

## Research Associate in Criminology

### **Project Title: Child First? Examining children's perspectives of their 'effective' collaboration in youth justice decision-making**

The position is full-time (FTE1.0) and fixed term from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Job Ref: REQ220872

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/subjects/social-policy-studies/about/>

### Project Description

Professor Steve Case (Loughborough) and Dr Kathy Hampson (Aberystwyth) have received funding from the Nuffield Foundation to examine children's perceptions of their capacity for meaningful *collaboration* in decision-making processes when involved with the Youth Justice System (YJS). A central part of this project is children's collaboration in the design, implementation and evaluation of criteria for youth justice practice *effectiveness* throughout their *journeys* through the YJS. Participation and engagement of children in youth justice processes and practice is vital, particularly since the Youth Justice Board's adoption of 'Child First' justice as its guiding principle and key strategic objective. However, despite concerted efforts to prioritise collaboration with children, policy/practice does not necessarily yet reflect child-centric, Child First justice and instead remains adult-centric - prioritising adult views and understandings.

We are seeking a Research Associate (RA) to work with the lead researchers and justice-experienced children as co-researchers through a 'Project Reference Group', to ensure that research questions, design, instruments and analysis are driven by children, privileging *child*-centric understandings. Additionally, we will support the RA to work with justice-involved children from community settings (e.g. working with police and Youth Offending Teams/YOTs) and the youth secure estate, using a wide range of creative materials and methods (e.g. rap writing, lego-building). The RA will help children to log their experiences/perspectives of collaboration across their youth justice journeys and what in their view constitutes 'effective' practice in the YJS in digital diaries and 'system journey interviews'. This will add significantly to meaningful, child-centric, Child First understandings of system-wide youth justice from the child's perspective. Through this project, the research team will generate child-friendly guidance and resources on collaboration practice/expectations, with training (supported by the RA) made available to youth justice professionals on embedding children's views when co-creating collaborative practice.

### Job Description

**Job Grade:** Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

#### Job Purpose

To conduct research in the area of youth justice by encouraging the participation of children in the Youth Justice System. To be responsible for the development and implementation of a participatory, co-created research project examining the decision-making experiences of children. To undertake primary data collection using creative, collaborative methodologies

**Job Duties:**

- Be responsible for conducting the day to day running of the project.
- To formulate detailed plans for the project based on broad guidance from the project team.
- To collaborate with the investigators in the design and implementation of the research project
- To feed back to the project team on progress, to make recommendations for next steps.
- To co-design and implement collaborative, participatory research and, gather and analyse data from a range of creative methodologies with children in the YJS
- To contribute to, develop and deliver training and child-friendly guidance to youth justice practitioners regarding collaborative practice
- To participate in the public dissemination and impact plans linked to the project, including presenting key research findings to relevant (non) academic stakeholders
- To write research papers for publication in high quality academic journals.
- To write up regular progress reports and present outcomes to all Investigators and Collaborators.
- To write research papers suitable for publication in high quality academic journals.
- To maintain an up-to-date awareness of current and emerging research relevant to the project.
- Travel to attend meetings and make presentations both within the project partners working group and to external stakeholders.
- To attend and contribute to conferences.
- To contribute to project promotion and public engagement events.
- To contribute to the preparation of subsequent applications for external funding.
- Engage in training programmes in the University (or elsewhere) that are consistent with the needs and aspirations of the project and those of the Department.
- Undertake other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post

**Points To Note**

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

**Special Conditions**

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

**Organisational Responsibility**

Reports to Professor Steve Case, CSSP

## Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed with respect to meeting the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
- 3 – Interview

### Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Background in Criminology or other relevant social science	1,2,3
	Working/engaging with children both individually and in groups	1,2,3
	Qualitative data analysis	1,2,3
	Working knowledge of the Youth Justice System of England and Wales (e.g. structures, processes, issues, debates, effective practice)	1,2,3
	Understanding of Child First justice and the importance of children's participation within it	1,2,3
	Understanding of visual criminology	1,2,3
	Skills and abilities	Excellent written and oral communication skills
Self-motivated with ability to meet deadlines		1,2,3
Excellent interpersonal, and organisational skills		1,2,3
Excellent time management skills and ability to complete agreed work commitments on time		1,3
Ability to write project reports and make presentations to stakeholder groups, including children		1,2,3
Knowledge of relevant Ethical issues		1,2,3
Training		Demonstrate evidence of having undertaken further training
Qualifications	PhD (or nearing completion) or other relevant qualifications and/or experience	1,2,3
Other	Commitment to observing the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times.	1,2,3
	Ability and willingness to travel to engage with child research participants	1, 3
	Willingness to complete a DBS check	3

### Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience and skills in using creative methods of data collection (e.g. poetry, drawings, song writing etc)	1,3
	Experience in participatory research with children	1,3
	Authoring original work for academic journal papers, conference papers or technical reports	1,3

Skills and abilities	Critical literature review writing	1,3
Experience	Research with children experiencing disadvantage	1,3
Skills and abilities	Authoring original work, in the highest quality refereed academic journals	1,3
	A publication track record	1,3

## Conditions of Service

The position is FULL TIME and FIXED TERM from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Salary will be on Specialist and Supporting Academic Salary Grade 6 (£31,406 -£40,927), at a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment. The appointment will be subject to the University's Terms and Conditions of Employment for STAFF GRADES 6 AND ABOVE, details of which can be found [here](#).

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which can be found [here](#).

The University offers a wide range of employee benefits which can be found [here](#).

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/childcare-information---page.html>)

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>