

POSITION STATEMENT ACADEMIC STAFF

UTS:HUMAN RESOURCES

POSITION: Postdoctoral Research Fellow: Academic Writing Analytics

FACULTY: Connected Intelligence Centre, Office of the DVC (Education and Students)

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR'S NAME: Professor Simon Buckingham Shum

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR'S POSITION: Director, Connected Intelligence Centre

The Connected Intelligence Centre (CIC) is a new research and teaching centre at UTS located in the heart of Sydney at the City campus. CIC has been created to provide a world-class data science and analytics research lab supporting the learning, research and business needs of the University. CIC collaborates with external organisations, government departments and other universities to deliver its goals and objectives.

This position provides the springboard for a highly motivated researcher to establish an international profile in an area of critical importance to both educators and employers: the ability to think critically, and make that thinking visible in one's writing as coherent analysis and argumentation. This is the hallmark of an educated mind, a skill that we start to nurture in school and refine in higher education; a quality required for scholarship, research and the knowledge-intensive workplace. CIC is developing Learning Analytics for higher order learning, and UTS offers many testbeds for investigating the potential of Academic Writing Analytics, providing datasets and a community of practitioners and researchers who will work with CIC. You will be evaluating existing tools and designing new tools offering personalised, formative feedback on writing in diverse contexts, e.g. new undergraduates struggling to master academic English; undergraduate essays; reflective blogs/eportfolios; draft papers intended for peer review. You bring in-depth knowledge of research into the teaching and assessment of academic writing, and technical expertise in the use of language technologies.

This 3 year post, with prospects for extension, provides all the opportunities you would expect in an advanced learning analytics lab: a data-intensive mindset in the university's senior leadership; Masters and PhD student supervision opportunities; grant writing experience; authentic testbeds; national and international travel; advanced computing infrastructure; an informal but high energy, creative team culture.

DUTIES OF THE POSITION:

TEACHING AND LEARNING / EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Preparation and delivery of internal and external training courses supporting the Centre's learning analytics research
- Support for other academics across UTS seeking to understand the potential of language technologies for their teaching and learning, research and scholarship

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

- In collaboration with the Director, work with academics in developing teaching and learning research projects to design, implement, evaluate and refine Academic Writing Analytics in different contexts
- In collaboration with the Director and other colleagues, report research findings through archival journal and refereed conference proceedings

- Working with the Director, define new Masters and PhD projects, interview candidates and co-supervise the students
- Demonstrate the ability to play an increasing lead role in writing research grant proposals for internal and external funding
- Forge effective research collaborations with both academic and industry partners

CONSULTING / EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

- Consistent with relevant UTS Policies, and agreed workplans, there may be the opportunity to conduct external consulting.
- Participate with relevant industry and professional bodies.

ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

- Attend Centre meetings
- Consistent with University policies, develop and submit annual workplans that are aligned with the strategic goals of the Centre and University, and participate in annual performance reviews.
- Take leadership development opportunities, and undertake administrative activities, under the Director's or Project Manager's supervision.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA ACADEMIC STAFF

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Skills and Attributes

- Exceptional personal and interpersonal skills, enabling you to design analytics with strong engagement from diverse stakeholders (e.g. students; educators; technologists)
- Strong sense of initiative and self-motivation, leadership, and readiness to take responsibility for initiating and delivering projects
- Exceptional presentation skills in English: you will be engaging diverse audiences, from small internal groups, to external audiences of hundreds
- Exceptional written communication in English: from general briefings to specialist technical reports
- A team player, ready to give and receive encouragement and constructive critique
- High personal integrity, professionalism and ethical standards
- Effective time and resource management without close supervision
- Knowledge of equity principles and commitment to their application.

Knowledge

- Language technologies: expertise in the design, tuning, and coding of technologies for the analysis of reflective writing in technical/academic domains (e.g. essays, research papers, reports, proposals, blogs, eportfolios)
- Academic writing: knowledge of the characteristics of reflective, academic writing
- Research methodology: experience in designing and executing research to validate writing analytics

Advantageous:

- In-depth knowledge of, and contributions to, research into the teaching and assessment of academic writing, using language technologies
- Specific expertise in the analysis of argumentation and rhetoric
- A strong digital scholarship presence online, e.g. blog, movies, twitter, slideshare

Qualifications

- A PhD demonstrating the ability to invent/adapt language technologies for the analysis of some form of technical/academic writing. Relevant fields include intelligent tutoring systems for writing, natural language processing of student texts, scientific discourse analysis, corpus linguistics.

Experience required

- Ideally 3-4 years postdoctoral experience evidencing growth in your skills and learning
- A strong research track record commensurate with your experience (e.g. peer reviewed papers in strong publications, open source software, small grants, chairing of workshops, invited talks, engagement with non-academic audiences).