



<b>Post title:</b>	<b>Research Associate</b>
<b>Reference Number:</b>	<b>SS0508</b>
<b>Salary Scale:</b>	<b>Grade 7: £31,020 - £35,938 <i>per annum</i></b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Kent Business School</b>
<b>Contract:</b>	<b>Fixed term for 2 years and Full time</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>University of Kent, Canterbury Campus</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Professor Said Salhi and the Director of Kent Business School or their nominee</b>

### **University of Kent**

The University of Kent was established at Canterbury in 1965 and has now become known as the UK's European university, with students in Paris and Brussels as well as at its other Kent campuses at Medway and Tonbridge. It has nearly 20,000 students, of which nearly 17,000 are undergraduates and approaching 3,000 are postgraduates.

The University has consistently been rated as one of the best universities in the UK by its own students in the National Student Survey for the quality of its teaching and academic provision. The 2011 Guardian University Guide sees Kent ranked 27th out of 118 universities while the Independent's latest Complete University Guide places Kent 38th, with 82% of its taught subjects being ranked among the national top 30.

In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, the University was placed 24th out of 159 participating institutions in the UK for its world-leading research, while 97% of its academic staff work in schools or centres where the research is rated as either internationally or nationally excellent.

In 2008, the University was awarded The Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for the work of its Kent Law Clinic.

The University's strong European impact is reinforced by long-standing partnerships with more than 100 universities in mainland Europe and it is the only UK university to have specialist postgraduate centres in Brussels and Paris. The University has also developed relationships with many leading overseas universities outside Europe and in 2010 launched a new initiative to offer more scholarships to students from Hong Kong and China.

It is a major educational, economic and cultural force in Canterbury, Medway and

throughout the rest of Kent, supporting innovation and enterprise across the region. During 2010/2011 the University expects to contribute at least £200m to the economy of the Canterbury district alone.

Website: [www.kent.ac.uk](http://www.kent.ac.uk)

## **Kent Business School**

Kent Business School was established in 1989, building on two decades of postgraduate management education and research at the University. Our MBA programme was established in 1991 and, in September 1992, we moved to new, purpose-built premises. In 1995 the University's programmes and staff in Accounting & Finance and in Industrial Relations & Human Resource Management were transferred to the School, followed in 1997 by programmes and staff in Management Science. The School has 1676 students on two campuses, 293 postgraduates (including 56 research students) and 1383 undergraduates, distributed across all our programmes.

A strategic decision to invest in it has seen the Business School grow in size and calibre since 2003. The appointment of new and highly motivated staff has transformed the research culture within the School, attracting interest nationally and internationally. Through the dedication and commitment of all our staff, we are steadily building on the successes of our foundational years to create a forward-looking Business School with global reach, creating stimulating research and learning environments.

The 2008 RAE results demonstrate the School's research excellence. Kent Business School moved up from 52nd place in 2001 to 21st place, as more than half of the School's research activity (55%) was classified as 'world leading/international excellent research' (3\* and 4\*). Overall, the Business School ranks 29th, positioning the School in the top third of the 90 UK Business and Management Schools included in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

Kent Business School has demonstrated excellence in learning and teaching. In the NSS in 2010, the School was ranked:

- ✓ 2nd amongst the UK HE institutions for the quality of Business Studies courses (93%)
- ✓ 7th for Management Studies (90%)
- ✓ 13th for Accounting (93%)
- ✓ 23rd for Finance (84%)

2011 Sunday Times University Rankings:

- ✓ 1<sup>st</sup> in South East England for Management Studies
- ✓ 3<sup>rd</sup> in UK for Student Satisfaction for Business Studies
- ✓ 5<sup>th</sup> in UK for Student Satisfaction for Management Studies
- ✓ 16<sup>th</sup> in UK for Management Studies

2011 Guardian University Guide:

- ✓ 6th in the UK for Business & Management graduating students' employment prospects

In 2001, the University launched the University of Kent at Medway with the aim of creating new higher education opportunities in the Medway towns. This initiative pointed the way to a future for the University that is ground-breaking amongst British universities, establishing it in a large demographic area, signalling our commitment to support the regeneration of the Medway area, and attracting a national profile.

At Medway, Kent Business School offers undergraduate programmes in Business Studies, Business Studies with Tourism and Accounting and Management. From September 2012, postgraduate programmes will also be offered at the campus. Kent Business School student numbers at the Medway site have grown steadily to 350 in 2011 with further expansion due from 2012 onwards as we collaborate with other Medway-based academic Schools within the University of Kent to offer a diverse and creative portfolio of programmes. Three of the Business School's research centres are represented at the Medway campus, and there are significant opportunities for collaborative research both with colleagues based at Medway and within the wider University.

The University of Kent's Brussels campus is home to the Brussels School of International Studies and offers a range of specialist programmes related to the study of international affairs. Students at the School benefit from the unique advantages of a degree from a renowned British University with excellent opportunities for networking and professional advancement offered by its location in the cosmopolitan and politically important "Capital of Europe". Many of the programmes are enhanced by lecturers working within the European Union institutions, NATO, NGOs, think-tanks and lobby groups. The School has a strong inter-disciplinary ethos involving 5 academic departments and currently has some 250 students from 72 different countries and offers 14 academic programmes. In addition, the University is establishing a presence in Paris, and is currently setting up new MA programmes within the Faculty of Humanities.

## Research

Our strategic priority is to continue to develop the School's research activity both by maintaining the appointment of new, especially senior, staff and through developing the research potential of our current staff.

The School's research portfolio is focussed around five research areas:

- Management Science (including OR and Systems)
- Strategy and International Business
- Accounting and Finance
- Organisational Performance and Employment Relations
- Food Marketing and Supply Chain Management

Overarching themes include sustainability, organisational processes and change management practices, performance management and innovation and enterprise.

In addition, there are six applied research centres:

- Centre for Employment, Competitiveness and Growth,
- Centre for Tourism in Island and Coastal Areas,
- Centre for Supply Chain Research,
- Centre for Logistics and Heuristic Optimisation
- Anglo-Chinese Business and Management Centre

- Centre for Evaluating Research Performance.

## **Job Purpose**

The Centre for Logistic and Heuristic Optimisation (CLHO) [www.kent.ac.uk/kbs/cho](http://www.kent.ac.uk/kbs/cho) is one of the six research centres within Kent Business School, with a focus on logistics mainly routing, location and inventory, using, designing and analysing heuristic and exact methods.

This position will provide an important link between research undertaken within the centre and logistic companies, initially regional ones in the South East. The aim is to help them improve their distribution systems such as reducing the total mileage cost through more efficient delivery routes, determining strategically the network design such as the opening/closing of facilities etc, the vehicle fleet size and composition, etc. This is an important decision given the variability that exists in the customer demands and the number of customers.

The use of Geographic Information System (GIS) will be an integrated part of the project. The initial aim of this project is to focus on two or three medium sized logistic companies in the South East, building up relationships whilst testing our computer tools on their logistics and routing problems. These are based on the methods designed by the authors of the centre with additional enhancements being provided if necessary. The acquisition by organisations of these tools needs to be through their ease.

Planned future interventions with larger companies will be required during the term of employment. Engagement with these larger companies will contribute to future development and the opportunity to explore further funding opportunities and research projects.

## **Key Accountabilities / Primary Responsibilities**

The successful applicant will work closely with the Director of the Centre, Professor Said Salhi, in developing these computer tools.

The primary goals are three fold:

- to develop these computer tools through easy to use software
- to build relationship with, and implement the software to, companies initially in the South East
- to assist in the preparation of articles of internationally excellent quality for submission to refereed academic journals and grant applications with members of The Centre for Logistic and Heuristic Optimisation.

The need to integrate GIS within the software is necessary so some experience in this area or the willingness to learn is useful. Gathering data from different sources such as excel sheets to be inputted into software is also part of the task.

The applicant does not need to design new algorithms but implement the authors' methods to suit the problem of these companies. Any enhancements and modifications will be carried out jointly with the Director.

In addition to the design of the software and the visits to companies, the research associate will be required to support the Director in the preparation and delivery of workshops to audiences such as potential collaborators, external companies in the promotion of the software and promotion and visibility of the Centre.

The successful candidate will also be required to be involved in a number of other centre projects and ensure their timely delivery. This will require the successful candidate to work with other academics associated with The Centre for Logistic and Heuristic Optimisation.

The role holder will be required to be the primary interface with companies interested in working with the centre. They will also be required to work closely with the Director of External Services and the External Services Director in the development and delivery of the external engagement strategy within the School whilst ensuring that all University processes and procedures are adhered to.

## **Key Duties**

### **The post holder will be required to:**

- Write computer codes in routing and location including interfaces with GIS using new research techniques and methods in routing and location
- Build up relationship with companies and implement and install the software to these logistical companies using CLHO design methods whilst enhancing and modifying where necessary. The post holder will need to use initiative and creativity to identify areas of opportunity within these organisations.
- Organise workshops in logistics to attract logistic companies as well as academics to the work and project opportunities within CLHO. The post holder will be required to communicate material of a specialist nature to these audiences.
- Future activity will require the post holder to get in touch with larger logistic companies to promote the centre and its value proposition. This will be with a view of attracting research project funding either directly with the company or through collaboration with jointly submitted bids to the EPSRC. The post holder will be required to prepare proposals and applications to external bodies this will be on an individual and team basis.
- Design and enhance the website for the centre (CLHO) and the MSc in Logistics to start in 2012.
- Assist in the preparation of articles of internationally excellent quality for submission to refereed academic journals and grant applications with members of the Centre for Logistic and Heuristic Optimisation. The successful post holder should continually update knowledge and understanding in field of Logistics.
- Attend meetings with logistic companies and act as focus point for the research work carried out in CLHO.
- Use initiative and creativity to identify areas for research, develop new research methods and extend the research portfolio within CLHO.

- Possess sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline of routing and location research methods and techniques.
- The successful post holder will need to work closely with the Director of External Services and the Business Development Manager in the development and delivery of the external engagement strategy within the School. The Centre will form a pivotal part in achieving this strategy.

Such other duties, commensurate with the grading of the post that may be assigned by the Director of Kent Business School or their nominee.

### Internal & External Relationships

**Internal:** Director of The Centre for Logistics and Heuristic Optimisation; KBS Academics with a research interest in Logistics and Heuristic Optimisation; Director of External Services; External Services Director; Communications and Marketing team; Undergraduates; Postgraduates; and PhD Students in the Kent Business School.

**External:** The post holder will be working closely with SMEs in the logistics and the transport sector, professional bodies, including a variety of regional, national and international based organisations.

### Person Specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications are assessed against each of the criteria either at application or interview stage. Applications will be deemed unsuccessful if an essential criterion is not met. This may also help you self-select if you are suitable for the role.

#### ▪ Qualifications / Training

	Essential	Desirable
Good first degree or equivalent in Mathematics or Computing (or a related discipline)	✓	
Masters in a relevant discipline (Operational Research [OR]/Management Science/Computing)	✓	
PhD in a relevant discipline (OR/Man Sci/Computing)		✓

#### ▪ Experience / Knowledge

	Essential	Desirable
Good knowledge of computer programming	✓	
Experience in Excel and VBA (Visual Basic for Applications)	✓	
Operation research techniques	✓	
Experience of research and willingness to be involved in the publication of research papers	✓	

Experience of working in a commercial environment and developing opportunities with external organisations.	✓	
Good working knowledge and experience with GIS (Geographic Information System)		✓
Logistics such as routing algorithms and location techniques		✓

▪ **Skills / Abilities**

	Essential	Desirable
Computer programming (C/C++/Fortran/Java/...)	✓	
Excellent interpersonal, presentational, organisational and communication skills	✓	
Experience of working well in a pressurised environment	✓	
GIS and data handling skill		✓
An ability to work to prioritise and work to deadlines	✓	

▪ **Additional Attributes**

	Essential	Desirable
Good social and communication skills	✓	
Ability to work independently as well as in a team	✓	
Ability to collaborate with colleagues within and beyond the School	✓	
Keenness to contribute to the development of the programmes, research and other activities of the School	✓	

**Further Enquiries**

For informal discussion only, please contact: Professor Said Salhi, Head of Group, Management Science and Director of CLHO at the Kent Business School, [s.salhi@kent.ac.uk](mailto:s.salhi@kent.ac.uk).

**Please do not send formal applications to Professor Salhi. Those sent will be asked to apply via our online recruitment process (please refer to the applications section).**

**Application Process**

To apply for this post you will be asked to complete a short form and upload your CV, a one page summary (covering letter) and any other supporting documents. The link to the application procedure can be found by returning to the position details page and clicking on 'click here to apply for this job'.

Applications must be received by the closing date and unfortunately late applications cannot be accepted.

Your application should provide clear evidence and examples demonstrating where you meet the criteria of the post.

If you are invited to attend an interview we will contact you by email confirming the arrangements.

<b>Closing date:</b>	<b>16 February 2012</b>
<b>Interviews are expected to be held on:</b>	<b>Date to be confirmed</b>

**Redeployment Policy:** Please note that applicants currently on the University of Kent redeployment register will be considered for this post prior to other applicants. For further information on our redeployment policy please visit <http://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-staffinformation/policies/redundancy-redeployment.html>

**Two Tick Symbol:** The University of Kent is proud to operate within the 'Positive about Disability' Employment Pledge (Two Tick Symbol) and guarantee an interview to candidates who declare a disability and meet the essential criteria listed in the person specification.

If you have a disability and require information regarding accessibility of our campus facilities please visit <http://www.disabledgo.com/en/org/university-of-kent>

**Job Share:** Applications to job-share this post are welcomed. If you wish to apply on a job-share basis indicate this on your application and include:

- If you are applying as part of a job-share team (please give name of sharer) or as an individual.
- The proportion of the job you would wish to work, expressed as a percentage.
- Whether you would be interested in the job on a full-time basis if a suitable sharer does not come forward.

**UK Border Agency Immigration regulations:** The University of Kent is unable, under current immigration law, to employ candidates who are not eligible to live and work in the UK.

For academic and research vacancies, or posts that require very specialist skills we can apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship (although there is no guarantee that this will be granted) if there are no suitable 'resident' candidates available to appoint.

Please refer to the Home Office website if you require further information on their Certificate of Sponsorship procedure/requirements at <http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/>



## Equality and Diversity

The University of Kent is committed to the provision and support of an inclusive and balanced environment that respects and celebrates diversity. The University has comprehensive Equality and Diversity policy that states our commitments to the various equality strands. Furthermore, we have Single Equality Scheme that



outlines our intentions and actions with regards to the race, gender and disability equality duties. Both of these documents alongside other useful guidance can be found on [www.kent.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity](http://www.kent.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity)

## Benefits and Terms and Conditions

• <b>generous holiday entitlement</b>	• <b>competitive salaries</b>
• <b>flexible working</b>	• <b>pension scheme</b>
• <b>childcare facilities/vouchers</b>	• <b>training and development</b>

**Salary:** Grade 7: £31,020 - £31,948 - £32,901 - £35,938 *per annum* according to experience and qualifications.

Employees normally receive an increment annually until the top of the scale is reached. In addition there is normally a nationally agreed annual cost of living salary increase.

**Annual Leave:** Whilst there is no prescribed holiday entitlement, research associate staff are expected to make arrangements for reasonable holidays with their line manager.

**Pension:** You will be automatically enrolled to become a member of **USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme)** – a defined benefit pension scheme, although you may choose to opt-out of the Scheme if you prefer.

Staff who commence employment at the University of Kent from 1 October 2011 who are not current members of the USS Scheme (either from their employment elsewhere or at the University of Kent) who wish to join the Scheme will pay an employee contribution rate of 6.5% of salary. The University contributes a sum equal to 16% of salary.

Staff who commence employment at the University of Kent from 1 October 2011 who are current members of USS (either from their employment elsewhere or at the University of Kent) or who have previously been a member of USS and wish to re-join the Scheme will pay an employee rate of 7.5% of salary. The University contributes a sum equal to 16% of salary. *NB To qualify to re-join USS under this arrangement there must not be a gap of more than 30 months since you were last a member of the Scheme.*

**Flexible Working:** The University is willing to consider changes in hours (either short or long term) for all groups of staff, when these are consistent with operational needs.

**Location:** The primary location is at the University's Canterbury Campus, although the post-holder may be required to work from time to time at other campuses and centres.

**Childcare:** There is an independent nursery on campus. There is usually a waiting list and to inquire about vacancies please contact the manager. Telephone 01227 827676

**Relocation package:** The University offers assistance with relocation expenses for those who have to move to the vicinity of a University Campus to a post, which is tenable for two or more years.

For full Terms and Conditions please see: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-staffinformation/conditions-of-service/index.html>