



RESEARCH ASSISTANT– DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (30 Month Part-Time, Fixed Term Appointment)

GENERAL JOB SPECIFICATION Duties and Terms & Conditions of Employment

1. PREAMBLE

Mary Immaculate College is an autonomous, university-level, Catholic College of Education and the Liberal Arts. Founded in 1898, and linked academically with the University of Limerick, MIC is the oldest higher education institution in Limerick. Significant expansion in recent decades has seen the College's menu of educational programmes expand across two impressive campuses, one based in the heart of Limerick City and one in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The diverse student community is made up of more than 5,000 learners, participating in twelve undergraduate degree programmes and a wide range of postgraduate programmes up to and including doctoral level. Academic staff members engage in professional academic research activities, and research underpins all teaching and learning at the College.

MIC seeks to prepare its students for professional excellence and to nurture their capacity to lead flourishing lives.

2. CANDIDATE PROFILE AND SCOPE OF THE POSITION

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) wishes to appoint a Research Assistant in the Department of English Language & Literature on a part-time, fixed-term basis for a period of 30 months. The appointee will work on a project entitled '*Interactional variation online: harnessing emerging technologies in the digital humanities to analyse online discourse in different workplace contexts*', funded by Irish Research Council (IRC) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). MIC is the lead Irish institution on the project and will work alongside Cardiff University who are the lead UK institution.

The appointee will assist the lead researchers on the project, taking a central role in data gathering, collation, transcription, quality control and analysis and in contributing to the development and maintenance of the project's online archive asset. The postholder will also contribute to events and publications that will disseminate research findings and showcase the online archive asset, to academic and community audiences.

Essential Qualifications, Experience & Skills:

- a) A postgraduate degree in a discipline related to language studies, applied linguistics, corpus linguistics, and/or multimodal interaction;
- b) Knowledge of data gathering methods and techniques used within language studies, applied linguistics, corpus linguistics, and/or multimodal interaction;

- c) Demonstrable ability to communicate research findings to peers in the research community through the delivery of research outputs;
- d) Experience in the use of social media platforms and proven ability to create media content;
- e) Demonstrable ability and motivation to work collaboratively as part of a research team across different partner institutions, as well as independently;
- f) Excellent communication, organisational, and time management skills;

Cuirfear fáilte roimh iarratais ó dhaoine go bhfuil dearcadh dearfach acu i leith na Gaeilge.

Applications are welcome from people who have a positive outlook on Irish.

Please note that current government policy may have implications for the re-employment of applicants who are currently in receipt of a public sector pension.

3. JOB DESCRIPTION

Reporting Relationship

The appointee is required to carry out the duties attached to the post under the general direction of the Principal Investigator, Dr Anne O’Keeffe to whom they report, and to whom they are responsible for the performance of these duties in the first instance and with other College personnel and relevant College bodies in carrying out the duties attaching to the post. The appointee will also have a reporting relationship with the Head of Department, the College President and/or such other College Officers as may be designated from time to time.

The reporting relationship may be subject to review from time-to-time, in line with service needs and developments in the College.

Duties and Responsibilities

The functions and duties attached to the position of Research Assistant will be assigned and modified by the Principal Investigator. They will carry out the following indicative functions and duties:

- Collect, transcribe and analyse natural language data for the project;
- Analysis of large quantitative datasets (including corpora);
- Collection and analysis of qualitative data (including questionnaires);
- Gather qualitative data from semi-structured interviews;
- Create content for social media applications such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook;
- Prepare in consultation with the research team, material for publication in peer reviewed journals, conference presentations and social media and training content and outputs;
- General administrative duties as required;

The list of duties and responsibilities as detailed is not exhaustive and other duties may be assigned as the project proceeds by the Principal Investigator.

4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

General

All persons employed will sign an appropriate contract, which will contain terms and conditions of the employment. A job description is given to all applicants for employment and this will form part of the contract documentation.

Place of Work

The appointee's primary place of work will be Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. The College reserves the right to require the appointee to work from any other location.

It is a requirement of the College that the appointee must reside within a commutable distance of the College. Due to current public health restrictions the appointee may be required to conduct some or all of their work remotely.

Exclusivity of Service and Outside Work

The person appointed will be required to devote their full-time attention and abilities to their duties during their working hours in the College and to act in the best interest of the College at all times. Therefore, for as long as the successful applicant is working in the College, they may not, without the prior written consent of the College, be actively engaged or concerned in any way, either directly or indirectly, in any other business or undertaking where this is or is likely to be in conflict with the College's interests or the performance of the duties that the person has been employed for.

Apart from the occasional giving of lectures elsewhere, the writing of books and occasional literary materials, the appointee will not, during their tenure of office, undertake paid outside work unless they have received the permission of Vice President Academic Affairs (VPAA) to undertake such work on the terms and conditions as agreed for the particular undertaking in question. In every case, it is the duty of the appointee to seek in writing the prior permission of the VPAA. It is also the duty, in every case, of the appointee to inform the person or body for whom the work is being undertaken, that the work is being conducted in a private capacity and that the College cannot in any circumstances be responsible for such work.

Probationary Period

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the standard 9 month probationary period. The probationary period may be extended at the discretion of the College but will not in any case exceed 11 months. In the event that your employment is for a period that is less than the standard probationary period, then probation will apply for the full period of your employment. Absences during the period of probation will extend the probationary period. Performance and conduct during the probationary period will be monitored through a process of assessment meetings. Termination of employment during the probationary period, for any reason or no reason, will be at the discretion of the College. The disciplinary procedure will not apply to a dismissal during probation where the probationary employee has been employed by MIC for less than 12 months.

Hours of Attendance

This is a part-time appointment and the hours of attendance will differ for each year of the appointment. The appointee will be required to attend as follows:

Months 1 - 12: 1 day per week or 7.8 hours per week (0.25 FTE)

Months 13 – 24: 4 days per week or 31.2 hours per week (0.8 FTE)

Months 25 - 30: 1 day per week or 7.8 hours per week (0.25 FTE)

The appointee is expected to be habitually present and available to staff and students alike during assigned working hours, Monday to Friday. The appointee may be required to work occasional evenings and weekends

Academic staff members are required to supply students with an MIC e-mail address at which they can be contacted. They must also provide the College Authorities with a telephone number at which he/she may be contacted during non-semester times. However, under no circumstances will contact telephone numbers to given to students by College Authorities.

Salary

This post is subject to external funding. The Irish Universities Association (IUA) salary scale has been adopted by the College for this externally funded research appointment. The annual salary for the post may be increased or decreased in line with Government Policy on Public Sector remuneration. In keeping with all other branches of the Civil and Public Service, individual bargaining for salary increases is not allowed.

With effect from 1st October 2020, the annual salary scale for this appointment is:

€26,609; €27,374; €27,767 (3 Points)

Starting salary will be at the 1st point of the scale. Increments are awarded in line with national pay agreements.

For employees working less than whole time hours salary will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

Salary will be paid on a monthly basis on the 25th of each month, or the previous Friday if 25th falls on a weekend, using the Paypath facility. Payment of salaries and wages are subject to statutory deductions, i.e. Income Tax (PAYE), Superannuation Contributions, Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) and Universal Social Charge (USC).

Superannuation

New entrants appointed will be required to participate in the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and pay Superannuation contributions at the appropriate rates in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012. Details of this scheme can be obtained from the College's website.

All other eligible appointees are automatically included in the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme on taking up appointment. In compliance with the Colleges of Education Pension Scheme, deductions amounting to 6.5% are made from salary. Details of the regulations concerning the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme may be obtained from the College's Human Resources Office.

Appointees who commenced employment in the public service between 1st April 2004 and 31st December 2012 and have not had a break in employment of greater than 6 months will have no mandatory retirement age. All other appointees will have a mandatory retirement age of 70.

Staff who are not eligible for membership of the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme or the Single Public Service Pension Scheme may avail of a PRSA (Personal Retirement Savings Account). A designated PRSA provider has been nominated by the College and staff who are not eligible for membership of the aforementioned schemes should contact the Finance Office for further information on PRSA.

The appointee will be required to pay Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) under the provision of Public Service and Pensions Act 2017.

Annual Leave

In addition to Public Holidays, a minimum of 20 working days will be allowed per annum, pro rata. Annual leave should be taken when students are off campus and the taking of leave must have the prior approval of the relevant Line Manager.

Public Holidays are granted in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

Sick Leave

Employees who have a minimum 3 months continuous employment with the College may be granted sick pay subject to the terms of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme. Sick pay is contingent on full cooperation and compliance with the Colleges absence management procedures.

Termination of Employment

At least **three** calendar months written notice is required to resign this post. On the termination of employment but before departing from the College, staff members are required to return to the College all books, reports, memoranda, correspondence, papers, records, reports, files including data held on electronic files, computer disks, electronically recorded discs, and any other documentation, and all other property, including office keys, belonging to the College or relating to its business or affairs which are in the possession of a staff member or under their control when the employment is terminated.

Confidentiality

In the course of working in Mary Immaculate College, the person appointed may have access to or hear information concerning staff and/or students and/or the functioning and the business of the College. Such information acquired in the course of employment with the College, including any aspect of the College's responsibilities or operations, is considered to be confidential information. On no account must information concerning students, staff or other College business be divulged or discussed except in the performance of normal duties and, unless authorised to do so, this information shall not be communicated to a third party. In addition records must never be left in a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them and must be kept in safe custody when no longer required.

Health & Safety

Mary Immaculate College attaches the highest regard to the safety, health and welfare of its employees. It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and of other people in the workplace. Each employee must comply with all health and safety policies and procedures in operation in Mary Immaculate College and familiarise him/herself with the Safety Statement.

Employees are obliged to wear any PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) that they may be provided with and no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing or other equipment provided in the workplace for health and safety purposes. Employees are statutorily/legally obliged to ensure that any accidents/incidents which may occur are reported promptly to the Health and Safety Officer on the MIC Accident/Incident Report Form.

College Policies, Rules and Regulations

The College is a Public Sector employer and is bound by National Agreements. It is also bound by regulations, circulars and directives issued on behalf of Government by the Department of Finance, the Department of Education, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Higher Education Authority.

Employees are at all times subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Staff, College policies, rules and regulations. These policies include but are not confined to Disciplinary & Grievance Policies, Dignity at Work, Examination Rules & Regulations, Policy on Responsible Computing and Use of Information Technology Facilities. All policies are outlined on the College's Staff Portal for College employees. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of Policies and Procedures, on the College's Staff Portal.

5. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Method of Selection for Recommendation

Shortlisting

An expert group will convene to conduct shortlisting of applicants, measured against pre-determined criteria.

The criteria that will be used to shortlist candidates for this appointment are:

- A postgraduate degree in a discipline related to language studies, applied linguistics, corpus linguistics, and/or multimodal interaction;
- Knowledge of data gathering methods and techniques used within language studies, applied linguistics, corpus linguistics, and/or multimodal interaction;
- Demonstrable ability to communicate research findings to peers in the research community through the delivery of research outputs;
- Experience in the use of social media platforms and proven ability to create media content;
- Demonstrable ability and motivation to work collaboratively as part of a research team across different partner institutions, as well as independently;

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the College may decide that a limited number will be called to interview. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable to undertake the job, rather that there are some candidates, based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is incumbent, therefore upon the applicant, to ensure that all relevant information is included in their application and that they clearly identify how they meet the specified candidate criteria.

Medical Examination

For the purpose of satisfying requirements as to health, successful candidates, before being appointed, will be required to undergo pre-employment health screening.

Garda Vetting

Successful applicants may be required to participate in Garda vetting. Specific instruction on this process will be given at the appropriate time. Applicants who do not comply with the College's requirements in

this regard will be excluded from consideration for appointment. Applicants who have resided outside Ireland for a cumulative period of 36 months or more over the age of 18 years must furnish a Foreign Police Clearance (FPC) from the country or countries of residence. Please note; any costs incurred in this process will be borne by the applicant.

Making of Applications

Applications must be submitted in typed format. Handwritten applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Applications will be acknowledged within 2 working days of submission. Please be sure to check Spam and Junk folders as it may be redirected here by your account preferences. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 2 working days of submitting your application please contact the HR Office by emailing hr@mic.ul.ie.

Application forms for this post may be downloaded from the Mary Immaculate College website. www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies. Applications must be submitted by e-mail to recruitment@mic.ul.ie with the subject title **Research Assistant – Department of English Language & Literature** no later than:

2pm on Thursday, 7th October 2021

Late applications **cannot** be accepted.

The College will not be responsible for any expenses, including travelling expenses, which candidates may incur in connection with their candidature.

Canvassing will disqualify. Any attempt by a candidate either personally or through any other person, on their behalf, to canvass or otherwise influence the outcome of the selection/interview process in their favour will lead to disqualification from the competition. Any representations made on behalf of a candidate, without their knowledge will be ignored.

Mary Immaculate College is an equal opportunities employer. Mary Immaculate College holds an Athena SWAN Bronze Institution award in recognition of our commitment to advancing equality and opportunity for all in higher education.

September 2021