



Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

**PhD Programme Coordinator
Information for Candidates**



Sainsbury Wellcome Centre for Neural Circuits and Behaviour at UCL

Supported by



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JOB DESCRIPTION

Vacancy Reference:	1800597
Job Title:	PhD Programme Coordinator
Department:	Sainsbury Wellcome Centre
Salary:	£35,328 - £42,701 per annum inclusive of London Allowance.
Grade:	7
Hours:	36.5 per week (full-time, 1.00 FTE) A part-time appointment would be considered for this role.
Reports to:	Graduate Tutors/HR Administration Manager

About the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

The [Sainsbury Wellcome Centre \(SWC\)](#) brings together world-leading scientists to investigate how brain circuits process information to generate perception, form memories and guide behaviour. Developed through the vision and partnership of the Gatsby Charitable Foundation and Wellcome, and with substantial investment from these partners, the mission of the SWC is to generate experimentally testable theories of brain function.

The Centre will comprise around 14 highly interdisciplinary experimental research groups accommodated in a new, purpose-designed building, offering an outstanding and unparalleled research environment. SWC scientists use a broad spectrum of the latest advances in molecular and cellular biology, imaging, electrophysiology and behavioural techniques and enjoy state-of-the-art research laboratories, cutting-edge scientific equipment, technologically-advanced prototyping and fabrication laboratories and custom in-house high-performance computing facilities. The full complement of scientists in the Centre is expected to reach around 150 together with circa 50 dedicated support staff.

Further details about the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre can be found at www.sainsburywellcome.org.

The Sainsbury Wellcome Centre is part of the UCL School of Life and Medical Sciences (SLMS). SLMS brings together four UCL Faculties to create one of the largest and most prestigious aggregations of academics in biomedical, life and population health sciences worldwide. The School has a global reputation for teaching, informed by cutting-edge research. A full profile of the School can be found at: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/slms/about-us>. The School is structured into four Faculties: Brain Sciences; Life Sciences; Medical Sciences; and Population Health Sciences. SWC is most closely linked with the Faculties of Brain Science and Life Sciences.

Further details about UCL can be found at www.ucl.ac.uk.

Professional Services at the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

The Sainsbury Wellcome Centre has a specialist and experienced professional services team led by the Centre Manager. It is structured to efficiently support research activity and deliver effective management and operational leadership of the SWC.

SWC prides itself on offering a high quality administrative, technical and operational support function, and fully supports the professional development and progression of its staff, actively encouraging colleagues to learn new skills and broaden their experience. The SWC is supported in this aim by UCL's Organisational



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Development team (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/learning-and-development>), who run a wide range of training programmes for all staff types and grades.

SWC offers staff an award-winning work environment in the heart of Fitzrovia with an on-site brasserie, access to lockers and changing facilities, secure bicycle storage, and access to pleasant outdoor spaces. The Centre also offers the full range of UCL staff benefits, including a generous annual leave entitlement, occupational pension schemes, excellent family-friendly policies such as occupational shared parental pay, a work-life balance policy, and a range of financial benefits such as a season ticket loan scheme and staff discounts. Further information can be found online: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-and-staff-benefits>.

The Role of the PhD Programme Coordinator

The Coordinator of the PhD Programme in Neuroscience provides comprehensive and effective administration for the Gatsby Unit and SWC graduate research programmes from admission to completion. The PhD Programme Coordinator will need to be fully conversant with all Centre, Faculty and UCL Doctoral School policy and procedures and assist the Graduate Tutors in implementing them. They are the first point of call for students with queries relating to administration and programme structure, and provide pastoral care for students, directing them to appropriate sources of central support. The post holder will need to proactively develop effective working relationships with academic and administrative staff within the Centre and other allied institutions, and with contacts in UCL Central Services – e.g. Admissions Office, Student Records, Fees Office, Research Finance, Student Funding Office – so strong communication and interpersonal skills will be essential.

It is essential that the PhD Programme Coordinator has good knowledge of neurosciences topics and related techniques, to ensure that they are able to develop a meaningful curriculum and support the students in their endeavour to select projects and laboratories.

The PhD Programme Coordinator will report to the Graduate Tutors on a day to day basis; overall line management is provided by the HR Administration Manager. However the post holder will be expected to manage their own workload using his/her own initiative, judgment and decision making skills when prioritising work.

This post is funded until 31 July 2021 in the first instance; the Centre is externally funded with funding awarded in five-year tranches subject to periodic funder review. Subject to successful grant renewal, it is anticipated that staff posts will be extended in line with successive funding periods.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

The role holder will assist the Graduate Tutors with the recruitment, selection and progression of students on the Gatsby Unit and SWC PhD programmes, providing an administrative support function and managing the dissemination of programme materials, timetables and lab rotation schedules, and course-related supporting information.

Information on the Gatsby Unit PhD programme is available online: www.gatsby.ucl.ac.uk/teaching/phd/.

Information on the SWC PhD programme available online: www.sainsburywellcome.org/web/content/phd-programme.

Recruitment, Admissions and Enquiries

- Support the SWC HR team and Gatsby Unit administration team with the advertisement of the PhD programmes, setting application deadlines and timelines, and coordinating the selection committee.



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- Manage the PhD inboxes and respond promptly to all queries received in a professional, helpful and timely manner.
- Support the SWC HR team and Gatsby Unit administration team with the circulation of applications, management of the shortlisting process, interview arrangements and candidate communications.
- Ensure that programme and departmental websites are kept up-to-date.
- Review, improve and manage the administrative arrangements for induction week (Boot Camp).
- Organise new student induction processes and ensure students attend the required training during the induction and Boot Camp period.
- Manage and maintain admissions statistics for the purpose of diversity monitoring.

Progression and completion

- Work with the Graduate Tutors and UCL Doctoral School to ensure that UCL policy on the monitoring of research students is implemented effectively.
- Support the SWC HR team and Gatsby Unit administration team in coordinating student engagement monitoring and keep Portico updated with confirmation of engagement and submission of evidence.
- Coordinate the lab rotations for first year students, collect rotation reports from students and supervisors and forward onto the relevant committee.
- Manage student transitions into their labs of choice, and ensure colleagues are informed and that the appropriate administrative arrangements have been made (i.e. ensuring that they have visitor status if moving to an affiliated lab, updating research group organograms and web pages etc).
- Maintain accurate student records and review and track student progression through the programme.
- Assist in the formation of thesis committees.
- Ensure that paperwork relating to students on the PhD programme is promptly submitted to central UCL Registry.
- Provide pastoral care, where appropriate, to students enrolled on the programme and guide them towards the appropriate sources of central support, as well as providing advice and guidance on the programme, the UCL Academic Manual, and UCL's policies and procedures for students.
- Work with the Graduate Tutors to coordinate, review and develop the programme timetables, curriculum and materials related to Neuroscience research topics.
- Work alongside the Graduate Tutors to ensure that all students are upgraded to PhD status and theses are submitted within the appropriate timeframes.
- Assist supervisors in the scheduling and hosting of viva examinations.

Administrative Management

- Complete the annual student load returns.
- Provide and assist with the collation of statistical data relating to students.

- Ensure that new staff are set up as supervisors as appropriate, and that accurate student and supervisor information is held centrally in the Portico student records system.
- Maintaining up-to-date information regarding the taught portion of the programme on Moodle, internal wiki or intranet, or on programme-specific online resources.
- Submit student fee and stipend payment requests accurately and in a timely fashion via Portico or stipend forms.
- Assist the SWC Finance Manager with monitoring student budgets and advising on non-standard costs such as visiting students or extensions to funding commitment.
- Maintain an up-to-date working knowledge of UCL, UK Research Council, Foreign Office and UKVI policy and procedure as regards to student eligibility, progression, examination and visa requirements.
- Organise and service relevant committee meetings, including act as Secretary for the joint Staff-Student Consultative Committee.

Student Events

- Organise the annual Graduate Symposium and other conferences/seminars for PhD students within the department.
- Review existing provision for the professional and career development of graduate research students and design and deliver a progressive developmental programme of events geared towards the needs of the student cohorts.
- Help coordinate induction events, final year symposium and retreats.

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. Job descriptions are reviewed on a regular basis including at the annual appraisal. As duties and responsibilities change, the job description may be amended in consultation with the post-holder.

The post-holder will be expected to actively follow all UCL policies and procedures including Equal Opportunities, maintain an awareness of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations, attend management meetings and undertake such training and development as may be required for the post.

All staff are required to act professionally, co-operatively and flexibly in line with the requirements of the post.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria outline the skills, knowledge and experience required in order to perform this role. Applicants will be selected based on how well they demonstrate that they meet the essential, and if appropriate, desirable criteria for this particular role.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Undergraduate qualification (or above) in a scientific discipline, or equivalent professional experience.	X	
Knowledge and experience		
Good working knowledge of the UK Higher Education system and an understanding of the specific needs of research students.	X	
A good understanding of Neuroscience topics and experimental techniques.	X	
Experience of working in student administration either in a departmental, faculty or registry role, for at least one academic cycle, preferably supporting graduate research students.	X	
Experience in using student database systems and maintaining student records relating to academic progression, finances and immigration compliance.	X	
Experience of prioritising your workload when dealing with a range of competing demands, particularly in relation to the student academic cycle.	X	
Skills		
Excellent standard of written English, including the ability to draft correspondence, guidance notes and programme materials for staff and students.	X	
Ability to explain complex regulations clearly so that they are understood by those unfamiliar with them.	X	
Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate well with students and academic staff alike, and the ability to work collaboratively as part of a team.	X	
Good attention to detail, particularly when dealing with large amounts of data or a high volume workload.	X	
Excellent IT skills, with experience of using the Microsoft Office suite of programmes and complex database systems; experience of using online learning environments, content management systems or wikis is desirable.	X	
Other Requirements		
An understanding and appreciation of the mission and research environment of the SWC, and a commitment to the establishment of the SWC as a world-leading research centre.	X	
Able and willing to work flexibly to meet the needs of the Centre.	X	

HOW TO APPLY

Contact Us

If you have any queries relating to the vacancy or how to apply please contact the SWC HR team, swc.hr@ucl.ac.uk, +44 (0)20 3108 8011.

Applying for the Role

To begin the online application process, please access the advertisement by searching for it on the UCL vacancy search page (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/jobs/>) using the vacancy reference number, and click on the “Apply Now” button at the bottom of the vacancy advertisement.

Please complete the online application form, and use the supporting statement section to outline how you meet the selection criteria. Applications will be shortlisted based on the strength of the examples used to demonstrate that the applicant meets the selection criteria.

Please note that there is a limit of 2,500 words to explain how you meet the essential criteria, and a limit of 2,500 words to explain how you meet the desirable criteria.

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



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Pre-employment Checks

Confirmation of appointment will be subject to receipt of satisfactory references, verification of proof of right to work in the UK and to satisfactory pre-employment health and security screening.

Salary

Starting salary will be on the Grade 7 scale according to relevant skills, knowledge, experience and achievement. Staff incrementally progress along the salary scale; the effective date of incremental progression is 01 August each year. You must have completed the period of service stipulated in your contract of employment (typically your probationary period) to be eligible to increment. Incremental progression does not include the discretionary contribution points on the salary scale. Cost of living pay awards are negotiated nationally and are normally effective from 1 August each year.

Pension

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

Conditions of Service

Conditions of Service for Research, Teaching and Professional Services Staff can be found at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/conditions-service-research-teaching-and-professional-services-staff>.

Probation

Appointments are subject to a probationary period of 9 months.

Hours of Work and Overtime

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.

Annual Leave

Staff are entitled to 27 days annual leave per year (pro rata for part-time staff). In addition, staff are entitled to 8 days public and statutory holidays, and around 6 UCL closure days with pay per year.

Location

The Sainsbury Wellcome Centre is located in the heart of London around five minutes' walk from the main UCL campus. The mainline railway stations at Euston, King's Cross, St Pancras, Marylebone and Paddington are within easy reach as are the London Underground stations located at Warren Street and Gode Street.

Equal Opportunities

SWC is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion for its staff, students and visitors and is fully supportive of UCL's policy; the full equality policy statement is available online:

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/sites/human-resources/files/equal_opportunity_policy_statement.pdf.

SWC is currently working towards an [Athena SWAN](#) award.