



Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

# Job Description

## Research Assistant

**Department:** Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

**Grade:** 6B

**Salary:** £39,148 to £ 41,833 p.a. including London Allowance

**Hours:** 36.5 hours per week (full time 1.00 FTE)

**Available until:** Funded for two years in the first instance



### Context

The [Mrsic-Flogel Lab](#) studies how the brain makes decisions by combining sensory information with prior knowledge. The research uses advanced techniques in mice to establish the link between neural activity to behaviour to better understand the mechanisms underlying decision-making.

### Main purpose of the job

We are looking for a Research Assistant to run behavioural and physiological experiments in mice. You will work closely within a team and be responsible for handling and care of rodents (supported by the SWC's Neurobiological Research Facility), performing surgery, training, behavioural experiments, histological and imaging procedures and will be able to assist in neural recording/optogenetic experiments, help to gather and collate data, and assist with data analysis and presentation of the results for which basic knowledge of at least one programming language is essential.

You will be an excellent communicator, have prior experience of working within a research laboratory and handling rodents, as well as some experience in monitoring rodents and providing post-operative care.

You will be expected to work under your own initiative in a collaborative and multidisciplinary research environment.

### Duties and responsibilities

- Perform histological procedures, including brain extraction and slicing using vibratome and microtome; immunostaining
- Operating microscopes to image brain samples
- Handle and monitor mice.
- Perform surgical and post-operative care of recovering animals.
- Run behavioural experiments in freely moving and head-fixed mice.
- Carry out data analysis using custom software tools, including writing or contributing to development of new analysis scripts.
- Provide support for maintenance of equipment, lab supplies and databases to ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with statutory and UCL regulations as appropriate.
- Maintain a meticulous record, and write up results, maintaining a permanent record of the methodologies and the experiments.
- Ensure the experiments are carried out efficiently and in a proper scientific manner.



- Maintain the lab cleanliness and organisation of the laboratory space.
- Observe all ethical and legal requirements in relation to the use of animal models in research.
- To participate in weekly group meetings.
- Adhere to good laboratory practice at all times and observe all required health and safety procedures.
- Observe all data protection and security requirements.

The above description is not exhaustive, and the post-holder will be required to undertake any other duties as may reasonably be requested within the scope, spirit, and purpose of the post.

## General

- Carry out any other duties within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job as requested by the line manager.
- Actively follow and promote all UCL policies including those on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Maintain an awareness and observation of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations.
- On occasion, be able to work extended hours.
- Actively participate in UCL networks, meetings and committees relevant to the role, as required.
- Act professionally, co-operatively and flexibly in line with the post.
- Adhere to UCL's Sustainability policies and objectives, attend management meetings and undertake such training and development as may be required for the post.
- Demonstrate ongoing commitment to excellence in line with the Academic Career Framework.
- Meet UCL's expectations set out in UCL's [Core Behaviours Framework](#).

# Person Specification

## Selection Criteria

Applicants will be selected based on how well they demonstrate that they meet the essential, and if appropriate, desirable criteria for this particular role. They should give examples of how they meet each criterion.

Essential Criteria	Assessment method (Application/ Interview/Practical Test)
<b>Qualifications, experience and knowledge</b>	
A bachelor's degree in Neuroscience, molecular biology or a related field.	Application
Experience of working in a research laboratory.	Application/ Interview
Experience with animal experiments and/or recording from brain tissue	Application/ Interview
Experience with electrophysiology, and/or molecular biology, and/or histology techniques	Application/ Interview
Experience in data analysis and knowledge of programming languages, e.g. Python, MATLAB, etc.	Application/ Interview
<b>Skills and abilities</b>	
The ability to contribute to research projects within the laboratory.	Application/ Interview
Strong written and oral communication skills, with the ability to work collaboratively in a multidisciplinary setting.	Application/ Interview
Able to prioritise, manage your own time, and multi-task to integrate the demands of a range of different activities and deadlines in parallel.	Application/ Interview
Computer literacy, including experience of a range of software packages	Application/ Interview
Works ethically, legally, and with integrity	Application/ Interview
<b>Ways of Working</b>	
<i>Achieving our mission:</i> Being practical and able to problem-solve	Interview
<i>Working together:</i> Innovating and sharing with new ways to work efficiently	Interview
<i>Personal Excellence:</i> Having a positive and helpful approach to work.	Interview
<b>Desirable criteria (only be scored if there is a tie break for shortlisting).</b>	
Understanding of animal cognition or experience in the field of neuroscience	Application
Experience using and writing custom software for data analysis or design	Application

# Apply

To apply for this position visit:

[ucl.ac.uk/work-at-ucl/search-ucl-jobs](https://ucl.ac.uk/work-at-ucl/search-ucl-jobs)

Please complete the online application form and use the supporting statement section to outline your interest in joining SWC and how you meet the essential and desirable criteria for the role.

If you have any queries regarding the application process, please email: [swc.hr@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:swc.hr@ucl.ac.uk)

For informal enquiries about the role please contact: Tom Mrsic-Flogel  
[t.mrsic-flogel@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:t.mrsic-flogel@ucl.ac.uk)

All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application.

## Probation

Appointments are subject to receipt of satisfactory references and a probationary period of 6 months.

## Annual leave

Annual leave is 27 working days for a full-time member of staff + 6 UCL closure days in addition to 8 Bank Holidays.

## Pension

Post-holders will be eligible to join the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), subject to the Scheme's rules and eligibility conditions.

## Hours of Work

UCL's full time working week is 36.5 hours per week. SWC is willing to consider flexible-working arrangements, subject to discussion and agreement with your line manager.

## Other benefits

UCL is a dynamic, global university based in one of the most exciting capital cities in the world. Not only does working at UCL offer the opportunity to work with some of the greatest intellects in the world, it also offers competitive terms, conditions and benefits to its staff.

As part of the UCL community you can access free lunch hour lectures, exhibitions and museums and collections. On campus UCL has the Bloomsbury theatre hosting a range of performances and a series of bars, cafes, and other facilities, which UCL staff can use.

In addition to 41 days annual leave (inclusive of public holidays and closure days) and generous pension schemes, UCL provides a number of other staff benefits which are linked from the page below:

✓ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-benefits/staff-benefits>

UCL benefits and policies apply equally, whatever the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of employees. Benefits and policies relating to employees partners, includes both different sex and same sex partners.