

Position Description

Research Officer

Position Number: 00067559
Position Title: Research Officer
Date Written: October 2018

Faculty / Division: UNSW Medicine
School / Unit: National Drug and Alcohol
Research Centre
Position Level: Level 6

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

UNSW is currently implementing a ten year strategy to 2025 and our ambition for the next decade is nothing less than to establish UNSW as Australia's global university. We aspire to this in the belief that a great university, which is a global leader in discovery, innovation, impact, education and thought leadership, can make an enormous difference to the lives of people in Australia and around the world.

Following extensive consultation in 2015, we identified three strategic priority areas. Firstly, a drive for academic excellence in research and education. Universities are often classified as 'research intensive' or 'teaching intensive'. UNSW is proud to be an exemplar of both. We are amongst a limited group of universities worldwide capable of delivering research excellence alongside the highest quality education on a large scale. Secondly, a passion for social engagement, which improves lives through advancing equality, diversity, open debate and economic progress. Thirdly, a commitment to achieving global impact through sharing our capability in research and education in the highest quality partnerships with institutions in both developed and emerging societies. We regard the interplay of academic excellence, social engagement and global impact as the hallmarks of a great forward-looking 21st century university.

To achieve this ambition we are attracting the very best academic and professional staff to play leadership roles in our organisation.

Values in Action: Our UNSW Behaviours

UNSW recognises the role of employees in driving a high performance culture. The behavioural expectations for UNSW are below.



Values in Action
Our UNSW Behaviours



Builds
Collaboration



Embraces
Diversity



Displays
Respect



Demonstrates
Excellence



Drives
Innovation

OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT AREA AND POSITION SUMMARY

UNSW Medicine is a national leader in learning, teaching and research, with close affiliations to a number of Australia's finest hospitals, research institutes and health care organisations. With a strong presence at UNSW Kensington campus, the faculty have staff and students in teaching hospitals in Sydney as well as regional and rural areas of NSW including Albury/Wodonga, Wagga Wagga, Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie.

The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) was established at the University of New South Wales by the Commonwealth Government in 1986 to extend the knowledge base required for effective treatment of individuals with alcohol and other drug related problems and to enhance the overall research capacity in the drug and alcohol field. The Centre is highly regarded, both nationally and internationally, for its contribution to drug and alcohol research.

The Research Officer will contribute to the Drug Trends program. The Drug Trends program is an internationally-renowned system which NDARC has coordinated since 1996. The program is key to identifying emerging problems in substance use in Australia and providing impetus for policy responses and intervention. The Drug Trends program involves analysing and triangulating various data sources, including interviews with people with use illicit drugs, secondary indicator data on drug-related harms (e.g., drug-related hospitalisations and mortality), and online data on drug supply and markets. The Drug Trends program is entering an exciting new phase, adopting novel methods to respond to new challenges in monitoring substance use (e.g., online drug marketplaces, availability of new psychoactive substances) and innovative communication strategies to reach national and international audiences.

The role of Research Officer reports to the study Chief Investigator and has no direct reports.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific responsibilities for this role include:

- Undertake data management, including cleaning and merging large data sets, maintaining data dictionaries, and ensuring data integrity.
- Undertake quantitative data analyses, including regression analyses and analysis of trends over time.
- Plan and prepare research outputs, including research reports, peer-reviewed publications, presentations, and interactive website updates.
- Ensure the ethical conduct of the study, including managing and coordinating the preparation, submission and maintenance of various ethical approvals.
- Liaise with various organisations, data custodians and stakeholders.
- Perform other research tasks as directed by your supervisor.
- Cooperate with all health and safety policies and procedures of the university and take all reasonable care to ensure that your actions or omissions do not impact on the health and safety of yourself or others.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Honours degree in epidemiology, public health, behavioural sciences, social sciences or equivalent.
- Demonstrated experience in cleaning, merging, and managing large data sets, including implementing various strategies to maximise data integrity.
- Demonstrated experience in applied/advanced quantitative analyses. Evidenced training in analysing trends over time would be highly regarded.

- Evidence of bringing innovation and improvements in achieving core objectives and outputs, including reflecting on and improving own work practice.
- Skills in data mining, programming, and/or data visualisation would be advantageous.
- Commitment to integrity and sensitivity in interacting with marginalised or at-risk populations and about sensitive issues, including in complying with ethical, legal, and policy requirements.
- Excellent written and oral communications skills including the ability to contribute to research outputs and reports for diverse audiences.
- Knowledge of health and safety responsibilities and commitment to attending relevant health and safety training.

It is not the intention of the position description to limit the scope or accountabilities of the position but to highlight the most important aspects of the position. The aspects mentioned above may be altered in accordance with the changing requirements of the role.