# RESEARCH ASSISTANT - JOB DESCRIPTION
Fixed Term Contract - Full Time 37 hours per week

## 1. JOB DETAILS

Job Title: **Research Assistant**
Immediate Manager: Head of OLR

Grade: 3 (£31,093 - £34,069)
Contract Type: Fixed Term Contract (12 Months)

## 2. JOB PURPOSE

To support the development and implementation of a range of research projects to advance effective practice in the field of risk assessment and management practice. The post holder may also be called upon to contribute to the range of RMA functions to support the promotion of effective practice.

## 3. ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Permanent Staff Structure = 24
As at August 2023
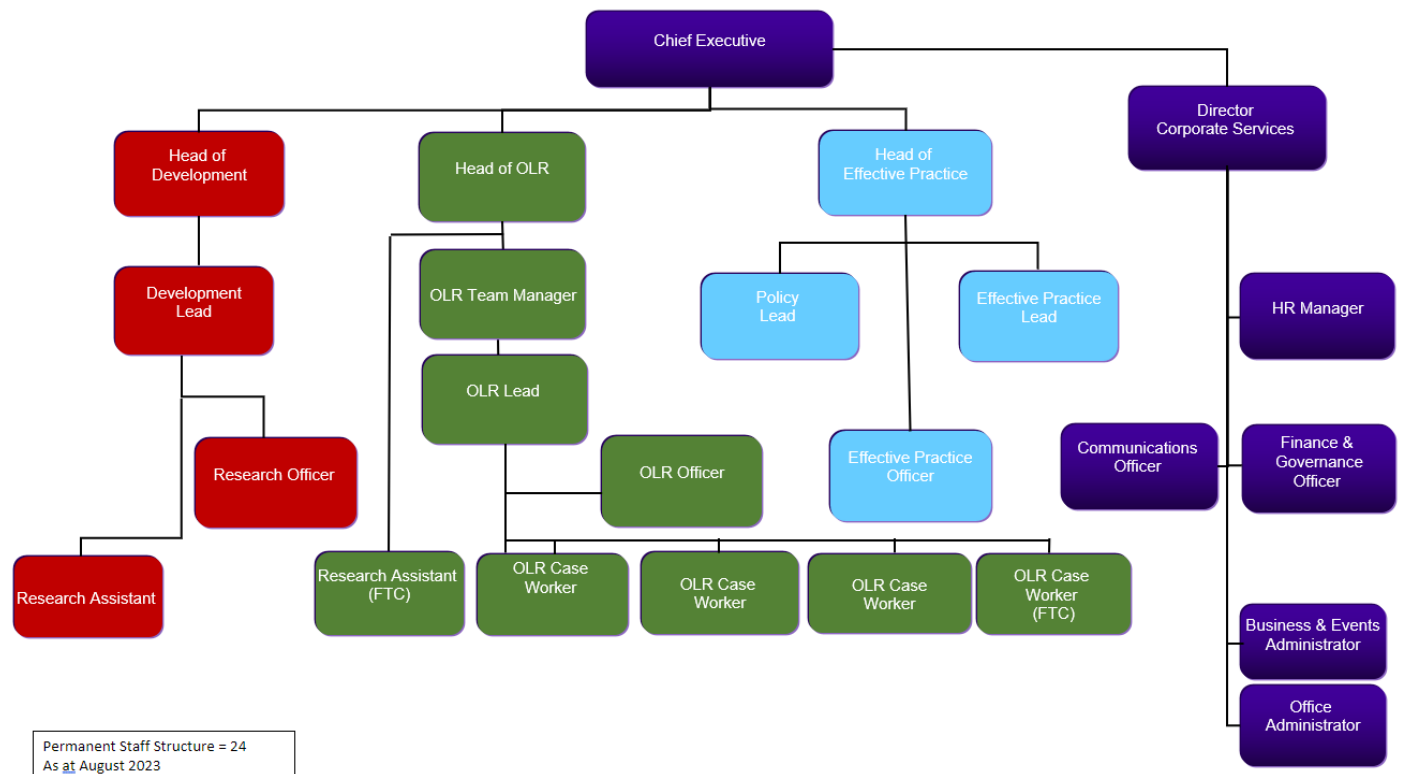
## 4. OUR VALUES

- **Learning**: We drive change and promote a culture of continuous improvement. We support and value each other's contribution; we acknowledge that shared experience and understanding help us achieve our aims.
- **Integrity:** We are impartial, consistent, and objective in our work and not afraid to challenge. We believe in honesty and transparency and our work can be trusted.
- **Fairness:** We put people at the heart of what we do, and our work is firmly rooted in human rights. We act fairly and consistently and treat everyone with dignity. Our people are compassionate and want to make a positive difference.
- **Excellence:** We are committed to setting and upholding the highest possible standards, and we deliver what we promise.

## 5. DIMENSIONS

Important dimensions include:
- Contribute to research projects, including reviewing secondary data, collating key information, identification of variables and recording data in line with a coding framework.
- Conducting literature searches and translating this literature into accessible and succinct summaries to inform research projects.
- Reviewing, updating and maintaining databases and datasets.
- Liaising with internal and external stakeholders to support research activities.
- Data input and quantitative data analysis.
- Producing research reports in line with internal standards of publication.

## 6. MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES

The post holder will primarily contribute to research under supervision. This will include the following:

- Literature review.

- Liaise with RMA staff and external stakeholders.

    Data analysis using an appropriate quantitative method.

- Identify opportunities to apply research finding to practice.

- Approaching and engaging with relevant external justice stakeholders.

- Monitor and make recommendations on quality and progress.

- Reporting, including contributing to the final research report.

- Disseminate findings in a range of formats, including presentation to interested groups of stakeholders.

The post holder will primarily assist with the 'Review of the Implementation of the OLR' research project. This will include reviewing OLR data, including Risk Assessment Reports, Risk Management Plans and Annual reports to develop individual case timelines. Variables will be extracted from the timelines for group level analysis. This work will be conducted in line with the RMA's Framework for Research Governance, Management and Assurance (FRGMA).

The postholder will undertake other reasonable duties as required by the needs of the RMA.

## 7. LEVEL OF AUTONOMY AND DECISION-MAKING

The post holder will undertake tasks under supervision and receive direction from a senior member of staff. However, it is expected that they will manage the prioritisation and administration of their workload and escalate risks and concerns as appropriate.

## 8. COMMUNICATIONS

The internal contacts of the post can include all members of RMA staff, dependant on the projects and processes undertaken. A variety of communication methods are used, including the RMA website.

The main external contacts of the post are:
- Project Advisory Groups.
- Service Managers, Team Managers and Practitioners.
- Academics in relation to work being carried out and any project changes.
- Scottish Government and other stakeholders including the Scottish Prison Service and Criminal Justice Social/Work.

## 9. COMPLEXITY

The main sources of complexity are:

- Collection, safe storage and analysis of sensitive data utilising quantitative techniques.

- Interpersonal skills – approaching and engaging with external stakeholders.

- Translating risk assessment and risk management literature into simple, jargon-free and accessible language.

- Input, analysis and communication of quantitative data.

- The level of detail required for the end of study report and dissemination is substantial as the end produce is for public consumption. The standard should be appropriate for submission to a peer review journal.

# 10. PERSON SPECIFICATION

## EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED

### EXPERIENCE

- Post-graduate qualification in a relevant social science subject.

- Prior experience of quantitative research.

### KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of the criminal justice system and the research literature on risk assessment and management is desirable.

- The post holder will be proficient in the use of data-processing and statistical packages (e.g. Excel, SPSS), and possess good presentation skills to contribute to the dissemination of research findings.

### SKILLS

- Good organisational and time management skills, and an ability to prioritise workload effectively and efficiently.

- Project management skills, including scheduling, anticipating risks, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills are required including a sensitive and appropriate approach to working with a range of stakeholders.