

How does the recruitment process at CHE work?

(video transcript)

Hello and welcome to the Centre for Health Economics or CHE. If you're thinking about joining CHE, this video will walk you through the standard recruitment process for research staff and answer some of the most common questions we receive.

What are you looking for from candidates?

We are looking for people keen to pursue research in the area of health economics, to a high academic standard, including the use of rigorous methods, and with a keen interest in policy-relevant research. They will have strong economics or other quantitative skills evidenced through qualifications and/or experience and will be enthusiastic about communicating their research to key stakeholders.

How does the recruitment process at CHE work?

We have a two-step process involving shortlisting and interview. The recruitment panel will shortlist candidates against all the essential and desirable criteria listed in the job description, so please read these carefully before applying and ensure you are evidencing these in your application. If shortlisted, you will then be invited to an interview which will usually take place online. At this point, the University will usually seek references from referees. We aim to shortlist around 6-8 candidates usually for early career researcher roles, often from a large number of applicants.

Sometimes we will move on to have a second interview for a smaller number of candidates, perhaps 3-4, which might for example happen a week after the first interview, if the panel feels they want to delve into more detail in any particular areas. Sometimes, different panel members may join the second interview.

What does the application process involve and do you have any top tips?

You will typically be asked to fill in an application form, include a CV and a cover letter and you may upload optional material such as publications. The application form may also ask you specific questions such as listing your top outputs.

The recruitment panel will be looking at a large number of CVs, so a top tip is to make sure your CV clearly lists all the important information, such as your academic record, for example, when and where you studied, what subjects you studied, and what marks you got. It should also clearly list any publications you may have and it is recommended to provide all the publication details so panel members can find the papers. You can also list any working papers that are in progress. If you have any funding, please provide all the details for this including the value of the grant.

For the cover letter, we would encourage you to provide a clear account of how you meet all of the essential and, if applicable, desirable criteria listed in the job description. Remember,

you will be shortlisted against these criteria so it helps to clearly explain in your cover letter, with examples, how you hit each of these criteria.

How does the interview process work and how can I prepare for it?

Once candidates have been shortlisted, we provide them with one or more interview tasks. These typically involve activities which might mimic the sorts of things you might be expected to do in your role.

For example, candidates might be given a data analysis task. You will be provided with data and asked to analyse it, share your code and write a brief report about it, and then discuss it at interview. This is done so as to assess a range of skills such as economic / analytical skills, coding skills, writing and communication skills.

Candidates are also often asked to read an academic article, critically appraise it, and prepare a presentation on it. This assesses critical thinking, understanding of methods and policy context, and presentation skills.

A final example, often for more senior roles, might involve a presentation around a planned research area, with thought given to how this fits with CHE's research agenda, and opportunities for publications and grant capture.

So the interview will start off with the interview task you have prepared, for example giving your presentation, and then asking you follow-up questions around the interview tasks such as the data analysis task or the academic article presentation, prompting you on issues raised, such as potential alternative approaches that could have been taken.

The panel will then follow on to more general interview questions such as why you want to work at CHE. To prepare for these, make sure you review the essential criteria in the job description as the panel will be essentially trying to test these key skills, experience, knowledge and attributes, as well as your research interests. A top tip is to have examples to hand that demonstrate how you meet these criteria.

Finally, make sure you follow the instructions provided carefully for the interview, whether that is for the length of time of the presentation, or the deadline to submit materials to the panel.

You will also always have an opportunity to ask questions of the panel at the end of the interview, so do think ahead and use this opportunity if you wish.

What is the timeline of typical recruitment rounds?

We try to ensure the process is as efficient as possible, but we need to give candidates enough time to firstly apply, for the panel to then shortlist, and then for candidates to prepare for interviews. So in total, from when we start to advertise, until the first interview date, is typically around 3 months.

If successful, you will be notified about the outcome of the application as soon as possible after the final interview, but usually we hope to make job offers within a week. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified at the same time.

What would my first year at CHE look like?

A successful candidate will join one of the research teams at CHE and receive a thorough induction process from various colleagues. This includes topics such as how CHE is organised, key processes and policies, data management, administrative support, staff development, and welfare, and so on.

The candidate will undertake research on projects within their research team, typically working on 2 or 3 projects in their first year. Each project will typically have anywhere between 3 and 5 team members from CHE involved, including a more senior project supervisor / lead, but can often have collaborators from other departments or Universities or other partners involved too. All of the work is done in teams. And the projects will all be funded research which CHE will need to deliver on.

So the day to day part of the job will entail getting to grips with the project objectives, the research questions, the data, the key literature, the policy context, and the methods. The successful candidates will usually get involved in all stages of the project, including writing up the work and presenting the work at conferences, or seminars or workshops.

Can I work on any research I like?

Initially the expectation is that successful candidates will help to deliver on the portfolio of already funded research in CHE. But over time, successful candidates would get opportunities to, and we'd encourage and support them to, think about how to take the research in different directions, or develop new research ideas of their own. The successful candidate may contribute to the development of research ideas with senior research staff, and ultimately develop to the point where they can be part of or even lead successful grant submissions and run projects of their own.

How do you support career development?

It's worth noting that the majority of the professors in CHE started out as early career researchers in CHE. This suggests that CHE is a very good place to build a long-term career in research. Our approach in general is to 'grow our own' so we strive to recruit the very best candidates from across the world and then invest in their careers through staff development, offering training opportunities, conference attendance, variety in projects and on-the-job learning and a nurturing and supportive atmosphere. Colleagues are always on hand to help out if you have any questions and it's very much an open door environment. You will be assigned a line manager, and a buddy to support you in your first few months, and we'll also provide extensive in-depth support around promotions for which we have a very strong track record.

Can I work remotely?

Yes. The University of York's requirement is for staff to be on campus for a minimum of 1 day a week. But we believe research is an 'ideas business' and that important interactions take place face-to-face, and especially for new starters. For this reason we strongly encourage all our staff to be on campus for at least 50% of their contracted hours, with core days being Tuesdays-Thursdays where most staff tend to be in the office. But many CHE staff come into the office more frequently. This helps create a vibrant research culture. Most of our meetings are hybrid though and we do take a flexible and supportive approach to staff's needs.

Do you provide support for visas?

Staff of many different nationalities work at CHE, in fact over 60% of our research staff are from outside the UK. Currently you should be eligible to apply for a Skilled Worker visa and in some cases a Global Talent visa depending on whether you will be working on an eligible research grant or meet other eligibility criteria. The University will apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship for you and support you through the application process and the University offers financial support for staff visa costs, including renewals. But if you have any questions concerning sponsorship please contact the University's HR department prior to making an application.

So, if you're the kind of candidate we're looking for, we encourage you to apply. We're always looking for talented, motivated individuals, who are enthusiastic to join one of the top health economics units in the world. Please see our website for more details about our research or you can contact the individuals on the recruitment materials if you have any specific further questions. Thank you and good luck.