

**College/Service:** Exeter IT  
**Post:** Research IT Officer  
**Reference:** P20782  
**Grade:** F  
**Reporting To:** Research IT Services Manager

## ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The University of Exeter is a Russell Group university that combines world-class research with very high levels of student satisfaction. Our vision is to become one of the most successful universities in the world, one that makes the exceptional happen by challenging traditional thinking and defying conventional boundaries.

## THE IT SERVICE

Exeter IT is a key enabler for this vision and is key to delivering the University's Values and its world class reputation. The IT & Digital strategy will support the growing ambitions for education, research and professional services, and exploiting the opportunities from changing technology will enable the University to thrive in an increasingly digital environment.

What makes Exeter IT different is its defining characteristics: *strong leadership, active collaboration, forward thinking, and delivering at pace*. We expect our staff to be comfortable with responsibility, and be innovative and creative in the delivery of IT and digital services. Being able to adapt to the momentum of change and having the freedom of action will enable staff to deliver IT solutions that will have a positive impact on our students, academics, and professional services staff.

## SOLUTIONS DELIVERY

The changing digital technology landscape and increase in SaaS and other emerging technologies requires a wide range of new skills in the IT service. Solutions Delivery covers a broad range of functions and capabilities to deliver a service that is completely customer focussed, service centric and design led. SOLUTIONS DELIVERY is key to delivering the capabilities for transitioning new and changed IT services into the supported environment, whilst ensuring they meet the expectations of the University. The use of IT industry standard methods and frameworks will be utilised to ensure the effective management of change projects and initiatives to enable the intended benefits to be realised. Solutions Delivery also capitalises on the opportunities for IT-led innovation to support education, research and professional services.

## RESEARCH IT SERVICES

The Research It Services function is part of Solutions Delivery and will provide specialist IT support to academics, working closely with Service Management to ensure non-specialist queries are captured and resolved by the Customer Services teams.

A collaborative community of specialist IT support will broker and translate the use of new technologies and work with the University's Technical Services teams to provide local support for research and specialist teaching.

Research It Services will deliver bespoke IT solutions that allow research groups to achieve the exceptional, winning grants by professional and tailored IT submissions, which are then delivered alongside research groups and communities to achieve the full impact.

The function will operate closely with Innovation work streams to deliver thought leadership in research groups around digital and IT technologies.

Research It Services will build trust with College disciplines and, alongside IT Business Partners, deliver first class solutions for the research and specialist teaching community. These solutions will include shared IT services to support cross discipline research activities such as High Performance Computing and Storage.

The function will provide a tailored quality assurance process that matches the level of IT risk with funding body requirements and the research and specialist teaching community experience, as well promoting the opportunities and value of using standard IT services.

## **Reporting Structure**

For the reporting structure of this job, please see the attached structure chart.

## **Main purpose of the job**

Lead responsibility for engaging with the research and specialist teaching academic community across the University to identify and provide specialist, bespoke and original IT and digital support, leveraging the community of specialist support to deliver locally. Working collaboratively with the Strategy & Architecture and the Service Management teams to ensure specialist IT support is delivered effectively whilst balancing the needs of clients with the standards and expectations of the IT Service.

You will build, facilitate and develop strong ongoing relationships and work closely with a number of research and teaching disciplines, and act as the central liaison point for sign-posting where support can be best provided to maximise client satisfaction.

## **Key accountabilities**

1. Leadership and application of specialist expertise as follows:
  - Support research proposal, grants and bids that require IT components and wording tailored to research outputs referenced in the proposals;
  - Support the creation of research collaboration websites, spaces and social networks;
  - By exception, support storage and archive in response to research requirements that cannot be satisfied by the standard IT service catalogue;
  - Support tasks that require staff certification or satisfy legal requirements, for example level 3 lab access approvals;
  - Integrate research specific new technology, hardware and software including legacy systems in accordance with IT standards;
  - Support networking (autonomous) where requirements cannot be fulfilled by standard network offering but are limited to research purposes (likely temporary networks for duration of research activity that are unable to use the standard offering, and for networks that do not connect to .exeter.ac.uk);
  - Technical support, integration and access advanced research computing;
  - Programming, scripting, data collection, development and maintenance for one off pieces of code limited to specific research project and in accordance with the policy about allowing code to run on the .ex.ac.uk domain;
  - Training individual and group referencing a deliverable from Research IT;
  - Installing non-standard software applications needed to perform research where the application would not feature in the service catalogue;
  - System administration of specialist applications to perform research and where the applications would not feature in the service catalogue;
  - Coordination and engagement of the wider IT research support community across UoE and partners;
  - Support electronics and other research specific technologies;
  - Patching servers for bespoke applications;
  - Provide professional advice and input to the procurement of research specific technology and equipment.
2. Investigate and develop a thorough understanding of the research and specialist teaching community and their needs and expectations.
3. Identify patterns of demand and the specialist support required to tailor, bespoke and realise conceptual ideas using new or enhanced technologies, to facilitate innovation and effect business change.

4. Accountable for negotiating and influencing the needs of your clients and delivering specialist support that adds value, drives research power and positive student experience as well as business benefits. Challenging priorities and managing expectations where there are conflicting needs and demands.
5. Help the client understand the need to consider IT governance, standards and expectations of the IT Service.
6. Develop communities and forums for specialist support internally, leveraging joint opportunities across other disciplines and computer sciences to maximise self-help and collaboration.
7. Engage with and occasionally lead external specialist and/or supplier forums to identify new and enhanced technologies and their potential application at the University to drive innovative research and teaching.
8. Lead and manage small/medium projects when required and be responsible for the time, cost and quality of deliverables including managing project budgets. You will actively participate in University projects where appropriate.
9. Provide specialist advice and guidance on the implementation of new technologies and how to get the most value out of project funding, and help your clients understand the wider impact of implementing change.
10. Promote the opportunities to adopt formal ITIL processes to ensure everything is in place to operate and support specialist IT services, as well as minimise risk of incidents and disruption.
11. Ensure effective governance arrangements are in place to manage changes to the research and specialist teaching IT environments to minimise risk of service interruption.
12. Work with Technical Services teams and ensure operational owners for new IT services have been identified and specialist support procedures are in place including the availability of support after-hours.
13. Responsible for recording new specialist IT services in the *configuration management* system including software licenses, maintenance agreements, and warranties.
14. Act as the central liaison point for sign-posting where support can be best provided including resolving issues on insurance, legal considerations, and regulatory compliance.
15. Responsibility for keeping your clients informed of planned changes to IT services which may benefit or disrupt their operations, and be an escalation point for major issues with service performance or client satisfaction.
16. Identify and contain the risk of non-specialist IT services being procured outside the Service Catalogue.

This job description summarises the main duties and accountabilities of the post and the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties of similar level and responsibility including deputising for your line manager.

The post holder will be required to provide support across all University campuses, and may be required to work additional hours to meet the requirements of the role.

All Exeter IT staff are expected to:

- Ensure the seamless and integrated end-to-end service delivery to academic, research and professional services staff.
- Be passionate about new IT and digital technologies, and promote and be an advocate for the IT operating model and IT & Digital strategies.
- Work closely with the Continual Service Improvement capability to ensure IT services are aligned to current and future business needs, and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the IT services are delivered.
- Work closely with the Knowledge Management capability to share perspectives, ideas, experience and information to support decision making and manage IT services.
- Raise the positive profile and good reputation of the University and contribute as a member to your IT networks and engagements, both locally and nationally where appropriate.
- Proactive personal and professional development including completion of mandatory training, skills courses and specialist training.

- Professionally represent the IT service by adopting the dress code or uniform appropriate to your role.

### **Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA)**

IT roles at the University of Exeter have been mapped to the industry good practice Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA<sup>1</sup>). The role of Research IT Officer is mapped as a SFIA level 5 “*Ensure, advise*” against the core competencies *autonomy, influence, complexity and business skills*, and summarised as:

*The post holder works under broad direction (work is often self-initiated), influences organisation, customers, suppliers, partners and peers on the contribution of own specialism, performs an extensive range and variety of complex technical and/or professional work activities, and advises on the available standards, methods, tools and applications.*

Most commonly identified specific SFIA skills required for the role are:

INAN	Analytics
CNSL	Consultancy
METL	Methods and tools
PRMG	Project management
REQM	Requirements definition and management
CIPM	Change implementation and planning
DLMG	Systems development management
DESN	Systems design
PROG	Programing and software development
TEST	Testing
HCEV	User experience design
RLMT	Relationship management
ASUP	Application support

### **Person Specification**

Competency	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications & attainments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational attainment at degree level (or demonstrable equivalent experience)</li> <li>• ITIL ® Foundation or studying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry standard IT related certification or professional qualification</li> <li>• Prince2 or equivalent project management</li> <li>• Apple \ Linux certified or equivalent experience</li> </ul>
Knowledge & skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven communication skills demonstrating ability to understand complex conceptual ideas and experience in conveying information to senior stakeholders</li> <li>• Proven ability to interact across cross-functional and technical working teams and build ongoing relationships to ensure effective communications and exchange of information.</li> <li>• Proven ability to take independent decisions without reference to your line manager relating to significant events, or influence decision-making that impacts resourcing and future business planning of the service.</li> </ul>	

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sfia-online.org/en>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good planning and organisation skills.</li> <li>• Excellent methodological, analytical (qualitative and quantitative) and problem-solving skills</li> </ul>	
Prior experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent experience of delivering IT changes and services in a commercial environment, demonstrating business acumen, balancing financial, quality, people and customer expectations</li> <li>• Experience of working with core HE applications both in a support and development capacity.</li> <li>• Experience of automated software and system management tools.</li> <li>• Experience of the full project life cycle and including product selection, resilience and recovery of services</li> <li>• Experience of monitoring technology performance and driving continual service improvement</li> <li>• Demonstrate experience of the review and diagnosis and successful delivery of solutions to complex problems in a measured and creative way, demonstrating the ownership of issues and opportunities.</li> <li>• Proven experience of undertaking complex analysis, using different methodologies, and providing reports and management information with supporting commentary.</li> <li>• Proactive personal and professional development including completion of mandatory training, skills courses and specialist training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working with HE Research Groups and developing and implementing complex information systems, platforms and IT digital services.</li> <li>• Experience of Prince2 and other project management methodologies.</li> <li>• Experience of working in an Agile DevOps environment.</li> <li>• Experience in the identification and proactive mitigation of risks</li> <li>• Experience of developing business cases for change to deliver organisational benefit</li> </ul>
Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of what customer service excellence means in an IT service environment</li> <li>• Offer a flexible and adaptable approach to working in an environment with a culture of change and growth</li> <li>• Take a proactive, pragmatic, and positive approach to problem-solving</li> <li>• Undertake tasks with a positive attitude, prepared to meet business goals and respond well to change</li> <li>• Demonstrate a relentless focus to deliver against key priorities</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate confidence, establish credibility and maintain trust</li> <li>• Ability to work within a matrix environment, collaborating effectively with different categories and levels of staff</li> <li>• Ability to generate enthusiasm and develop an effective team working culture</li> </ul>	
Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support across all University campuses</li> <li>• May be required to work additional hours to meet the requirements of the role</li> </ul>	

**Terms & Conditions**

Our Terms and Conditions of Employment can be viewed [here](#).

**Further Information**

Please see our [website](#) for further information on working at the University of Exeter.