

Job Description

Research Development Manager

Salary:	Grade 7
Contract:	Full time, ongoing
Location:	KMMS locations at the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University campuses in Canterbury
Responsible to:	Head of Operations
Responsible for:	Project Coordinator, Research Administrative Coordinator, Research Ethics Coordinator
Job family:	Administrative, professional and managerial

Kent and Medway Medical School

Kent and Medway Medical School (KMMS) opened to our first cohort of students in September 2020 and achieved full GMC accreditation in 2025. Our vision is to become a beacon for first-class medical education and research and to attract the most talented aspiring doctors from within the local community and beyond, offering training and development opportunities that will help keep this talent in Kent and Medway. The five-year undergraduate programme is taught at the Canterbury campuses of both university partners with medical placements within Primary, Community and Secondary Care across Kent and Medway. KMMS brings together the existing centres of excellence in health and medical education provided by the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University and local healthcare organisations, to offer a new model of person-centred medical education. Research is a vital part of the Kent and Medway Medical School vision and mission. The Kent and Medway region, in which we are based, is characterised by degrees of inequality that Public Health England has identified as amongst the worst in the UK. This has informed the strategic research priorities for KMMS.

Kent and Medway present a stark picture of health inequalities, primarily due to 'coastal excess or effect' across its numerous coastal and rural communities, which are typically more dependent on the immediate supporting community infrastructure and assets, such as transport and communication links, local shops and social activities. These are especially precarious due to the nature of these relatively isolated coastal and rural areas.

Kent and Medway are also home to pockets with high health inequalities in rural regions, with well-described challenges in the delivery of community services. The opportunity to conduct high-impact research with populations that suffer disproportionately from adverse health and life outcomes, and for whom there are unique challenges to the provision of integrated and comprehensive healthcare due to their geographic location, is one of our key research priorities.

KMMS is leveraging its unique location and network to focus on rural and coastal medicine, inequities and disparities in health in relation to important disease areas. KMMS researchers are also involved in national and international studies. This research is always underpinned by multidirectional learning from work in other areas in the UK, the Global North and the Global South.

KMMS researchers have established a knowledge partnership to facilitate collaborative research between local NHS organisations, local authorities, academic, and community partners. Through collaborative research with colleagues from the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University, UK and international research centres, Kent healthcare providers, business and industry, policymakers and other external partners KMMS aims to become a regional hub for high-quality research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building in medical and clinical research.

All KMMS research is underpinned by strong community and public involvement, which is integral to ensure our research is ethical, effective and appropriately oriented to the needs of people in Kent and Medway. KMMS

researchers employ different creative and participatory methods to facilitate sustained and genuine engagement with local communities, dissolving knowledge hierarchies, and co-producing innovative health initiatives and interventions. People with lived experience, patients, community leaders, healthcare practitioners and policy makers are fully involved from the onset of KMMS research and voices, especially those voices who are often marginalised, are put central in KMMS research.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

KMMS is proud to have a diverse and inclusive community of students and staff. We welcome applications from members of all the non-majority parts of our community and KMMS is committed to fair treatment and to ensuring that the learning and working environment is supportive and inclusive to all. Duties in the delivery of learning, teaching and supporting students and staff should be performed in a manner in keeping with the School's commitment to equality and diversity.

Job purpose

The Research Development Manager will work in partnership with the KMMS Director of Research and the Business Development, Research and Innovation directorates at Kent and CCCU to help set-up KMMS research processes, policies and procedures as well as support the implementation of the KMMS research strategy. Their work will involve conducting an audit of activity ensuring that research and enterprise/ innovation income targets are met, establishing and maintaining internal and external networks, fostering the development of high-quality outputs and helping to build a sustainable and inclusive research culture. There will also be a strong project management focus of helping to establish new systems and ways of working for KMMS research, engaging all appropriate stakeholders, testing and improving processes.

As a member of the KMMS Professional Services management team, the Research Development Manager will provide direction and support in all areas of research administration and policy within the School. The role holder will work closely with the Business Development, Research and Innovation Directorate at the University of Kent and at Canterbury Christ Church University to ensure KMMS administrative requirements are met and also help to drive forward the work of the Research Support Joint Service Delivery Team across KMMS, the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University.

They will work with the academic community to influence and drive REF and any future KEF exercise preparation and submission as well as determine appropriate research-related policies. They will monitor and contribute to the achievement of KMMS's research and innovation key performance indicators and oversee all pre- and post-award administration. The Research Development Manager will also support the development of early and mid-career researchers within the academic community.

Key accountabilities

The following are the main accountabilities for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Set up and manage all research and innovation related processes, policies and procedures in KMMS
- Project manage the design and implementation of all new systems and ways of working related to KMMS research
- Conduct regular audits of research activity to help define new operational requirements
- Support the implementation of the KMMS Research Strategy in order to generate income and world leading research opportunities and support the University of Kent's institutional commitment to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity
- Support KMMS with REF and KEF submissions, working with academics, the Business Development, Research and Innovation Directorate, external Stakeholders and Unit of Assessment Coordinators to demonstrate strong impact case studies

- Provide administrative leadership and sound governance of research activities (producing data, management information and reports and providing support for all research related meetings) to monitor KMMS research and innovation activity and evaluate progress on the KMMS Research Strategy implementation plan
- Seek funding intelligence to support the Director of Research in the development and implementation of the KMMS Research Strategy by evaluating research performance and providing recommendations to KMMS decision-makers, preparing reports that will guide decision-making on research investments (e.g. new recruits, infrastructure etc.)
- Cooperate and collaborate across academic units and professional service directorates at both Partner Universities as well as with research support offices in affiliated NHS Trusts to provide focused pre- and post-grant award support to improve the success rate of applications
- Ensure the effective delivery of projects and maximise outputs
- Support the KMMS Director of Research and Dean with the induction and training of KMMS staff by facilitating the delivery of training and guidance by Kent's Business Development, Research and Innovation directorate on research management, grant writing, governance and systems to ensure research integrity such as ethical approval, support funding submissions
- Develop and deliver research development workshops to drive excellence, develop a strong research environment, build partnerships both within HEIs and NHS/social care organisations and disseminate good practice to the research community
- Work collaboratively with the KMMS Director of Research and KMMS research staff to build and develop an inclusive and sustainable research culture in line with KMMS values
- Support the ethical review process by managing the Ethics Coordinator, working closely with the KMMS Ethics Lead and the Universities' ethics experts, closely monitoring applications for ethical review, providing advice on procedural requirements, seeking specialist advice and ensuring adequate records for internal and external audit purposes
- Lead, motivate and develop the professional services staff reporting to this role, providing clear objectives and managing performance against these, to ensure that staff are appropriately motivated and trained to carry out their responsibilities at a high level of excellence

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- Setting up systems and processes by liaising with, influencing and seeking support from colleagues within KMMS, across both partner universities and with partner organisations
- Reporting to and communicating with senior leaders within KMMS and both partner universities to make requirements clear for the above
- Managing a complex workload with competing demands and deadlines. The role holder will agree objectives and overall priorities with the KMMS Director of Research and is also expected to manage unexpected/unplanned work within overall timeframes
- Representing the KMMS Director of Research at internal and external meetings to help grow KMMS' research reputation, networks and income by influencing a wide range of external senior stakeholders

Facts and figures

This role will directly support the KMMS Director of Research to deliver the KMMS target to increase its research income every year. The role holder will deal with a wide range of stakeholders, including research teams across five different NHS Trusts.

The role holder will support colleagues in Business Development, Research and Innovation directorates with the submission of c.15 research applications in the first year. This will need to grow rapidly year-on-year to enable KMMS to deliver its mission to be 'a beacon for first class education and research' and to meet its research and innovation income targets.

The role holder will manage three direct reports but will need to influence a wider Research Support Joint Service Delivery Team of around 10 staff from KMMS, University of Kent, and Canterbury Christ Church University who will need to support KMMS with implementing its research strategy.

They will help the KMMS operations team to induct and onboard at least 10 different individuals every year ranging from affiliated PhD students to honorary staff, partners and Research Assistants, bringing everyone together as a wider research team. In addition, they will be responsible for stakeholder mapping and engagement in relation to research and innovation related to KMMS.

Internal and external relationships

Internal: KMMS staff and students, Health-related researchers across both partner universities, Business Development, Research and Innovation Directorates at Kent and CCCU Finance directorate

External: Research Development Managers, researchers and research administrators in NHS trusts, NHS England, funders, other health sector organisations, private enterprise

Health, safety and wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Repetitive limb movements
- Conflict resolution
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends (this will be rare but may be necessary to support research events or activities)
- Ability to occasionally travel in a timely and efficient manner between campuses and to NHS, other healthcare or private enterprise sites

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent (A)
- Knowledge of higher education policies and an understanding of the need for universities to diversify their activity and income streams (A)
- Experience of and a passion for start-up environments and project management and solid knowledge of the challenges inherent in this type of environment (A, I)
- Demonstrable experience of improving processes or finding innovative solutions to problems (A, I)
- A proven track record of applying for funding increasing revenue and establishing new partnerships (A, I)
- Experience of supporting and establishing collaborative partnerships between professional services teams, institutions, academics, NHS, social care, local authority and/or business sectors (A, I)

- Excellent and effective negotiation, influencing, presentation and oral communication skills, particularly the ability to persuade and inspire colleagues from a wide range of backgrounds to work collaboratively (I, T)
- Effective report writing skills and the ability to produce clear and concise written materials (A, I)
- High level of analytical skills, with the ability to communicate on, and work within, complex strategic and policy concepts (A, I)
- Firm commitment to service excellence and continuous improvement with an ability to be resourceful (I)
- Experience of successfully managing staff, with well-developed team management skills and a clear passion for developing motivated staff and strong teams (A, I, T)
- Commitment to deliver and promote equity and inclusion and the KMMS vision and values (I)
- A passion for multidisciplinary, impactful research (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- Knowledge of the academic research and innovation funding landscape
- Experience of developing and maintaining a network of contacts within own organisation and wider (A, I)
- Cognisant of the challenges and strategic issues facing research across health and social care providers and higher education institutions (I)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage