

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE (ERC)

PANEL FOR
RESEARCH ASSISTANTS WITH FLUENT (SPOKEN AND WRITTEN) IRISH

(PERMANENT, FIXED TERM AND SPECIFIED PURPOSE)

Background

The Educational Research Centre (ERC) was established as a Statutory Body in accordance with the Education Act (1998) in September 2015, but has been in existence since January 1966. It published its current strategic plan in April 2022. It has a dual remit of providing tests and supports for these tests to schools, and conducting educational research and evaluation studies. Since summer 2020, the ERC comes under the remit of the 2003 Official Languages Act. Its programme of work can be divided into seven strands (with more information available at www.erc.ie):

1. Oversight, delivery and national reporting of large-scale international assessments.
2. Management, oversight and reporting of large-scale national assessments.
3. Contributing to policy on, and evaluation relating to, educational disadvantage.
4. Test development, standardisation and support (in both paper and online formats).
5. Programme evaluation.
6. Data analytic support.
7. Independently-initiated research.

The main ERC building is located on the grounds of DCU's St Patrick's Campus in Drumcondra and its Test Department is nearby on Richmond Road, Drumcondra. The ERC employs about 40 staff who work together in small collaborative teams. The work is supported by an administrative team and the ERC's Senior Management Team, which is comprised of the CEO, Head of Governance and Corporate Services, senior researchers, senior administrators and IT manager. The ERC engages with various sections of the Department of Education and other agencies in its research projects, and participates in a range of advisory and steering committees, both national and international.

Job Specification

The ERC now wishes to create a panel for **Research Assistants with fluency in the Irish Language**. Successful candidates will be assigned to one or more research, evaluation or test development projects in the ERC's work programme. Panels will cover permanent, fixed term and specified purpose posts.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Assisting with general administrative work related to projects (e.g. liaison with schools and other agencies/bodies).

- Preparing or adapting instruments (e.g., tests, questionnaires) to be used in projects, under supervision.
- Assisting in the management of databases.
- Attending meetings (possibly occasionally abroad, in accordance with prevailing public health and Government guidelines) and liaising with national and/or international agencies in relation to assigned projects.
- Conducting literature searches and reviews.
- Conducting data processing and data coding activities under supervision.
- Conducting statistical analysis (e.g., using SPSS) under supervision.
- Supervising the work of temporary/casual staff.
- Assisting in report writing
- Undertaking any other reasonable duties as may be assigned from time to time.
- Providing support to other Centre projects as needed (e.g., by translating materials into Irish or reviewing translations).
- Undertaking any other duties as may be assigned from time to time.

Note

This job specification is intended as a basic guide to the scope and responsibilities of the position. It may vary depending on which project(s) the post holder is assigned to. It is subject to ongoing review and will evolve in line with the constantly evolving practices and functions of the ERC. A high level of flexibility is expected.

Citizenship Requirements

Candidates must fall under one (or more) of the criteria below at the date of submitting their application:

- A citizen of the European Economic Area. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- A citizen of the UK under the protection of the Common Travel Area
- A citizen of Ukraine who has received a letter confirming they have been granted Temporary Protection under the EU Directive; or
- A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4; or
- A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4; or
- A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or Switzerland and has a stamp 4.

Essential Person Requirements

Applicants should meet all of the below at the time of submitting their application:

- Strong proficiency (CEFR/TEG Level C2 or equivalent) in spoken Irish and written Irish.

- An honours primary degree (1 or 2:1) in a relevant discipline (e.g., education, Irish studies, translation studies, psychology, social science, statistics, data analytics, economics).
- Good working knowledge of the Irish education system.
- High level of competency in using Microsoft applications (e.g. Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- Evidence of excellent writing skills, both formal and informal.
- Evidence of excellent interpersonal and communication skills, especially the ability to liaise with schools and other educational institutions and/or bodies.
- Proven strong planning and organisational skills.
- Evidence of strong personal effectiveness, flexibility and problem solving.
- The ability to work both on own initiative and collaboratively.
- High attention to detail.
- Capacity to respond to competing priorities.

Desirable Experience, Skills and Characteristics

It would be a significant advantage to have one or more of the following :

- A post-graduate degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., education, Irish studies, translation studies, psychology, social science, statistics, data analytics).
- Knowledge of the development and use of standardised tests (e.g., for Irish, English, or mathematics).
- Experience of designing child-friendly materials (for example, information leaflets, activity sheets).
- Experience in survey/questionnaire development and design.
- Knowledge and understanding of statistical concepts associated with surveys and assessments.
- Experience in statistical analysis skills (i.e. using SPSS or similar software).
- Experience in using and managing database applications (such as Microsoft Access).
- Experience working on a large-scale assessment or survey.
- Experience in bivariate, and preferably multivariate, analysis of statistical data.
- Knowledge of psychometrics (e.g. classical test theory, item response theory).
- Familiarity with basic principles of sampling and weighting.
- Experience in construction and standardisation of psychometric tests.
- A current full clean driver's licence.
- Access to a car for occasional work-related travel.

Following recruitment, a panel of successful candidates will be created. Appointments will be made on a permanent, fixed term or specified purpose basis depending on vacancies arising. The panel will remain in place for 12 months from the date of its creation and may be renewed once for a further 6 months.

Salary Scale

The appointment will be made on the Research Assistant Scale of the ERC (€35,233 - €48,551 (Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) Scale) as at February 2022, at a point in line with current Government Pay Policy, with new entrants commencing at the first point of the scale. Different terms and conditions may apply if, immediately before appointment, the successful candidate is a currently serving civil/public servant.

Pension

The successful candidate will be offered the appropriate superannuation terms and conditions as prevailing in the ERC at the time of being offered an appointment. In general, and except for candidates who have worked in a pensionable (non-single scheme terms) public service job in the 26 weeks prior to appointment, this means membership of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"). However, in the latter scenario, some exceptions may apply.

Place of Attendance

The appointee for this role will be based in the ERC's main building, in Drumcondra, Dublin. The ERC is in the process of developing a Blended Work Policy which will allow some remote working options for staff members. The options to work remotely will rely on the submission of an application by the candidates and will depend on the requirement of the relevant project. When absent from home and place of employment on official duty, the appointee will be paid appropriate travelling expenses and subsistence allowances, subject to normal civil service/public sector regulations.

Tenure

In the event of appointment to a permanent, fixed term or specified purpose position with the ERC the appointee must serve a probationary period, which normally will last for 6 months. If at any time during this period it appears that the appointee would not be suitable for final appointment the employment will be terminated.

Hours of attendance

Hours of attendance will amount to not less than 35 hours net per week. The appointee will be required to work such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of their duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.

How to Apply

Only applications submitted electronically will be accepted. Applications will not be accepted after the closing date and time.

THE CLOSING TIME AND DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS: 5.00pm (Irish time), Friday August 19th 2022.

Applications must be submitted in the Irish Language but candidates are also encouraged to send a copy in the English Language. Applications must include:

1. A cover letter of no more than 2 pages (minimum size text 11) explaining why you are applying for this position and how your experience aligns with the Essential Person Requirements and, as applicable, the Desirable Experience, Skills and Characteristics for this position.

2. An up-to-date CV of **no more than four pages** in length which includes the names and contact details (phone number and email) of two referees.

All documents must be submitted as attachments in Word or PDF format. Files sent by email as links to documents in shared cloud-based servers will not be accepted for security reasons.

Completed applications should be submitted to: vacancies@erc.ie, quoting 'Research Assistant – Irish Language Post' in the subject heading.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your application to vacancies@erc.ie within 24 hours of applying, please contact our HR Officer, Hertes Oliver Da Silva, at hertes.dasilva@erc.ie. Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 as amended, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

Communications

Campaign updates will be issued to the email address supplied with your application. The onus is on each applicant to ensure that they are in receipt of all communication from the ERC. Candidates are advised to check emails on a regular basis throughout the duration of the competition. In addition, candidates should check junk/spam folders should any emails be mistakenly filtered. The ERC accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by a candidate.

Selection Process

The selection may include shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application. An expert Interview Board will examine the applications against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. The selection process may include one or more of the following:

- Shortlisting on the basis of cover letter and CV;
- Interview(s) in English and/or Irish;
- Presentation or any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate;
- Language/communication test (oral and/or written).

Where Irish language fluency is a requirement for a position, shortlisted candidates may be invited to complete a separate assessment (written and/or oral) in Irish, in addition to interview.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview(s) to be scheduled between two and four weeks after the closing date for applications, or as close as possible to this timeline. Shortlisted candidates will be provided with further information and guidelines on the selection process at least one week in advance of interview to facilitate preparation.

Notification of interview date and time will be issued to the candidates at the email address provided in their applications. Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the ERC and should make sure that the contact details specified on their application are correct.

Candidates who do not attend for interview or any other element of the selection process when and where required by the ERC, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the ERC requires in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

The ERC reserves the right to conduct interviews either remotely online or face-to-face as circumstances require, and also to require candidates to attend a second interview and/or complete further assessments or tests as it deems appropriate and necessary following the first interview.

The preferred candidate will be offered the position subject to satisfactory reference checks. Referees will **not** be contacted without the candidate's prior agreement.

Panel

Arising out of this competition, the ERC may create a panel or panels from which future similar vacancies may be filled. Where a panel is created, the ERC reserves the right to decide that only a certain number will be placed on that panel. Qualification and placement on a panel is not a guarantee of appointment to a position.

Candidates not appointed at the expiry of a panel (12 months following its creation in this instance with the possibility of extension for a further six months) will have no claim to a position thereafter because of having been on the panel.

Once an offer of a specified purpose or fixed term appointment has been declined, the candidate may remain on the panel until the expiry of the panel for permanent positions only (that is, the candidate will not be offered any specified purpose or fixed term position).

Once an offer of a specified purpose or fixed term appointment has been accepted, the candidate may remain on the panel until the expiry of the panel for any other specified purpose or fixed term appointment which becomes available.

Once an offer of appointment to a permanent position has been accepted or declined by a candidate, the candidate will no longer remain on the panel in question and the ERC may select another person for appointment based on the results of the selection process. More detailed information will be provided to successful candidates.

Other Important Information

The ERC will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates. The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result notification, is not to be taken as implying that the ERC is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that their application will receive further consideration.

It is important, therefore, for applicants to note that the onus is on them to ensure that they meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If essential entry requirements are not met but applicants nevertheless attend for interview they could be put to unnecessary expense.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position, the ERC will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed, a final determination cannot be

made, nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made. Should the person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it or if an additional vacancy arises, the Interview Board may, at its discretion, select and recommend another person for appointment on the results of this selection process.

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment, which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003; GDPR 2018

When a candidate's application form is received, the ERC will create a record in the candidate's name, which contains much of the personal information supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing the candidature and should the candidate be successful certain information provided will be retained going forward. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003 and in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), 2018.

To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003/GDPR 2018, please submit your request in writing to the Data Protection Officer at Data.Protection@erc.ie. Ensure that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record.

The ERC provides a flexible and dynamic working environment and is an equal opportunities employer committed to creating an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated. We welcome applications from everyone, including those who identify with any of the protected characteristics that are set out in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy (<https://www.erc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Equality-Respect-and-Dignity-in-the-Workplace-Policy-V1.pdf>) and by the National Disability Authority (<https://nda.ie/disability-overview/definitions/>).