

CANDIDATE PACK

Research Associate

School of Social Sciences



OUR UNIVERSITY

Under the inspirational leadership of Professor Peter Bonfield OBE, the University of Westminster is a place where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. Serving more than 21,000 undergraduate, postgraduate, apprentice and executive students, our mission is to transform the lives of young people from all backgrounds. We seek to make the world a more inclusive, sustainable, better and healthier place through our educational, research and knowledge exchange endeavours.

Since our founding in 1838 we have stood out as innovators, committed to tackling social inequalities. In 2021, our University ranked 2nd in England out of more than 100 higher education institutions for social mobility. The ranking - produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Sutton Trust - compares the number of students from low-income backgrounds at universities, and the extent to which their studies helped them to move up the income ladder. Westminster has the second highest performance among universities in England.

As we focus forward to 2029, we will continue to do so in a way that is true to our progressive, compassionate and responsible values. Our education offer will be more personalised and authentic, giving students from all backgrounds an opportunity of transformative learning, helping them succeed in their studies and professional lives. Our curriculum will be employability-linked, leading to stronger outcomes and helping prepare our graduates for the world of work and for life. Our research and knowledge exchange will enable us to maximise our positive impact on societies in the UK and around the world in an environment where everyone is inspired to succeed. Our priorities of wellbeing, inclusion and sustainable development will help us as we navigate through the challenges and opportunities towards 2029.



OUR PRIORITIES

The University's 2022-2029 strategy, *Being Westminster*, sets us apart and builds on our unique history and achievements. In our University, we value social justice, moral conscience, inclusivity and equality, acting positively together to make change for good.

The University of Westminster has three priorities.

WELLBEING

Working and studying together at Westminster as a community of students and colleagues is a big part of our lives - doing so in an environment that places our wellbeing front and centre helps us to be safe and feel safe. We care for the safety, health and wellbeing of those around us as well as ourselves.

INCLUSION

All Westminster, colleagues and students are in a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and is a place where harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. As a responsible institution, we strive to ensure and to champion equality. As a progressive institution, we take pride in our diversity. As a compassionate institution, we commit to an inclusive culture that allows students and colleagues to reach their full potential.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We take inspiration from the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in how we drive our actions and activities and governance across our University. As a community, we bring together our collective energies to play our part in addressing the climate crisis and inequalities to enable a more sustainable and socially just world. We are one of the top 20 universities in the world in SDG 5 for providing equal access and supporting the academic progression of women. We are one of the top 25 universities in the world in SDG 10 tackling economic, health based and international inequalities. We are in the top 50 universities in SDG 12 for promoting resource and energy efficiency, having a sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services for all.



OUR OBJECTIVES 2022-2029

Against a backdrop of a changing and challenging higher education environment, the University has recently completed a major review of its objectives and strategy, and has published its commitments for the period 2022-29.

EDUCATION

We will offer personalised and authentic education, underpinned by an inclusive curriculum, to enable all our students, from all backgrounds, to engage in transformative learning and to succeed in their studies and professional lives. We will address global, political, and social challenges through a relevant demand-led and forward-looking portfolio. We will do this by offering authentic teaching, learning and assessment modes which immerse students in the wider-world through live projects, work-based learning and global opportunities. We will invest in our people to enable all teaching colleagues to plan and deliver exceptional learning experiences and professional colleagues to offer exceptional support. Students will be empowered by working in partnership with colleagues and fellow students to shape the Westminster experience. We will develop an integrated physical and digital environment that supports excellent practical, active and collaborative learning for all our students.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Research and knowledge exchange are fundamental to our commitment to making a positive difference to the world and transforming lives. We are committed to research in four priority areas: Diversity and Inclusion; Health Innovation and Wellbeing; Sustainable Cities and the Urban Environment; Arts, Communication and Culture. Our excellence in research and knowledge exchange will infuse our education endeavour, inspiring and equipping our students as agents of change locally as well as globally. We will continue to grow our community of PhD researchers, ensuring that the Westminster postgraduate research experience remains sector leading and the foundation for great careers. In knowledge exchange we will focus on engagement with government, business and with the public and local community. We will achieve more when we identify shared interests and build partnerships with our communities and collaborate for the public good with a clear civic purpose.

EMPLOYABILITY

We will ensure that all our students benefit from employability-led learning and purposeful engagement with employers, business and industry, to give students from every background the best possible preparation for the world of work and enable the best possible employability outcomes. We will do this through the further extension and embedding of programmes such as work-based and placement learning; the Westminster Employability Award; Westminster Working Cultures; mentoring; and student enterprise. Employability-related learning will be a core and critical part of the courses and curriculum we offer, right across the University. It will be front and centre of life at the University for students and colleagues.



A key priority will be the development of a dedicated Centre for Employability and Enterprise at 29 Marylebone Road, intended to transform our student experience and our engagement with business, industry and employers. The Centre will provide a game-changing experience through which undergraduate and postgraduate students from across Westminster will come together and practise enterprise; develop an entrepreneurial mindset and skills; access training, work, projects, business advice and mentoring; and connect directly with employers. The future-focused environment of the Centre will scale up our employability provision, helping our students to be 'fit for the future' in the most challenging of post-pandemic labour markets and economic environments. It will strengthen links between our UK-based and international employer partners and our motivated, bright, work-ready students, affording employers access to a diverse mix of people right for the needs of the contemporary workforce.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

We will raise the international reputation and reach of the University, ensuring that 30% of our undergraduate community and 70% of our taught postgraduates come to us from overseas. Overseas partnerships will remain central to our global engagements. We will prioritise the outward mobility of our students to partner institutions, Contributing to students' development of employability skills and competences. We will extend and deepen our Trans-National Education relationships. These partnerships, particularly that with Westminster International University in Tashkent, will move beyond franchised or validated arrangements to embrace employability, alumni-related research, CPD and knowledge exchange connections.



OUR STRUCTURE

ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

Our structure is built to deliver an enhanced learning environment, stronger and broader industrial, international and professional connections and pioneering and impactful research. The University comprises three Colleges:

Westminster Business School

- School of Organisations, Economy and Society
- School of Finance and Accounting
- School of Applied Management
- School of Management and Marketing

College of Creative Arts and Technologies

- School of Architecture and Cities
- Westminster School of Arts
- School of Computer Science and Engineering
- Westminster School of Media and Communications

Liberal Arts and Sciences

- School of Social Sciences
- Westminster Law School
- School of Humanities
- School of Life Sciences

The University Executive Board comprises:

- Vice Chancellor and President
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Employability and Global Engagement)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
- Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
- Three Heads of College

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Our Professional Services teams support the effective and professional delivery of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange and the management of student residences and sports facilities.

- Academic Registry
- Business Engagement and Graduate Futures Directorate
- Digital and Technology Services
- Estates
- Finance and Commercial Activities
- Global Engagement
- Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications
- Graduate School
- People, Culture and Wellbeing
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Strategy, Planning and Performance
- Student and Academic Services
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Research Associate
Reports to: Senior Lecturer
Department: School of Social Sciences
Grade: REA

ROLE PURPOSE

All Research Associates are required to demonstrate respect for individual learners and be committed to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and/or professional practice. All Research Associates are required to be committed to the development of learning communities and encouraging participation in Higher Education, while acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity. It is also a requirement that all staff are committed to undertaking continuing professional development and evaluation of individual practice and that they are proactive in improving the student experience.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To understand and make use of standard research techniques and methodologies and to analyse and interpret results from individual research and generate original ideas based on these outcomes.
2. To plan and manage personal day-to-day research activity, within the framework of an agreed programme, and to deal with any problems that may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines.
3. To undertake research, for example, the preparation, setting up, conducting and recording of qualitative interviews, the development of a policy analysis, literature and database searches; ensuring that results are written up and outcomes are presented to the individual or bodies sponsoring or supervising the research, e.g. steering groups, developing and managing a steering group of mothers and their associated tasks, ensuring impact and dissemination of the research findings.
4. To contribute to the production of research reports and publications and to prepare papers and documents for individuals, partner agencies or bodies sponsoring or supervising the research as required.
5. To make internal and external contacts and develop knowledge and understanding with a view to forming relationships for future collaboration.
6. To attend and contribute to relevant internal and external meetings and to the decision making process in general, in a positive and collaborative manner.



7. It is envisaged the postholder will look to engage in subject, professional and pedagogic research and other scholarly activities which can support teaching activity and where the quality of the outputs can be recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
8. To ensure a personal programme of Continuous Professional development (CPD) is developed and maintained.
9. To have an understanding of individual health and safety responsibilities and an awareness of the risks in the work environment, together with their potential impact on both individual work and that of others.
10. To undertake any other duties within their competence, as required by the University.

CONTEXT

We are looking for a post-doctoral researcher to work on an Economic and Social Research funded project: Centring Mothers Voices in the Prevention of Gangs and Serious Youth Violence.

Mothers are the primary defenders against gangs and serious youth violence, yet their voices are rarely heard. This project puts mothers at the heart of prevention. It recognises their unique role as protectors, advocates, and anchors in communities. While they often mediate between their children and systems of support, mothers' lived experiences remain sidelined in research, policy and intervention design. This study breaks new ground by being participatory and co-created with mothers themselves, alongside key stakeholders who can translate findings into real-world practice. It is more than research—it is a collaborative endeavour for change.

The research will involve conducting a literature review and policy analysis of extant research and legislation related to the role that mothers play in the prevention of gangs and serious youth violence. The post holder will also be expected to conduct qualitative photovoice interviews with mothers and the practitioners that support their families. In addition, the post holder will be involved in a range of impact and dissemination activities including managing a steering group of mothers who will work with the research team to produce policy briefings, a policy toolkit an online project site and academic publications.

The postholder have experience of conducting quantitative analysis with vulnerable groups, preferably mothers of young people involved in gangs or serious youth violence. They will have excellent communication skills including both academic and lay accessible written and verbal communication.

The postholder will possess sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques to work within their own area. The postholder will be expected to engage on a programme of continuous professional development (CPD).

The postholder will be expected to actively participate as a member of the research team and have the ability to show consideration to others and liaise with other members of staff (academic, research and support). They will need to co-ordinate their own work with others to avoid either conflict or duplication



of effort and be able to contribute to the decisions affecting the work of the team. The postholder will be expected to deal with routine communication using a range of media and be able to communicate effectively.

The postholder has responsibility for ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken for the activities for which they are responsible and that measures to control risk are identified and implemented, and communicated to all affected.

They must ensure the provision of adequate supervision and training, to include: the responsibility to work with due regard for the health and safety of themselves and others; familiarity with actions to be taken in the event of emergency; and the duty to report accidents and hazards appropriately.

They will also require a thorough understanding of the diversity and equal opportunities issues.

DIMENSIONS

The successful candidate will work with a Senior Lecturer from the University of Westminster. They will be based in Criminology, School of Social Sciences, University of Westminster, Regents St Site in central London.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- Degree

Desirable

- Post-Graduate Degree or Professional Qualification
- PhD or the equivalent in professional qualifications and experience (or working towards this)
- Teaching Qualification

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Recognised record of experience in research
- Subject expertise that is up to-date

Desirable

- Contribution to design of teaching or research

APTITUDES, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Essential

- High level analytical capability
- Knowledge of relevant research models, techniques and methods
- Ability to communicate information clearly.
- Fully committed to contributing to a stimulating learning and working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

Desirable

- Ability to encourage commitment to learn in others
- Ability to assess and organise resources



HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this vacancy, please visit our [vacancies page](#) where you will be able to register as a candidate and complete your online application.

You will be requested to upload a CV which will be used to populate relevant sections of your application. You will also be requested to complete a concise statement in support (ideally no longer than 1000 words), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification and your motivation for applying.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 11.59pm on 26th October 2026.

Interviews will take place on 17th or 18th November 2026.

An appointment will be made subject to proof of eligibility to work in the UK and satisfactory references being obtained.

At the University of Westminster, diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders.

We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

The University has adopted Smart Working principles to support and further our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims of being an inclusive, collaborative and flexible employer. Further details of Smart Working can be discussed at interview stage.



OUR BENEFITS

The University offers a range of wellbeing and work-life balance benefits to recognise and reward the essential contribution our colleagues make to success and growth. Our benefits are inclusive for colleagues of all backgrounds including LGBTQ+ colleagues, disabled colleagues, pregnant colleagues, parents and carers, as well as colleagues of all genders, age, ethnicities, nationalities, religion and beliefs, and marriage and civil partnership status.

- 35 days annual leave per year, plus bank/national holidays and University of Westminster closure days (pro-rata for part-time staff).
- A generous occupational pension scheme.
- Annual incremental progression and/or cost of living reviews.
- Generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave.
- Flexible working and smart working.
- Learning and development opportunities.
- Free membership rates for a wide range of sporting facilities, including gyms at Regent Street and Harrow campuses, as well as the Chiswick Sports Ground.
- Employee assistance programme.
- The opportunity to participate in other attractive employee benefit schemes such as Cycle to Work, Eye Care Vouchers, Season Ticket Loans, and Give As You Earn.





westminster.ac.uk

The University of Westminster is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Registration number: 977818. Registered office: 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2UW. 9860/08.23/JT

