



RESEARCH ASSISTANT
(Part-time or full-time, 12-month contract, Payclass 7)
Division of Immunology
Department of Pathology
Faculty of Health Sciences

If you meet the requirements below, we invite you to apply for a 1-year T1 fixed-term contract position as a Research Assistant in the Department of Pathology at the University of Cape Town. The minimum working hours of the position are 20 h/ week, full-time appointment is negotiable. Appointment for further years dependent on availability of funding.

The main purpose of this position is to assist in the collection of data collection related to a study that enrolls infants who are born to mothers with HIV and assesses microbiological and immunological phenotypes and clinical outcomes, including neurodevelopment, in a randomized, double-blinded trial of *Bifidobacterium infantis* probiotic versus placebo given during the first month of life. The trial is conducted at the Community Health Center in Khayelitsha.

The role involves working closely with the research team, healthcare professionals, and study participants to ensure accurate and timely data collection while adhering to ethical guidelines and protocols. This appointment will be held in the Department of Pathology in the Faculty of Health Science at the University of Cape Town, under the leadership of the principal investigator (PI) of the research study, Dr Anna-Ursula Happel, and will report to the study's Project Administrator and Study coordinator.

Start Date: Immediate or as soon as possible.

Requirements for the job:

- Undergraduate qualification in a relevant field (e.g., Social sciences, Psychology, Public Health, or related discipline)
- Experience in and/or demonstrated interest in working with children and their caregivers.
- Previous experience in collecting data for clinical research
- Familiarity and/or experience with psychometric or qualitative assessment tools specific to pediatric research, such as developmental screening tools, standardized behavioural, cognitive or psychosocial assessments.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (both written and oral)
- Fluent in English and isiXhosa
- Demonstrated understanding of clinical research regulations, Good Clinical Practice or equivalent, and ethical guidelines.
- Strong attention to detail and ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a team.
- Demonstrated understanding of being mindful of cultural differences and adapting communication and administration methods to respect diverse participants.
- Demonstrated understanding of empathy, patience, and sensitivity to the needs and emotions of both children and caregivers.
- Ability to follow standardized protocols and procedures for questionnaire administration to maintain consistency and validity in data collection.
- Ability to address unexpected situations or challenges that may arise during the administration of questionnaires. Flexibility to adapt methods if necessary without compromising the integrity of the study, and flexibility in scheduling assessments to accommodate families' needs.
- Willingness to work in Khayelitsha Community Health Center
- Own transport

The following will be advantageous:

- Postgraduate training or qualification in Psychology, Public Health, Neuropsychology or related discipline.
- Proficiency in using data collection tools or software (i.e. REDCap).

Responsibilities:

Administrative Support

- Managing participant schedules, ensuring timely administration of questionnaires, and keeping track of completed surveys.
- Collaborate with the research team to support various aspects of the study, such as preparing materials, scheduling appointments, and coordinating with clinical staff.

Data Collection:

- Conduct data collection procedures according to the study protocols, which includes standardized behavioural, cognitive or psychosocial questionnaires. *you will be trained on the job in the tools which will be used in this study.
- Precision in administering the questionnaire to avoid errors or missing data. Ensuring all questions are answered properly and data is accurately recorded.

UCT reserves the right not to appoint.



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- Creating a comfortable environment for participants to encourage open and honest responses. Being empathetic and sensitive to participants' needs or concerns is crucial.
- Accurately recording responses and managing data in a systematic way to ensure its integrity.
- Clearly explain the purpose of the study and the questionnaire to participants, ensuring participants understand the questions.
- Accurately enter and maintain collected data in databases or electronic systems. Organize and manage data in compliance with confidentiality and regulatory requirements.
- Perform quality checks on collected data to ensure accuracy and completeness. Identify and report any discrepancies or issues to the research team.
- Ensure adherence to ethical guidelines, regulatory requirements, and institutional policies throughout the research process. Maintain documentation of all procedures and obtained consents.
- Communicate effectively with study participants, healthcare professionals, and other team members. Assist in the preparation of reports, presentations, and documentation as needed.

Training and Development:

- Stay updated on relevant research methodologies, protocols, and procedures. Participate in training sessions and contribute to the improvement of data collection processes.

The annual cost of employment for a full-time employment will lie between R242,404 and R444,945 depending on experience and qualifications.

To apply, please e-mail the below documents in a **single pdf file** to anna.happel@uct.ac.za:

- Cover letter
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- 2 references

Please ensure the title is indicated in the subject line.

An application which does not comply with the above requirements will be regarded as incomplete. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and may be required to undergo a competency test.

UCT is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity and redress in achieving its equity targets. Our Employment Equity Policy is available at <http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/eepolicy.pdf>