

POSTGRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT in Biomechanics and Motor-Control

Full-time (37-hours per week); Fixed-term for 5-years, or upon completion of PhD, whichever is sooner

Job Ref: REQ231073

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Internationally recognised for its contribution to the study of sport, exercise and health, the School has wide-ranging expertise, encompassing such diverse areas as biomechanics, medicine, molecular and cellular biology, nutrition, pedagogy, psychology, physiology, sociology, economics and sport management.

The School has an active and ambitious plan to grow capacity and influence through developments as part of the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine, Loughborough in London, and StemLab.

The School is extremely proud to have held an **Athena SWAN Silver Award** since 2013, recognising the commitment and work of the School in addressing gender inequalities in Science, and to improving career progression for female academics.

The School is committed to ensuring that female students and staff are able to achieve their full potential, and provides a flexible and open working culture to enable staff to maintain a work-life balance.

We support our Athena SWAN initiatives by investing in:

- Bespoke leadership programmes to encourage and build confidence in women to take leadership roles.
- Working lunches, where needed, to enable meetings to be held between 10.00am and 4.00pm (as per our Silver Action Plan).
- Monthly coffee mornings which provide opportunities for networking and develop a sense of community within the School.
- Extra Mile Awards which recognise the 'above and beyond' contributions of staff from all job families and research students.

Further information about Athena SWAN and the School's commitment to upholding the Silver Award can be found at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ssehs/about/athena-swan/>

Research and Innovation

Research and Innovation within the School is characterised by excellence and breadth, and its quality was recognised in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework where Loughborough University ranked top for research power (GPA x volume) in Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism. Loughborough University has also placed Number 1 in the QS world ranking for sport-related subjects for six consecutive years (2017-2022, every year since the category was introduced). A broad range of social and natural sciences contribute to the School's research and innovation activity which is organised within three overlapping themes:

- **Sport Performance**, understanding and supporting the enhancement of athletes' performance in competitive sport;
- **Lifestyle for Health and Well-being**, encompassing research across several disciplines with the common goal of facilitating healthy living and ageing across the lifespan; and
- **Sport, Business and Society**, exploring how individuals, communities and organisations engage with and facilitate sport and exercise opportunities.

The School's research themes articulate in particular with the Sport and Exercise Beacon and the Health and Wellbeing Global Challenge which are key elements of the University's CALIBRE (Collective Ambition at Loughborough for Building Research Excellence) framework.

Further information about the School's research themes can be found at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ssehs/research/> and about the University's CALIBRE framework at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/calibre/>

Job Description

Job Family & Grade: Specialist & Supporting Academic Grade 5

Fixed-term for 5-years, or upon completion of PhD, whichever is sooner.

Job Purpose:

To provide support to the School's learning and teaching activity through assisting academic staff with the delivery of learning and teaching-related duties for Biomechanics, with a focus on Motor Control.

To provide the opportunity to undertake a PhD in an area aligned to the School's research themes.

It should be noted that a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant's learning and teaching duties will be undertaken with the close supervision of one or more academic members of staff, and will be in support of academic staff and the student experience. Duties will include assisting with marking, giving feedback, developing materials or pastoral care.

Postgraduate Teaching Assistants are expected to maintain standards of professional ethics appropriate for any member of academic staff.

Job Duties:

Teaching and Related Activities

1. To assist academic staff and students with learning and teaching, and perform defined tasks under supervision (not to exceed 600-hours across the academic year). PGTAs will be asked to undertake one or more of the following types of teaching activity under the supervision of, and in collaboration with, relevant academic members of staff:
 - Demonstrating/Seminars/Tutorials – to undertake laboratory demonstration and/or support teaching activities during seminar, tutorial and practical sessions.
 - Supervision – providing support to academic staff, supervising UG projects through, for example, providing technical support in experiments or assisting students in the use of software.
 - Mentoring/Tutoring – providing students with guidance and technical support for module queries, study skills, and referring them to appropriate pastoral support.
 - Highly moderated marking at Part F and Part A and, in exceptional circumstances (where the assessments have very clear marking schemes, and with the approval of the Associate Dean for Teaching), at Part B.
 - Answering student enquiries on behalf of the module leader, and escalating these to the module leader, where necessary.
2. To undertake the 'Essential Teaching Skills' training and to work towards Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

Research

To register as a part-time PhD student of the University and to maintain satisfactory progress throughout the period of appointment. PhD progress will be assessed through the standard PhD progression arrangements of the University and the School.

Potential PhD projects can be found at:

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/schools/sport-exercise-health-sciences/postgraduate-research/postgraduate-teaching-assistant>

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.

Upon successful completion of the Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, and not before the conclusion of the second year, the postholder may be eligible for promotion to the position of Postgraduate University Teacher, on Grade 6 of the *Specialist & Supporting Academic* job family.

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.

Continuation of employment is dependent on continued PhD registration and making appropriate progress. A number of special conditions and arrangements relating to this role are set out in **Appendix A**, at the back of this document.

Organisational Responsibility:

Reports to Dr Dave Burke, University Teacher – Biomechanics Practical Lead.

The postholder will also have a PhD supervisory team which will include at least two members of academic staff.

Person Specification

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

Area	Criteria	Stage
Qualifications	A good undergraduate degree in Biomechanics.	1
Experience	Some experience of planning, progressing and prioritising work	1
	Some experience of planning and undertaking a research project	1
Skills and abilities	In depth knowledge of the relevant academic area	1,3
	The ability to pursue a substantial independent research project over a sustained period (required for PhD registration)	1,3
	The ability to foster positive relationships with staff and students	1,3
	The ability to communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing	1,2,3
	The ability to think quickly and to respond to technical/theoretical questions about the relevant academic area	3
	The ability to actively listen, giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made and asking appropriate questions to aid understanding	3
	Strong IT skills	1,3
	The ability to develop a high level of skill in the prioritisation of a complex workload	1,3
Training	A willingness to undertake all necessary training	1,3
Other	Commitment to equal opportunities, health and safety	1,3
	Applicant must have also applied for and received a PhD offer from the School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences – the application for this should be done at the same time as the employment application	1,3

DESIRABLE

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of teaching or facilitating others' learning	1,3
Qualifications	A relevant MSc, or equivalent relevant work experience	1

Conditions of Service

This full-time post is offered on a fixed-term contract for a period of 5-years, or upon completion of PhD, whichever is sooner, with a September 2023 start. The salary offered will be within the *Supporting & Specialist Academic* job family, Grade 5 (£27,979 to £32,982 per annum); starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment.

The appointment will be subject to the University's normal Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff employed on Grade 5 and below, 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 are available at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/family-leave-policy-and-procedure---page.html>.

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 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/>

Before applying, candidates should review the information on our dedicated website: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/schools/sport-exercise-health-sciences/postgraduate-research/postgraduate-teaching-assistant>

Loughborough University is committed to allowing its employees to work **dynamically** with a combination of working on campus and remotely, where possible. This has been identified as a role that could work dynamically and, if successful, your line manager will discuss these informal arrangements with you. Please note that there is a general expectation that the successful candidate will spend the majority of time working on the Loughborough campus (further information is available [here](#)).

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Candidates who are invited to attend for interview will be required to complete an **application for PhD study** (applications should only be submitted by the invited candidates, when asked).

Available PhD projects, along with important information about these posts can be found in: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/schools/sport-exercise-health-sciences/postgraduate-research/postgraduate-teaching-assistant>

See Postgraduate Research Degree web-page for more details: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/apply/research-applications/>

APPENDIX 1.

Operating Procedures for Postgraduate Teaching Assistant and Postgraduate University Teacher (PGTAs and PGUTs)

1. Purpose and Definition

Postholders are employed on a 5-year training contract on a full-time basis during which they are also registered for a PhD on a part-time basis. The purpose of the role is to offer able students the opportunity to develop their academic career by supporting the teaching activity within School, thereby gaining valuable experience, while studying for a PhD with tuition fees covered by the University.

In general, the employment terms relate to the postholder's teaching role and their PhD studies are governed by the relevant academic regulations and procedures. Continued employment in the role is dependent on satisfactory progress with the PhD. Further details are set out below.

2. Recruitment and Selection

Vacancies will be advertised in accordance with normal staff recruitment procedures (see: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/recruitment-guide---page.html>). Opportunities will include the general areas of research interest available for PhD projects but will not normally be based on a specific PhD project. Candidates will therefore be asked to provide a brief proposal covering their PhD interests as part of the application. Candidates must meet the standard academic requirements for registration as a PhD student in the relevant subject area. Candidates will receive separate offer letters confirming their employment terms and the offer of PhD registration.

Posts will normally start on 1st September or 1st January of a given year, and individuals will be registered with effect from 1st October or 1st January respectively for their PhD. The maximum period of appointment will be for 5-years and 1-month to 30th September for 1st September starters, and 5-years exactly to 31st December for January starters.

Only individuals with existing rights to work and study in the UK can be considered as the role does not meet the requirements for Visa sponsorship under UK immigration regulations.

The views of potential PhD supervisors on suitability for research study, and of staff with responsibility for teaching on suitability for the teaching duties of the role, will both be taken into account to generate the shortlist of candidates. During the final stage of the selection process including the interview, the candidate's ability to undertake a PhD and the teaching duties will be evaluated and supervisors will be identified. The selected candidate will be offered the appointment and if they accept, directed to complete the on-line application form for registration for PhD study. A formal offer to register as a part-time PhD student for a period of 5-years with one of the relevant start dates noted above will then be issued by the Doctoral College Office.

3. Working Arrangements

All PGTAs will be subject to a 12-month probation period. They will be line managed in respect of their teaching duties by an appropriate member of academic staff within the School who will be responsible for managing their probationary period and subsequently conducting their Performance and Development Reviews (PDR).

Each postholder will have a Principal and Secondary PhD supervisor and their PhD studies will be overseen by the School's Director of Doctoral Programmes (DDP). Their PhD progress will be monitored according to the standard University and School procedures for part-time PhD students, taking into account that the duration of registration is 5-years.

Each postholder will also have a mentor who will be responsible for resolving any conflicts between the demands of their teaching activities and their PhD studies.

Employment will continue for the duration of the contract as long as teaching performance and research progress remain satisfactory unless the postholder completes their PhD early (see section 6 below).

PGTAs will initially be appointed to Specialist & Supporting Academic Grade 5 and will be expected to gain Associate Fellow status of the Higher Education Academy (or other such body) within the first 2-years of employment.

Not before the conclusion of the second year, a review will take place to assess the contribution that the PGTA is making to teaching in the School. If they have secured Associate Fellowship and have demonstrated sufficient ability to take on greater responsibility, they should be transferred to Specialist & Supporting Academic Grade 6 and their post will be retitled Postgraduate University Teacher. Deans of School will be prompted by Human Resources (HR) to consider whether promotion to Grade 6 is merited when PGTAs are close to completing 2-years' service.

Postholders will be expected to teach no more than the equivalent of 2-days per week over a 52-week period and will receive a full training programme, which will be delivered by colleagues in the Centre for Academic Practice. (CAP). The core training programme is mandatory.

In relation to their teaching duties, all University terms and conditions in relation to employment will apply to postholders and, in relation to their studies, the relevant terms and conditions for research students will normally apply. Should disciplinary action be required, the relevant staff procedures will be used. In the event of any other conflict between a staff policy and a student policy, the Chief Operating Officer will adjudicate on which policy should be followed.

4. Performance Management

Postholders' performance as a staff member and a student will be managed separately in accordance with the relevant staff and student policies.

There is a requirement that performance in both roles (student and staff member) will be at least satisfactory. Where this is not the case, the appropriate procedure(s) should be implemented to address this, and the postholder should be made aware of the potential consequences for their continued employment (see section 6 below).

5. Extensions

Extensions to the contract of employment in these roles will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, for example, where the postholder has been absent for a considerable period of time, eg. maternity, paternity, adoption leave or long-term sickness.

Extensions to employment will not be made during extensions of registration to complete the PhD beyond the 5-year period of study.

6. Termination

The appointment will conclude after 5-years except where an employment contract extension has been approved for the reasons outlined in section 5 above. Postholders will not be placed on the Redeployment Register at the conclusion of the contract.

If a postholder stops being a PhD student at any point during the contract, for whatever reason, the employment contract will automatically lapse, subject to contractual notice provisions. Where the PhD is completed successfully (examiners have recommended the award of the degree), the employment will be brought to end with a minimum of the contractual notice period. This may be extended for a short period at the discretion of the Dean to allow teaching for the current Semester to be concluded.

If a postholder resigns during the contract, discussions may take place separately regarding their PhD studies. The postholder will have the same rights as other part-time PhD students and as long as they are able to fulfil the requirements to engage with their research and to cover the tuition fees, it should be possible for them to continue with their PhD programme.

Anne Lamb, Deputy Director (Human Resources)
Jennifer Nutkins,, Academic Registrar
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