

Research Officer

Job Number

BU03660

School/Department

College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences

Grade

7

Salary Information

£37,099 - £46,974

Contract Duration

18 Months

Responsible to

Professor in Criminology & Criminal Justice

Closing Date

21-10-2024

Applications are invited for the above temporary full time post working in the School of History, Law and Social Sciences.

Duties will include conducting an empirical study on the cooperation between lay and professional judges at the German lower criminal courts (Schöffengerichte).

Candidates should be educated to MA/LLM or PhD standard (or equivalent) and have previous experience in conducting empirical research.

German language skills are essential.

The successful candidate will be expected to commence 1 December 2024.

The ability to communicate in Welsh is not essential for this post.

This role will be located on campus at Bangor.

Through our Dynamic Working framework, there will also be the option to spend some time working remotely (although remaining in the UK) to support work life balance, which will be discussed further with candidates at interview.

Applications will only be accepted via our on-line recruitment website, jobs.bangor.ac.uk. However, in cases of access issues due to disability, paper application forms are available by telephoning 01248 383865.

Closing date for applications: 21 October 2024

Informal enquiries can be made by contacting: Professor Stefan Machura, s.machura@bangor.ac.uk, 01248 38-2214.

Committed To Equal Opportunities

Overview

School of History, Law and Social Sciences The School unites the subjects of criminology, sociology, social policy, law and other subjects. It has a vibrant research culture, welcomes diversity, has a strong commitment to excellence in research and has a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Inter- and transdisciplinary studies are at the heart of the school's activities.

The Project

The project "The cooperation of lay assessors and professional judges at lower criminal courts" addresses features and challenges of democratic participation at German "Amtsgerichte" (lower criminal courts). At the Amtsgerichte, lay and professional judges hear and decide cases together in a "mixed court" (Schöffengericht). We will address how both sides experience their cooperation in surveys with lay and professional judges.

Our study will include lay and professional judges at the adult and the youth court. Previous research indicated problems such as some professional judges not accepting their lay colleagues as equal partners and not supporting them to make meaningful contributions. Frequently, lay judges do not participate much and some even just relish being in this position. Lay participation was established to allow for active participation fully supported by professional judges who are not to become too dominant as to render lay participation ineffective.

The project will run for 18 months, starting 1 December 2024. We will conduct two online surveys, one with professional judges and one with lay judges. The surveys will address the main theories on the cooperation of lay and professional judges: Status Difference Theory: lay judges are evaluated by the perceived contribution they can make; Social Justice Theory: perceptions of justice influence how active lay judges are; and Power Distance Theory: some lay judges do not expect to have a say. We will also address if the consumption of social media and any migration background have an influence. Questions for the lay judges will include how they saw the other lay judge in the panel act, and how the presiding professional judge. The professional judges will be asked for their experience with their lay colleagues.

Purpose of the Job

The project involves Professor Stefan Machura, the research officer, and a retired German High Court Judge in an advisory role. The research will provide findings on the cooperation of lay and professional judges in German criminal courts that have relevance for similar settings in other types of courts and in other countries employing mixed courts. The research outcomes will be discussed with stakeholders in a workshop in Germany and at academic conferences, published in articles for international peer reviewed journals and a book.

Working on the project allows the research officer to develop and demonstrate a range of research skills. Training will be provided including on project management, data handling and security, quantitative and qualitative analysis. The research officer will co-author publications and do presentations at the stakeholder workshop and conferences attended. In this way, the job offers an excellent opportunity for a career in research and to lay the foundation for a career as lecturer. The post holder will be responsible for conducting and analysing the empirical studies, for liaising with external partners and project management.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Development of quantitative techniques. Maintaining a thorough and up to date knowledge of the literature related to the research project. The research officer actively supports the principal investigator in developing new techniques.
- Delivering research outcomes. The research officer contributes to the dissemination of research outputs through relevant academic and public press and conferences. They will be working with partners to disseminate results to stakeholders, collaborate with co-researchers and write up the results in scientific articles and write final reports.
- Administration of the research project. This includes participating in project meetings, coordinating the project to meet aims and objectives, and liaising with stakeholders (external and internal).
- Monitoring of financial controls associated with the research project. This includes: monitoring and reviewing costing to ensure the research project is within budget.

Other Duties and Responsibilities

- The post holder will be expected to participate in performance review and developmental activities.

- The post holder will be expected to comply with the University's equality policies and statements, Dignity at Work and Study Policy and the University's Welsh Language Scheme.
- The post holder has a general and legal duty of care in relation to health, safety and wellbeing and must take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for themselves and for other members of staff, students and visitors affected by their actions or inactions. The post holder is also required to comply with all applicable health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments.
- The post holder must comply with relevant legal and financial policies and procedures and be aware of their responsibilities in terms of the legal requirements of their post.

Person Specification

Qualifications/Training

Essential

- PhD in psychology, sociology, law, criminology or a related subject, or be close to the completion of or possess equivalent experience relevant to the role

Experience/Knowledge

Essential

- Experience with empirical research methods and analysis.
- The ability to undertake quantitative analysis.

Desirable

- An interest in acquiring further knowledge and experience in quantitative and qualitative research skills.
- Knowledge of the German legal system and society structures.
- Track record of publications in academic or professional journals and books.
- Track record of conference presentations.

Skills/Abilities

Essential

- Demonstrate good verbal and written skills.
- Demonstrate good analytical skills, ability to analyse numerical data and present results appropriately.
- Demonstrate the ability to prioritise workload and work to deadlines.
- Demonstrate good computer skills, including MS Office, Powerpoint, Excel, SPSS or similar statistics software.
- Ability to read texts in German language.

Desirable

- Ability to read German to academic level.
- Ability to do presentations in German language.
- Demonstrate proven project management skills.
- Demonstrate ability to work as part of a team.
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills.

Other

Desirable

- Ready to travel to academic conferences and workshops abroad.

To test German language skills, part of the interview will be conducted in German. At the interview, please also demonstrate your right to work in the UK.

General

The University is committed to supporting and promoting equality and diversity and to creating an inclusive working environment. We believe this can be achieved through attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse range of staff from many different backgrounds. We strive to develop a workforce from all sections of the community regardless of sex, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, trans identity, relationship status, religion or belief, caring responsibilities, or age. We promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language through our progressive Welsh Language Policy. We comply with the Welsh Language Standards and are committed to equality of opportunity. You are welcome to apply for any job in English or Welsh and all applications submitted will be treated equally.

We are a member of Advance HE's Athena SWAN Gender Equality charter and hold a Silver award in recognition of our commitment to and progress towards gender equality within the University's policies, practices, and culture. We are proud to be a Disability Confident employer.

All members of staff have a duty to ensure their actions are in line with the overall environmental aims of the University and minimise their environmental impact.

All offers are made subject to proof of eligibility to work in the UK and receipt of satisfactory references.

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working for us. When you apply for this post you will be required to explain the basis upon which you believe you will be able to live and work in the UK legally on the commencement date of the role should your application be successful. If you do not have the right to work freely in any position in the UK already, any offer of employment we will make to you will be subject to you obtaining a right to work visa.

The following link provides information on the various visa routes into employment and the eligibility requirements (including switching visa status where permissible) <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>. If you are successful in your application we will discuss visa options with you at the time of making the offer of employment. Candidates should also note that they may be required to apply for an ATAS certificate (Academic Approval Technology Scheme) from the Counter-Proliferation and Arms Control Centre of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office before being able to apply for a visa - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme>

Please note that, in the event of applications being received from candidates on the University's Redeployment Register with a reasonable skills match to the post specification, these applicants will be given prior consideration.

Help

- Download the [Applicant Guide \(PDF\) \(ApplicantGuide.pdf\)](#) to help complete your application.
- See the [FAQ page \(https://jobs.bangor.ac.uk/FAQ.pdf\)](https://jobs.bangor.ac.uk/FAQ.pdf) for help with any problems.