

**Job description and selection criteria**

<b>Job title</b>	Research Assistant (Greek tragedy, Shakespeare and Theory of Mind)
<b>Division</b>	Humanities
<b>Department</b>	English and Classics
<b>Location</b>	St Cross Building
<b>Grade and salary</b>	Grade 6: £25,854 - £30,870 (Discretionary range to £33,734) <u>pro rata</u>
<b>Hours</b>	0.5 FTE
<b>Contract type</b>	Fixed-term, April – November 2012 (8 months only)
<b>Reporting to</b>	Professor Laurie Maguire, Dr Felix Budelmann and Professor Robin Dunbar
<b>Vacancy reference</b>	102035
<b>Additional information</b>	

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **The University**

The University of Oxford is a complex and stimulating organisation, which enjoys an international reputation as a world-class centre of excellence in research and teaching. It employs over 10,000 staff and has a student population of over 21,000.

Most staff are directly appointed and managed by one of the University's 130 departments or other units within a highly devolved operational structure - this includes 5,900 'academic-related' staff (postgraduate research, computing, senior library, and administrative staff) and 2,820 'support' staff (including clerical, library, technical, and manual staff). There are also over 1,600 academic staff (professors, readers, lecturers), whose appointments are in the main overseen by a combination of broader divisional and local faculty board/departmental structures. Academics are generally all also employed by one of the 38 constituent colleges of the University as well as by the central University itself.

Our annual income in 2009/10 was £879.8m. Oxford is one of Europe's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities: income from external research contracts exceeds £367m p.a., and more than 60 spin-off companies have been created.

For more information please visit [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)

### **Humanities Division**

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the faculties of Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Oriental Studies; Philosophy; and Theology, as well as the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art. The division has responsibility for over 500 members of academic staff, for over 4,000 undergraduates (more than a third of the total undergraduate population of the University), and for about 1600 postgraduate students.

The Division offers world-class teaching and research, backed by the superb resources of the University's libraries and museums. Oxford's extraordinary resources facilitate research at the very highest level. The Bodleian Library, one of the great libraries of the world, has a continuous history reaching back to the late sixteenth century. Its historical collections are outstanding, and as a legal deposit library it can claim a copy of every new title published in the UK. The Bodleian is now second in size only to the British Library. The English Faculty also has its own library with over 100,000 volumes, including important holdings of pre-1800. Every college has its own library, many of which have important holdings of their own (Regent's Park College has notable holdings in manuscripts and printed books related to Dissenting history). Such historic resources are linked to cutting-edge agendas in research and teaching, with an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary study.

The Division's faculties are among the largest in the world, enabling Oxford to offer an education in Arts and Humanities unparalleled in its range of subjects, from music and fine art to ancient and modern languages.

For more information please visit: <http://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/>

## **English Faculty**

The Faculty of English Language and Literature is by far the largest English Department in the UK, and has a very distinguished research record (awarded the top grade in the last two research assessment exercises). We were voted the top university for English in the *Independent's* Complete University Guide 2011, and our teaching has been graded 'Excellent' in every Quality Assurance review.

The Faculty currently has 79 permanent members of academic staff, including 9 Professors. This is in addition to a further 80 or so members teaching in the colleges and temporary members of staff. A list of Faculty members and their research interests is available on the website.

There are currently approximately 900 undergraduate students (with roughly 260 admitted each year to the single honours school and a further 20 to joint honours school programmes). The Oxford English Faculty has the largest graduate school in the country, with approximately 70 Masters students, with a further 170 graduate research students.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.english.ox.ac.uk>

## **Classics Faculty**

The Classics Faculty comprises the two Sub-Faculties of Greek and Latin Languages and Literature and of Ancient History and Classical Archaeology and currently has about 53 permanent academic postholders on the University payroll. The Colleges employ a number of other people in this subject area on fixed-term or permanent contracts, and these are members of the Faculty likewise. Details of the Faculty's postholders and its other members are given under 'Faculty' at: <http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/>

Like other Humanities Faculties in Oxford, the Classics Faculty is not departmentally organised at the undergraduate level. The colleges control and run undergraduate admissions, tutorial teaching and welfare. The Sub-Faculties and the Classics Faculty Board are responsible for devising the syllabus in the relevant areas for undergraduate courses, for appointing examiners, and for providing lectures and classes to complement the tutorials: the lecture-list committees oversee these and try to marry lecturing needs with lecturers' expertise. The Sub-Faculties meet separately at least once a term in order to discuss issues of common concern, such as syllabus reform; these meetings are regularly preceded by joint meetings with members of both Sub-Faculties present together.

The Faculty Board controls the admission and supervision of graduate students through its Graduate Studies Committees. There are currently about 86 graduate students in Classical Languages and literature, 75 graduate students in Ancient History and about 75 in Classical Archaeology (the latter are admitted through the Graduate Studies Committee of the School of Archaeology) reading for higher degrees (the M.Litt. and D.Phil. by thesis; the M.St. and M.Phil. which are normally a mixture of thesis and taught course).

Many of the activities of Classics are based in colleges, but the base of the Faculty and its centre of gravity is the Ioannou School of Classical and Byzantine Studies, at 66 St Giles'. This houses the Faculty Office, a number of Classics research projects, Byzantine Studies, and the Classics Language teaching staff, and includes facilities for graduates and a number of seminar and teaching rooms. It acts as a focal point for staff and graduate students in all aspects of Classical studies.

For more information please visit: <http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk>

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Overview of the role**

'Greek tragedy, Shakespeare and Theory of Mind' is a collaborative research project across the disciplines of Classics, English and Psychology, The successful applicant will design, carry out and analyse two practical studies involving audiences of drama.

This (0.5FTE) post will be available for 8 months from 1 March 2012.

### **Responsibilities/duties**

- designing questionnaires (with the guidance of evolutionary psychologist Professor Robin Dunbar)
- preparing for the practical studies: booking venues for rehearsal and performance, liaising with actors and directors, recruiting audiences, organising payment claims for actors and audiences, etc
- running the events, including administering the questionnaires
- running any focus groups
- writing up and evaluating the results
- contributing to joint publications
- attending weekly meetings of the project team
- liaising as necessary with all parties

### **Selection criteria**

#### **Essential:**

- Masters or higher degree (or equivalent) on a topic relevant to the project, such as ancient or Renaissance drama, or psychology
- thorough knowledge of Greek tragedy or Shakespeare or psychology, and an interest in the others
- an interest in audience and performance issues
- familiarity with a range of computer applications, including word-processing, databases, and web technology
- the ability to work independently and with a high level of accuracy
- the ability to strategize and organize (experiments, people, events)
- a willingness to work collaboratively within a team of researchers.

#### **Desirable:**

- experience of practical theatre work (acting, directing, producing)
- good knowledge of theatre and cultural history

- an interest in psychology and/or experimental design (if the applicant comes from a Humanities background)

## WORKING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

For further information about working at Oxford, please see:

[http://www.ox.ac.uk/about\\_the\\_university/jobs/research/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/research/)

The postholder will be a member of both the Faculty of English and the Faculty of Classics.

## HOW TO APPLY

If you consider that you meet the selection criteria, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page (available at [www.recruit.ox.ac.uk](http://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk)) and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a user. You will then be required to complete a number of screens with your application details, relating to your skills and experience. When prompted, please provide details of three referees and indicate whether we can contact them at this stage. You will also be required to upload a CV (including a list of publications), a covering letter/supporting statement, and a one page description of your research interests. The covering letter/supporting statement should demonstrate how you meet the selection criteria outlined above. Please save all uploaded documents to show your name and the document type.

To return to the online application at any stage, please click on the following link:

[https://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk/pls/hrsliverecruit/erg\\_jobspec\\_version\\_4.jobspec?p\\_id=102035](https://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk/pls/hrsliverecruit/erg_jobspec_version_4.jobspec?p_id=102035)

Or search [www.recruit.ox.ac.uk](http://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk) using the Vacancy ID 102035.

You should also arrange for two referees to send in references direct to the English Faculty by the noon on the closing date of **24 February 2012**. References should be e-mailed (preferred) to [english.office@ell.ox.ac.uk](mailto:english.office@ell.ox.ac.uk) or posted to English Faculty, St Cross Building, Manor Road, Oxford, OX1 3UL.

All applications (and references) must be received by **24 February 2012**.

It is anticipated that shortlisted candidates will be informed by 29 February 2012 and at this stage, written work (up to 7,000 words) will be requested from shortlisted candidates by 2 March 2012.

It is anticipated that interviews will be held on 9 March 2012. If you cannot make this date, please make this clear in your application. Unfortunately, we cannot reimburse travel expenses for interview.

Queries about the application process for the post should be directed to [administrator@ell.ox.ac.uk](mailto:administrator@ell.ox.ac.uk); queries about the post itself or the teaching involved should be directed to [laurie.maguire@magd.ox.ac.uk](mailto:laurie.maguire@magd.ox.ac.uk) or [felix.budelmann@magd.ox.ac.uk](mailto:felix.budelmann@magd.ox.ac.uk).

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email [recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk)

Further help and support is available from <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~chri1411/corehelp.htm>

## APPENDIX A:

### Project overview

'The 'Greek tragedy, Shakespeare and Theory of Mind' project investigates how Greek tragedy and Shakespeare's plays exploit what psychologists call 'Theory of Mind' (ToM): the characteristically human capacity for making – conscious or unconscious – inferences about other people's minds. This capacity for reading minds is at the heart of the literary construction of character. Although fictional characters are not real people with minds and emotions, readers and spectators respond to them as if they were. ToM offers new ways of dealing with this divide.

In recent years, the operation of ToM in literature has been the focus of work on prose fiction rather than drama. There are obvious reasons for this: readerly response to prose is measurable (an individual is set to read in solitude in a lab); the individual response is not affected by others' responses in an auditorium; and prose is not mediated. The mediating body of the actor complicates audience response.

This project aims to explore the complexities that specifically pertain to ToM in drama. In this initial phase, to which the Research Associate will make a major contribution, there will be two practical pilot studies, which will lay the foundations for more large-scale work in subsequent phases.

### Pilot studies

The first study compares audience responses to different characters bringing news in *Antigone* and *Romeo and Juliet* (all of whom will be studied as part of full-length productions), and secondly three Greek and three Shakespearean characters that set the scene at the beginning of plays (all studied through stand-alone renditions).

The second study assesses audience response in different media from prose narrative to film to multi-level ToM operations (*I believe that you suppose that I intend...*), which are the focus of deception scenes, recognition scenes, plays-within-plays and such like. A writer will be commissioned to rewrite episodes from *Alcestis* and *Winter's Tale* at different levels of intentionality. The rewriting is itself multi-layered; subjects will be presented with 1) a narrative of a scenario; 2) the scenario as drama; and 3) the scenario-as-drama rewritten at different levels of intentionality. The scene will be performed live by student actors but it will also be given as an audio recording and a film.

Both studies will be carried out in Oxford, drawing on student actors and audiences. The prime medium for gathering audiences' responses will be questionnaires; there may also be focus groups. The two studies will be sequenced, with the performances and gathering of audience responses taking place in May 2012 for study 1 and November 2012 for study 2.

The research associate's workload will vary; 50% is an average figure. The workload may approximate full-time during the hands-on work with audiences, and will be below 50% during some of the preparation and evaluation periods. It should be possible to hold this post alongside other research activities and/or employment such as lecturing.