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**PDRA in Biochemistry**

**Job Description**

**1. Job Details**

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| Job Title: | PDRA in Biochemistry | Job Family: | Research, Education & Enterprise |
| Line Manager: | Lecturer Algal Biotechnology/CCAP Manager | Grade: | 5 |
| Full Time/Part Time: | Full Time - 37hrs per week | Duration of Appointment: | Approx. 36 months - funded to 30/09/2028 |

**2. Job Purpose**

* Provide empirical datasets of the metabolic composition and activity of the NERC-UKRI CCAP algal strains.
* Will advance their applications in algal biotechnology, with an emphasis on the agri- and aquaculture sectors.
* Important post to advance SAMS capacity and research profile in metabolomics and natural products research, as well as developing metabolomic data to increase the biotechnological value of NERC-UKRI CCAP strain holdings.
* This will be achieved through three main activities: i) overseeing an untargeted biochemical phenotype screening of CCAP strains; ii) conducting a full-trait characterisation of sector-targeted species within CCAP; and iii) optimising bioassays to identify and quantify bioactivity of selected strains.

**3. Main Responsibilities**

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Role Description* | *Approx. %*  *of time* | | Conduct fundamental and applied algal research related to the Natural Products BioHUB project. | 70 | | Present and discuss findings at regular internal and partner project meetings in the UK. | 10 | | Lead preparation and deliver content for necessary Natural Products BioHUB and CCAP reports needed to ensure SAMS meets its obligation for these projects. | 5 | | Publish research in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and support SAMS staff with writing research grants to support project and your career development. Assist Principal Investigator (PI) with areas of commercial income generating interest. | 5 | | Give presentations at national and international conferences and workshops (either online or in-person), acting as an ambassador for projects and SAMS. | 5 | | Provide relevant biological and data material for CCAP and SAMS training. | 5 | | Be proactive in the application of SAMS Health and Safety Procedures. | Ongoing | |  |

**4. Planning and Organising**

* Plan and deliver quality science in conjunction with others including PIs, PDRAs and/or support scientists to deliver the project work packages on time.
* Liaise with other related SAMS and CCAP projects on all aspects regarding algal research, collaboratively, contract research and analysis and studentships.
* Liaise with Natural Products BioHub project partners to timetable the supply of relevant information ahead of meetings.
* Assess project resource requirements, purchasing, and where necessary, delegate maintenance and equipment purchases.
* Supervise students and interns, where time allows, developing their planning and organisation skills.
* Plan internal and external project reporting and publications, writing manuscripts and organising their publication in collaboration with co-authors.
* Prepare risk assessments and SOPs, where required.

**5. Problem-Solving**

* Able to solve problems that occur in the lab, seeking advice from specialists or relevant staff members when necessary. For example, an equipment or analytical fault.
* Present any encountered problems to partners diplomatically, having already discussed and determined potential solutions with relevant peers.
* Act as a sounding-board to undergraduate and postgraduate students, helping them to solve problems, either by providing advice or steering them towards the solution.
* Design and plan out resourcing issues, liaising with senior staff, professional services, and others as appropriate.

**6. Decision-Making**

* Determine the most appropriate course of action for research, commercial, education and management enquiries – seeking advice from your line manager, SAMS project PIs and Natural Products BioHub partners where appropriate.
* Where appropriate, delegate tasks/provide opportunities to support staff, students, or interns.
* Liaise with staff to decide best course of action for any commercial queries.
* Decide how and when to engage with stakeholders and interested parties.
* Peer-review research publications both internally and externally.

**7. Key Contacts/Relationships**

* Work closely with other SAMS staff involved with the Natural Products BioHUB project. Consulting with SAMS PIs for project planning. And working collaboratively with SAMS technical resources for planning and conducting research.
* Work with and engage in meetings with Natural Products BioHUB project partners from Swansea University and CABI.
* Work in synchrony with senior management, SAMS professional services, Health, Safety and Environment advisor, PDRAs, lab technicians and members of the facilities team to ensure all necessary experimental facilities and experimentation run smoothly.
* Discuss, where appropriate, experimental findings with scientific researchers and members of industry; to develop our respective research knowledge, agendas and future collaborations.
* Represent SAMS and CCAP at local, national and international meetings and conferences as required.
* Interact with students, volunteers and interns to develop their scientific skills.
* Engage with customers, potential collaborators, peer-groups, networks, stakeholders and interested parties for the betterment of SAMS/CCAP.

**8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience needed for the Job**

* PhD in Phycology/Algal Biotechnology/Biochemistry (with a preference for strong biochemistry focus).
* Some experience in phycology/algal biotechnology with macro and/or microalgae research.
* Experience of working in interdisciplinary teams.
* Some experience of experimental design and method development in analytical biochemistry and biology.
* Effective written and verbal communication of scientific research.
* Experience in GC-MS, HPLC is highly desirable.

**9. Dimensions – Scope of role**

* Able to take a fundamental approach to the assessment of algal strains for physiologically and commercially important products.
* Design experiments conducted by this post and with technical support.
* Keep up to date with research publications and state of the art in the subject area.
* Complete all deliverables and publish research findings of projects in high-impact journals.
* Contribute to new research grant proposal bids, led by PI.
* Represent SAMS at national/international conferences and workshops.
* Co-supervise interns and student projects, where required.

**10. Any other relevant information**

The particular duties and responsibilities attached to posts may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibilities entailed**.** If the normal duties of the post include going to sea (apart from small boats e.g. RHIB's) the applicant must be able to obtain the ENG1 medical certification and complete the STCW 95 Personal Survival Techniques training.

Useful Reference Areas

Our website - [Home — Scottish Association for Marine Science, Oban UK (sams.ac.uk)](https://www.sams.ac.uk/)

SAMS Impact Report - [Digital-SAMS-AR-2024.pdf](https://www.sams.ac.uk/t4-media/sams/pdf/Digital-SAMS-AR-2024.pdf)

Science - [Science — Scottish Association for Marine Science, Oban UK (sams.ac.uk)](https://www.sams.ac.uk/science/)

Education - [Study — The Scottish Association for Marine Science (sams.ac.uk)](https://www.sams.ac.uk/study/)

Enterprise - [Home — SAMS Enterprise - Marine Consultancy (sams-enterprise.com)](https://www.sams-enterprise.com/)

[What can SAMS offer you?](https://vimeo.com/411370772)

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Our Values and culture

We strive to be a world-class marine science enterprise that underpins regional, national, and international policy, and societal action to secure healthy and sustainable oceans.

As a workforce, we have a strong family and team culture, helping each other to achieve our goals.

Remuneration

We offer a competitive salary and pension as well as employee benefits package. We also have a number of supportive policies to assist absence, family, and other leave types.

Career Goals

SAMS provides a supportive learning and career growth environment for those looking for that next step in their career or upskill in the workplace. This may be through opportunities to develop techniques, learn more about the science objectives for the group, gain some tutorial opportunities, as well as attend meetings and CPD events.

We’ll provide you with a good start as you join SAMS

SAMS provides an excellent induction which is a great introduction to the organisation, the facilities, your department and team, and provides that support that you need over the early months joining a new organisation. We will also provide you with office space, computing equipment and ensure this is ready for you on your first day of work.

Employee Benefits

In addition to a general remuneration package which includes a generous salary, pension, and sickness absence policy, we offer a number of employee benefits to our staff, some of which are listed below:

* Flexible & Hybrid working arrangements (up to 2 days working from home) – will depend on role dynamic.
* Purchase of additional annual leave – up to 20 days per annum
* Access to shopping discounts as well as local shop and leisure discounted memberships
* Cycle to work scheme
* Purchase of technology
* Payroll Giving
* Salary Sacrifice – pensions
* Access to wellbeing portals which provide support for mental health, nutrition and fitness and GP referral scheme
* Occupational health support
* Welfare support on site
* Sabbatical scheme
* A number of training and development courses to assist you with your career development – leadership, coaching and mentoring.
* Free car parking and bicycle sheds
* Electric car charge points on-site

SAMS’ commitment to gender equality has been recognised, as our institute was presented with an Athena SWAN (Scientific Women’s Academic Network) Bronze Award and is currently working towards Investors in Diversity accreditation.

SAMS follows Fair Work Practices.

As an Academic Partner of the University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI), SAMS is designated as an educational establishment and subject to the provisions of the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act. Certain roles may be subject to a satisfactory check by Disclosure (Scotland) as a condition of their appointment.

Applications must include CV and Cover Letter and should be sent electronically to [recruitment@sams.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@sams.ac.uk) quoting Job Ref. ‘D05/25.MR’ in the subject line.

The closing date for applications is 27th July 2025.

Interviews will be held shortly thereafter.

Please note, we prefer to contact referees prior to interview.

Guidance for Applicants

This position unfortunately does not meet the minimum requirements for sponsorship to work in the UK. You must therefore have the rights in place to work in the UK already.

Your application – what are we looking for?

We are looking for a full CV – please remember to document all your relevant work experience, listed with the most recent first. You should also include your educational achievements with your most recent qualification first.  You should include skills and competencies gained from previous employment or education. This should be specific to the job description.  Also, please include details of two referees, one referee at least from your current role, who we may contact if invited for interview.

We enjoy reading cover letters and these are an important part of the application. In the letter, connect your past accomplishments with the requirements listed in the job description. Focus on your most relevant experience, qualifications, and skills. Where possible, quantify your accomplishments with facts and data.

 Useful links

* [How to write a flawless cover letter](https://career-advice.jobs.ac.uk/cv-and-cover-letter-advice/how-to-write-a-flawless-cover-letter-in-2020/) (please right click and select open in new tab)
* [How to write a CV](https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/how-to-write-a-cv/) (please right click and select open in new tab)

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