Aston's research base in line with our 2030 Strategy.

Working with the Senior Research Leadership Team the role holder will combine strategy and planning with effective system management, data analysis and data management support for our Research Excellence Framework submission, and the development and maintenance of research activity dashboards.

Reporting to the Director of Research Services, the role holder will be part of a dedicated team offering research management reporting and benchmarking support across the University. A continuous business improvement approach is essential, underpinned by excellent service provision.

The Research Data and Systems Manager will collaborate closely with the Data Centre of Excellence to ensure consistent application of the university data management and governance policies, standards, and best practices throughout the data lifecycle. As a key member of the Data Champions Group and an advocate for the university data strategy, they will be the lead for developing a data-guided culture within research and enterprise, driving alignment and promoting best practices in data analysis, reporting and insights.

Main duties and responsibilities

Development and Implementation of Research Management Systems

▶ To plan and manage research management systems priorities, reporting and business improvements across the University and make recommendations for improvements to existing research information systems, data and related processes. Develop a systems roadmap to support this work, working with Digital Services colleagues and other Research Management System owners to ensure required developments and support is scheduled.
▶ To engage with Digital Services to ensure robust integrations are developed for PURE (the University's Current Research Information system) from other core systems, and to ensure the interests of research management are represented on the institutional roadmaps.
▶ Work proactively with colleagues in Library Services to integrate infrastructure and support around research systems that support scholarly communications, research evaluation and open research.
▶ Work closely with Research Finance to specify and implement our Awards Management System.
▶ Work closely with the Impact Managers to develop evaluation and data systems for capturing impact.
▶ Work closely with the Research Integrity and Governance Manager to provide appropriate digital solutions for managing research ethics approval processes.
▶ Work with Institute managers and College research administrators to provide appropriate digital solutions for supporting research activities.
▶ Manage the use of SciVal bibliometric software across the University – ensuring its optimisation and value for money being an expert user and trainer to academic and professional services staff in order to inform and improve publication strategies. Manage the supplier relationship, contract/tender renewal and integration into Aston digital systems.
▶ Work with the Director of Research Services and other colleagues in Research and Enterprise to develop Equality Diversity and Inclusion dashboards.
▶ Work with colleagues across Research and Enterprise to scope and develop new dashboards to respond to emerging needs.

Development of research management dashboards and reporting

- ▶ Responsible for the creation, maintenance, and ongoing review of PowerBI dashboards which make up the bulk of Aston University's research-related reporting.
- ▶ Management of the Research and Enterprise suite of financial, activity, REF (and PGR) dashboards curated through PowerBI for research reporting.
- ▶ Working with the Director of Research Services, PVC-R and others to scope, develop and curate complimentary dashboards.
- ▶ Lead engagement with colleagues from Research, Research Finance, Colleges and Data and Analytics Team to curate financial, REF and bibliometric data within PowerBI.
- ▶ Collaborate closely with the Data Centre of Excellence to ensure consistent application of the university data management and governance policies, standards, and best practices throughout the data lifecycle.
- ▶ Operating as a key member of the Data Champions Group, the role-holder will be responsible for developing a data-guided culture within research and enterprise, driving alignment and promoting best practices in data analysis, reporting and insights.
- ▶ Be the lead for managing and developing new reporting techniques to feed into Aston University's progress towards the 2030 Research Strategy.
- ▶ Work closely with stakeholders in Colleges to ensure that reporting meets with ongoing requirements.
- ▶ Management of processes for data quality checks and working with various teams to ensure data accuracy.
- ▶ Responding to data audit queries from stakeholders and making amendments or seeking clarification as appropriate.
- ▶ To provide data and analysis of key research indicators in particular those concerning research funding, research environment and output evaluation regularly and on request to frame strategic discussions and provide high quality reports and analyses to inform evidence-based decision making.
- ▶ Preparation of headline REF-related data for review by Executive Deans, Deputy Deans for Research and the REF Management Group.
- ▶ Prepare detailed analyses of College applications and awards performance and Unit of Assessment readiness.

Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission.

- ▶ Responsible for providing data support for all aspects of the Aston REF submission from planning and modeling through to the collation and monitoring of our data during preparation, validation and submission of our return, post-submission responses to audit queries and analysis of results.
- ▶ Work with the Director of Research Services, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise and the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise to monitor and evaluate performance against our REF strategy, support future REF exercises and Aston's ongoing REF reporting needs.
- ▶ Developing and providing high quality benchmarking data to enable University strategic planning including for league tables and REF strategy, working closely with the Research and Enterprise Senior Management Team and the Quality and Planning team.
- ▶ Lead on the collation and maintenance of all REF-related data (including outputs and People, Culture and Environment data) from across all relevant university systems throughout the REF lifecycle – advising on their relevance, accuracy and use as necessary.
- ▶ Working with the Director of Research Services to establish and manage the timetable for REF preparation, evaluation, validation and final submission.
- ▶ Working with professional services colleagues to verify and audit publication records, research income data and PGR student numbers.
- ▶ Responding to REF audit queries and analysis of REF results on behalf of PVC- Research and Enterprise and Director of Research Services.

Pure System Owner

- ► Manage the ongoing development the University's current research information system (Pure), including its integration into other university systems making recommendations to the Director of Research Services and other key senior stakeholders. This will include maintaining and managing the relationship with the platform provider and liaising with Digital Services as necessary.Manage and maintain the use of Pure across the university, including managing the in house Pure helpdesk (and resolution of calls).
- ► Provide training of all academic and professional services colleagues to support Pure uptake as needed.
- ► Lead on the release of system updates (incl. testing and coordination with Digital Services) and evaluation of any proposed developments and integrations liaising with Digital Services as appropriate.
- ► Manage the relationship with Pure's supplier (Elsevier) including contract renewal, cloud transfer, integrations – working with Digital Services as necessary.
- ► To ensure that user roles continue to be provisioned correctly to minimise data protection risks.
- ► Ensure that updates and changes are communicated to stakeholder groups and resources are updated accordingly.
- ► To manage Pure on a day-to-day basis, including for example setting up new users, maintaining data tables of Aston-specific information, troubleshooting queries and actively working with the data owners to resolve these queries.
- ► To maintain and develop system documentation such as process-maps,standard operating procedures, list of "known-issues" appropriate for end user consumption.

Management

- ► Line management of the Research Data and Systems team (currently one Research Officer) including management of workload and appropriate delegation of the above activities and also their wider work to support Research and Enterprise and the Director of Research Services.
- ► Communication and collaboration
- ► Work collaboratively with colleagues in Research and Enterprise, Deputy Deans for Research, Executive Deans, and the wider Aston community towards achieving University's research strategy and thereby delivering for its beneficiaries.
- ► Work closely with the University Data Centre of Excellence, who validate all University dashboards, to ensure that the design and development of new research dashboards aligns with university standards.
- ► Work closely with the Head of Academic Insights (Quality and Planning Team) on data modelling in support of league table monitoring.

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	Educated to degree level or equivalent qualification.	Application form
Experience	Providing a high level of customer service, for example through running a system helpdesk and training new system users in the Colleges and Professional Services. Acting as the institutional point of contact for external providers of research management systems. Having the relevant expert knowledge to be able to take the initiative and find creative solutions to problems with IT systems, process issues, and progressing project work. This may require working with external system providers.	Application form and interview
Aptitude and skills	Ability to think strategically about your area of expertise, providing input into workshops and planning meetings. Excellent influencing and negotiating skills as well as the ability to manage conflict and resistance to change. Exercises good judgement about issues where there is a need to consult and inform others, and where decisions should be taken independently. Communicates and collaborates effectively with key stakeholders within and beyond the University,	Application form and interview

	Essential	Method of assessment
	providing advice, evidence and expertise to inform decision making. The ability to prepare and analyse data to provide meaningful insights using Power BI or other visualisation tools.	

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	Educated to post-graduate level. Qualified project manager.	Application form
Experience	Experience of a role where an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the UK research environment has been developed. Line management responsibility.	Application form and interview
Aptitude and skills	Writing technical specifications for integrations and reports for technical support staff.	Application form and interview

University values

All staff are expected to demonstrate/promote the University's values and expectations, which are an integral part of our strategy and underpin the culture of the University. In addition, our leaders are expected to be accountable, help to execute strategic visions of the University and share and set clear expectations that inspire those around them.

Values + Behaviours

Innovation
We strive for excellence within ourselves and others, providing solutions to new and existing challenges.

Collaboration
We work best when we are collaborative, working together to contribute to the Aston community.

Ambition
We strive together for improvement and innovation looking ahead to see the bigger picture.

Inclusion
We treat everyone in our community equally and how they would like to be treated.

Integrity
We are open, honest and fair. We take ownership of the way we work and how we treat each other.

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 23.59 pm 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 recruitment@aston.ac.uk.

Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:
Name: Sally Puzey
Job Title: Director of Research Services
Email: s.puzey@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:
Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

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

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

Benefits: Benefits and Rewards | Aston University

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: You should ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements, including meeting the English language standards. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful. Please see UKVI guidance for further information on eligibility, knowledge of English requirements and approved test centres https://www.gov.uk/tier-2-general

With the end of free movement for EU/EEA/Swiss nationals from 1 January 2021, the UK's new immigration system applies to all non-UK/Irish nationals who require a visa.

Where an individual is subject to UK immigration control, they will require a visa to work in the UK.

The following individuals do not need a visa for the UK, but do still have to prove their right to work before employment can commence:

- **British Citizens or Irish Nationals**
- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals with Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme**
- **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK**

The main routes available for those who need a visa to work in the UK are **Skilled Worker**, **Global Talent** and the **Graduate Route**.

You can find further information about each of these visa routes on our candidate immigration page.

If you will conduct research in your role, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application. Please see below for further details.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS):
If you will conduct research in your role and you apply for a Skilled Worker or Temporary Worker GAE visa, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application.

This process can take at least 6 weeks to process, and Aston will consider this when confirming your expected start date. Processing times will increase between April and September and can longer to complete.

There is no fast-track option available. ATAS certificates will be processed in order of receipt.

You can find more information about ATAS on our candidate immigration page.

Before you start and Right to Work

90-day entry vignette
If you have applied for your visa outside of the UK, you will receive a vignette in your passport which is usually valid for 90 days. Please make sure to travel to the UK within the 'valid from' and 'valid to' dates on this visa. If you entered the UK before or after these dates, you would not 'activate' the visa and you would need to leave and re-enter the country.

You will also receive a decision letter confirming details about your immigration permission and where to collect your Biometric Residence Permit.

Cost of Living - Estate and Letting Agents
There are numerous Estate and Letting Agents in and around Birmingham that can help you find suitable accommodation. The Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme provides a list of professional agencies and landlords who have applied with them for accreditation. Whilst accreditation is not a guarantee of quality, it provides some reassurance about the standard of the service they provide.

You can also use property search websites such as Rightmove or Zoopla.

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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