

## Job Description

Post Title and Post Number	Research Assistant - 55231
Organisation Advertising Description	School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences College of Life and Environmental Sciences
Post Number	55231
Full Time/Part Time	Full Time
Number of hours / weeks to be worked	100%
Duration of post	1 year
Post is open to:	Internal and External Candidates
Grade	Grade 6
Salary	Starting salary is normally in the range £25,513 to £27,864. With potential progression once in post to £31,342 a year.
Terms and Conditions	Research & Analogous
Closing Date	19 August 2015

## Job Summary

A research assistant position in vertebrate palaeontology is now available based within the research group of Dr Richard Butler, within the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences. The role would suit a recent graduate with a background in palaeontology or geology, who wishes to build experience and skills in palaeontological research.

The successful applicant will be employed for one year to work as part of a European Research Council-funded team focused on testing the spatial and temporal patterns and abiotic and biotic drivers of the diversification of terrestrial tetrapods over the Phanerozoic. The research assistant will be primarily focused on developing spatially and temporally comprehensive datasets of fossil vertebrate taxonomy and occurrences. They will need to conduct comprehensive literature searches to recover and extract from the scientific literature information on fossil vertebrate distribution, which they will then incorporate into the online *Paleobiology Database*. Some travel outside of Birmingham (e.g. to London) may be necessary to acquire key scientific literature. Opportunities may be available to attend relevant training courses and conferences, and to collaborate on research publications with other members of the research team.

## Main Responsibilities

- To undertake the collection and compilation of research data, primarily identifying and extracting information on fossil vertebrate occurrences from published literature and incorporating it into the *Paleobiology Database*
- Analyse research data as directed
- Present research outputs, including drafting academic publications or parts thereof, for example at seminars and as posters
- To travel outside of Birmingham as required in order to access key scientific literature

- To contribute to the quantitative analysis, interpretation, and publication of this data
- To work in collaboration on this research project with other members of the research group and external partners
- Provide guidance as required to any students who may be assisting with research
- Carry out administrative tasks related directly to the delivery of the research

#### **Scope of the Role**

- To undertake the collection of research data within the scope of the specified research project
- To support and contribute to the analysis and publication of this data

#### **Skills and Experience**

##### **Essential**

- First degree in a relevant area such as Geology or Palaeontology
- Understanding of and ability to interpret and work with published stratigraphic and taxonomic information
- Ability to develop a structured and well-organised approach to data collection
- Practical experience of applying the relevant skills and techniques
- Ability to analyse information and communicate effectively
- Excellent IT skills

##### **Desirable**

- Experience of working with databases

#### **Planning and Organising**

- Plan own work effectively to maximise data collection
- Coordinate own work with others to avoid conflict or duplication of effort
- Work to agreed specifications, time and quality standards
- Undertake those management/administration tasks that are related directly to the delivery of the research

#### **Decision Making**

- Plan work to agreed specifications, time and quality standards
- Attend and contribute to group meetings
- Deal with problems that may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines

#### **Internal/External Relationships**

- Liaise with University of Birmingham research staff and support staff on research-related matters
- Liaise with external collaborators on the research, where appropriate
- Maintain contact with (including membership of) appropriate professional bodies
- Liaise with the relevant external research community via seminars and conferences