



Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

Job Description

Research Technician / Senior Research Technician

Department: Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

Grade: 6 or 7

Salary: £36,433 - £42,891 (G6) or
£43,981 - £54,019 (G7) inclusive of
London Allowance

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

Reports to: Group Leader

Available until: 30th September 2029



Context

[The Behrens Lab](#) at SWC aims to understand how our brains make decisions and support flexible behaviour, by utilising sensory information and prior knowledge.

We conduct experimental and theoretical work across mammalian species from human to mouse in a brain-wide approach.

Main purpose of the job

You will contribute to the research programme of the Behrens Lab by supporting and directly contributing to projects investigating the neural mechanisms underlying flexible behaviour and decision-making.

The role combines hands-on experimental research with responsibility for supporting the day-to-day operation of experiments across the group. You will work closely with the postdoctoral researchers and students to support multiple projects, oversee shared experimental setups and resources, and ensure experiments are conducted efficiently and to a high technical and scientific standard.

The role will involve animal handling and behavioural training, behavioural and electrophysiological data collection, histology, aseptic stereotaxic surgery and data analysis.

You will build, maintain and troubleshoot experimental setups, support the organisation and

management of shared experimental spaces and train and support students and researchers in experimental procedures and good laboratory practice.

The post therefore requires excellent organisational and communication skills, strong technical ability, and the capacity to work independently and proactively while supporting a collaborative and multidisciplinary research environment.

The role is particularly suited to candidates seeking to develop a career as a technical specialist within research operations and laboratory support.

Duties and responsibilities

Core duties

- Handling, monitoring and care for mice.
- Train mice in behavioural tasks.
- Perform in vivo experiments including optogenetic manipulation and electrophysiological recordings of neural activity in behaving animals.
- Work closely with the team members to set up, gather and organise data within databases.

Lab duties

- Monitor and maintain levels of consumables within the behavioural laboratory and ensure



adequate stock control of surgical and other experimental supplies.

- Manage and assist other group members with raising purchase orders of laboratory equipment, consumables and reagents.
- Maintain laboratory cleanliness and organisation of the laboratory space.
- Contribute to the 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 meticulous records of experimental results and methodologies.
- Maintain the safety manual to ensure new members of staff, visitors and students receive the appropriate induction.

Duties expected at Grade 7 only

- Perform and manage histological processing of brain tissue across projects in the group.
- Perform and assist with aseptic, stereotaxic brain surgeries.
- Build, maintain and troubleshoot behavioural and electrophysiological experimental setups.
- Oversee the day-to-day operation of shared behavioural and experimental spaces, coordinating equipment and resources across multiple researchers and projects to support efficient use of laboratory facilities.
- Provide training and preparation for assessment for lab members at Home Office regulated animal procedures and general laboratory practices.
- Support multiple researchers and students in setting up and running experiments and troubleshooting technical and experimental issues.

Other

- To be a primary worker on the given project and ensure it is carried out efficiently and in a proper scientific manner.
- To participate in fortnightly group meetings.

- Adhere to good laboratory practice at all times and observe all required health and safety procedures.
- Observe all ethical and legal requirements in relation to the use of animal models in research.
- Observe all data protection and security requirements.

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.
- There may, on occasion, be a requirement to work extended hours.
- Follow and actively promote the [UCL Ways of Working](#).
- This job description may be reviewed and be subject to amendment in consultation with the post holder.
- All staff are expected to act professionally, co-operatively and flexibly in line with the post.
- UCL's Sustainability policies and objectives, attend management meetings and undertake such training and development as may be required for the post

Person Specification

Essential Criteria	Assessment method
Qualifications, experience and knowledge	
Hold an undergraduate degree (2nd class degree or above) or equivalent qualification in Biological or Biomedical Science. Or equivalent experience.	Application/ Interview
Experience of working in a research laboratory.	Application/ Interview
Experience of handling, monitoring health and caring of rodents.	Application/ Interview
Knowledge of training rodents in behavioural tasks.	Application/ Interview
Grade 7 only: Experience of teaching or supervising students in techniques within a lab setting.	Application/ Interview
Grade 7 only: Experience in histological processing.	Application/ Interview
Grade 7 only: Experience in setting up and maintaining behavioural and electrophysiological experimental setups.	Application/ Interview
Skills and abilities	
Ability to work independently within a research laboratory.	Application/ Interview
Good problem-solving skills and ability to use own initiative whilst recognising when advice and input is needed.	Application/ Interview
Excellent interpersonal skills with an ability to work co-operatively in a multidisciplinary setting and as a member of a team.	Application/ Interview
Ability to manage time and work to deadlines while maintaining a high level of accuracy in all aspects of work.	Application/ Interview
IT proficiency at advanced user level, and some proficiency in coding and using software for data or statistical analysis.	Application/ Interview
UCL Ways of Working	
G6: Personal Excellence: Delivering work to agreed standards. G7: Personal Excellence: Making best practice an absolute priority.	Interview
G6: Working Together: Demonstrating an interest in personal development. G7: Working Together: Promoting personal and professional development.	Interview

G6: Achieving our Mission: Taking responsibility for your work. G7: Achieving our Mission: Creating and supporting simple and consistent work.	Interview
Desirable Criteria	
Commitment to and knowledge of advancing equality, diversity and inclusion.	Application
Experience in optogenetic manipulation, electrophysiological recording techniques and/or stereotaxic surgery technique in rodents.	Application

Apply

To apply for this position, please visit:
www.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 criteria for the role.

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

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

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.

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.

Pre-agreed overtime will be offered as equivalent time off in lieu.

Probation

Appointments are subject a 9-month probationary period.

Pension

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

Other Benefits

UCL is a dynamic, global university based in one of the most exciting capital cities in the world, offering competitive terms, conditions and [benefits](#) to its staff.

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](#). 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.

As part of the UCL community you can access free lunch hour lectures, exhibitions, museums and collections.