

ABERTAY SA

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Walk, Talk & Learn Project: Part Time Researcher
Salary & Contract	£9.13 – 32.5 hours over 7 weeks
Location	Students Association Office, Kydd Building
Organisation	Abertay Students Association (University of Abertay Dundee Students Association (UADSA), SC036647)
Who You Report To	Ian Lowe, Andrea Cameron
Other People You Work With	Project Team Members

JOB PURPOSE

Project: At Abertay we take the health and wellbeing of students seriously and want to support our staff and students to lead as healthy a lifestyle as possible. Well-being spans many areas of a persons' life, and for many members of our community keeping both physically and mentally healthy, can be a challenge. Adding physical activity to the learning activities undertaken by staff and students provides an opportunity to gain the benefits of physical activity within a tight schedule. An open space environment can provide an opportunity to apply disruptive pedagogues by taking the classroom outside.

Increasing concerns have been voiced about the mental health of students¹ and particular cohorts of our students, such as Mental Health Nursing need high levels of resilience to deal with academic and occupational demands yet have poorer health behaviours than the general population². Other cohorts such as our sports students require to understand and appreciate the barriers communities face with regard to leading an active lifestyle.

While walking meetings may be gathering momentum in the business sector³ there is little literature regarding their use as a teaching method. Where walking seminars have been trialled as a tutorial⁴ or research supervision⁵, the impact on students' sense of wellbeing has been wholly

¹ Education Policy Institute. (2018). Prevalence of mental health issues within the student-aged population. Retrieved from <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/prevalence-of-mental-health-issues-within-the-student-aged-population/>

² Neall, R., Atherton, IM. & Kyle, RG. (2016). Nurses' health-related behaviours: protocol for a quantitative systematic review of prevalence of tobacco smoking, physical activity, alcohol consumption and dietary habits. *JAN.*, 72 (1), 197-204

³ Clayton, R., Thomas, C. & Smothers, J. (2015). How to do walking meetings right. *Harvard Business Review*. Aug. 5. 2015 <https://hbr.org/2015/08/how-to-do-walking-meetings-right>

⁴ Clayton, R., Thomas, C. & Smothers, J. (2015). How to do walking meetings right. *Harvard Business Review*. Aug. 5. 2015 <https://hbr.org/2015/08/how-to-do-walking-meetings-right>

⁵ Graves, J. (2016). Is it time to take PhD Supervision out of the classroom. *THE*. Retrieved from: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/is-it-time-to-take-phd-supervisions-out-of-the-classroom> 23 Aug 2016

positive. For example, walking has been cited as enhancing creativity⁶, and exercising outdoors has been found to have a more positive impact on mental health than indoor activity⁷.

This project proposes to use walking tutorials as an educational tool for a number of students within the School of Science recognising that many will be future health educators and that personal lifestyle habits influence the capacity to give health promotion messages. We are proposing to recruit Student Consultants to complete Focus Groups with students taking part in walking tutorials and to complete interviews with staff who have led walking tutorials.

What does it involve? The role of the research assistant will be to work with the project team to recruit and interview students and staff from Abertay that have taken part in Walk, Talk and Learn sessions. Additionally the RA will transcribe these interviews and conduct thematic analysis, providing a report to the research leads. The RA will also regularly meet and liaise with the research leads.

Who should apply? Any fourth year or master's student who is enrolled on an Abertay School of Applied Science programme.

What are the hours? The student researcher can expect to be employed for approximately 32.5 hours (over 6 weeks) on the project. The research will be conducted between April 2019 and May 2019.

How much will I be paid? 32.5 hours @ £9.13 per hour

How do I apply? Please send your CV and a covering letter outlining your reasons for applying and your suitability for the role to hello@abertaysa.com by close of play on 15th March 2019.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

- Support the administration and development of the research under the guidance of the project leads.
- Attend project meetings.
- Create a contact database and schedule interviews with participants
- Conduct, transcribe and analyse interviews.
- Perform duties as may be assigned by the Project Leads

General

- Complying with the University Health & Safety Policy in relation to your own safety and that of any other Abertay SA employee.
- Adhering to the Disciplinary rules and Procedures of the Association.
- Adhering to all Association Policies including the Financial Policies and Procedures.
- Strict compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Attending Students Association meetings as and when required.
- Producing written and verbal reports as and when required.

⁶ Oppezzo, M. & Schwartz, DL. (2014) Give Your Ideas Some Legs: The Positive Effect of Walking on Creative Thinking *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 2014, Vol. 40, No. 4, 1142–1152

⁷ Thompson Coon, J., Boddy, K., Stein, K., Whear, R., Barton, J. & Depledge, M.H. (2011). Does Participating in Physical Activity in Outdoor Natural Environments Have a Greater Effect on Physical and Mental Wellbeing than Physical Activity Indoors? A Systematic Review. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 2011; 110203115102046 DOI: [10.1021/es102947t](https://doi.org/10.1021/es102947t)

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Attributes	Essential Selection Criteria	Desirable Selection Criteria
Education/Qualifications	Enrolled as 4 th year or Masters student in an SHS degree course at the University of Abertay.	
Knowledge and Experience	Knowledge and experience of conducting one-to-one interviews, transcribing interviews and thematic analysis of interviews.	Project administration.
Competencies	Effective Communication Liaison and Networking Decision Making Processes and Outcomes Planning and Organising Initiative and Problem Solving Analysis and Research	

In order to achieve the goals of the project all employees need to demonstrate the following competencies:

Effective Communication

Definition: The use of appropriate communications media and methods, to convey, explain or discuss information in a manner that is clear and accurate for the target audience.

The ability to use a range of media to clearly and accurately communicate specialist or highly technical knowledge and conceptual ideas to a variety of groups, including, peers and external bodies.

Liaison and Networking

Definition: Active participation in, contribution to or leadership of internal/external networks which build positive relationships and promote collaborative/inter-disciplinary working.

The ability to effectively work with others, and join external networks, to build positive relationships that support future collaboration.

Initiative and Problem Solving

Definition: Showing desire for continuous improvement in individual and team performance by actively contributing to problem solving and responding positively to opportunities for development.

The ability to show initiative, creativity and judgment in their research and to work with colleagues to identify areas for improvement within their team.

Analysis and Research

Definition: The use and/or design of appropriate methods to actively engage in research and scholarly activities to investigate issues, analyse information and disseminate knowledge in a particular field of specialism.

The ability to actively keep up to date their knowledge of a field of specialism, to develop research objectives and proposals for their own and joint research, to conduct research both individually and collaboratively, to write up their research for publication and to effectively translate new knowledge into their course of study.

Decision Making

Definition: Active contribution to/ leadership of decision making processes within the team which ensure objectives are achieved and quality standards are maintained.

The ability to positively contribute to the decision making within the team to reach an optimal conclusion and to use their judgment to make decisions with limited/ambiguous data, taking into account, multiple factors.

Planning and Organising

Definition: Proactive planning, prioritisation and organisation of work activities and resources to ensure best value is achieved whilst maintaining service availability and quality standards.

The ability to effectively plan their own activities and resource requirements with the framework of agreed research programmes and to co-ordinate with others to avoid conflict and duplication, developing plans to take account of problems, delays and new priorities.