# Research Trainee

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| **Department:** | Psychology |
| **Hours of work:** | 37 Hours per week |
| **Contract type:** | Fixed-term, 36 months |
| **Salary:** | £27,131 |

## Introduction

The Department of Psychology at the University of York is seeking a Research Technician (research assistant) from 1 February 2023 to contribute to a 3-year ESRC-funded project in the area of speech perception and cognitive listening. The funding was awarded to Professor Sven Mattys and co-PIs Dr. Sarah Knight and Dr. Ronan McGarrigle. The aim of the project is to further our understanding of individual differences in “effortful listening”. The team will explore the interface between speech signal quality and cognitive functions during divided-attention listening. Main themes for this project include energetic masking, attention control, working memory, spatial hearing, and effort. Data collection will involve both behavioural methods (speech transcription tasks, auditory psychophysical tests) and physiological methods (pupillometric measures of listening effort). The programme of experiments will combine large-scale online testing and targeted in-lab testing. The project will be carried out in Professor Sven Mattys’ labs at the University of York, in collaboration with Dr Ronan McGarrigle’s lab at the University of Bradford.

Candidates should have a first or upper 2-1 undergraduate degree or Master's degree in speech and hearing science, cognitive psychology, linguistics, or another relevant discipline. A good command of experimental designs in cognitive science and proficiency with statistical analysis (preferably using R) are essential. Experience in psychophysics (including programming psychophysical experiments), pupillometric analysis, creation/manipulation of speech stimuli using relevant software (e.g., Audacity, Praat), and/or knowledge of spatial hearing is desirable, as is experience with writing up scientific results. Because a substantial portion of data collection will be carried out online (via the Prolific and Gorilla platforms), experience with online testing is highly desirable.

## Main purpose of the role

To assist in designing the experiments, creating, recording, and editing auditory and visual materials for behavioural and physiological (pupillometric) experiments, collecting data (in the lab and online), analysing and interpreting data, and disseminating results. The candidate will be fully integrated into a vibrant lab and expected to attend and contribute to lab meetings and public-engagement activities.

## Key responsibilities

(Role holders will be required to undertake some or all of the duties below)

* To undertake work, which may be as part of a research team, investigating a designated area of subject knowledge to promote further understanding
* To contribute to the intellectual development of the project and plan own activities within the overall research effort
* With the guidance of the project supervisor, to undertake a combination of literature searches/scholarly reading, desk and/or lab-based research, subject interviews, questionnaires/sampling or other research activity. Using specialist knowledge, techniques and/or instrumentation as required.
* To document work appropriately and in accordance with research best practice.
* To work closely with the project supervisor to prepare work for dissemination, presenting preliminary findings at meetings within the research group as appropriate.
* Under the guidance of the project supervisor, to assist in writing articles, papers, reports or books as appropriate.
* To liaise and collaborate with students and researchers and relevant external contacts and organisations.
* To participate in the dissemination of research findings internally and externally at seminars, workshops and conferences.
* To consider the public engagement and impact of the project and take appropriate steps to maximise these with the support of the research leader
* To provide instruction to students as required
* To undertake appropriate organisational and administrative activities as delegated by the Research Supervisor. Examples may include: organising meetings, conferences and workshops; monitoring budgets and stock control; developing promotional or educational material, including website maintenance and development.
* To prioritise tasks within an agreed work schedule to ensure that the project(s) are delivered on time.

## Person specification

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|  | **Essential / Desirable** |
| Qualifications |  |
| Undergraduate or Master’s degree in speech and hearing science, cognitive psychology, linguistics, or another relevant discipline | Essential |
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| Knowledge |  |
| Theoretical knowledge in speech, hearing, or language science | Essential |
| Knowledge of experimental designs in behavioural science | Essential |
| Understanding of relevant health & safety practices | Essential |
| Has research expertise in an area that will complement and enhance the department's research strategy and goals | Essential |
| Proficiency with statistical analysis (preferably using R) | Desirable |
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| Skills, abilities and competencies |  |
| Ability to undertake academic research. Examples may include preparing, setting up, conducting and recoding the outcome of experiments or field work, the development of questionnaires and conducting surveys | Essential |
| Ability to organise own research activities to agreed deadlines and quality standards | Essential |
| Excellent IT skills including the ability to maximise social media as appropriate (include any specific skills such programming, web maintenance, database skills etc) | Essential |
| Ability to assist in the supervision of student projects | Essential |
| Ability to provide support to staff and any students who may be assisting with the research | Essential |
| Excellent written communication in order to contribute effectively to the production of research reports and publications | Essential |
| High level oral communication skills to enable the effective presentation of research progress and outcomes to key stakeholders | Essential |
| Ability to communicate new and complex information effectively to a range of audiences | Essential |
| Ability to develop internal and external contacts in order to enhance knowledge and understanding and form relationships for future collaboration | Essential |
| Ability to work as part of a team and also to work independently using own initiative | Essential |
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| Experience |  |
| Experience of working in cognitive psychology, speech, hearing, or language science | Essential |
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| Personal attributes |  |
| Interest in and enthusiasm for the subject matter of the project(s) | Essential |
| Positive attitude to colleagues and students | Essential |
| A passion for conducting high quality research with impact | Essential |
| Willingness to work proactively with colleagues in other work areas/institutions | Essential |
| Ability to plan and prioritise own work in order to meet deadlines | Essential |
| Commitment to personal development and updating of knowledge and skills | Essential |
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