

Department for Communities and Local Government

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has two core objectives

- Driving forward the Government's localism agenda, which means empowering communities and enabling decisions to be taken at the lowest practicable level
- Creating the conditions in which places can succeed and prosper through their own leadership.

The Department sets policy on supporting local government, communities and neighbourhoods, regeneration, housing, planning, building and the environment, and fire.

There are five internship opportunities available:

- Economic analysis on alternatives to regulation policies at the DCLG
- Understanding the barriers to public service transformation: the role of data sharing
- Statistical analysis of the English Housing Survey on the private rented sector
- Policy and programme monitoring and evaluation

Economic analysis on alternatives to regulation policies at the DCLG

Organisation/ department background

The role will be based in the DCLG in the Strategic Analysis Team (SAT) in the Analysis and Innovation Directorate (AID). DCLG aims to move decision-making power from central government to local councils. This helps put communities in charge of planning, increases accountability and helps citizens to see how their money is being spent. Our key policy areas are housing, local government, public safety and emergencies, economic growth, planning and building and community and society.

SAT has a remit to enable the Department to achieve its objectives and deliver value for money by leading and disseminating cross-cutting analysis and improving DCLGs capability to act strategically. It has a clear thought-leadership role in bringing together the best evidence and strategic thinking to put analysts at the forefront of policy debates. It is a mixed policy and analytical team.

SAT has five areas of responsibility including cross-cutting strategic projects, developing new areas of work, developing capability, support to the Chief Analysts and deregulation. The role will be in the deregulation branch of SAT.

Project brief

The intern will be working in a dynamic environment on a key departmental policy priority. The role will bring the intern into contact with a wide range of policy colleagues and analysts and provides an excellent opportunity to gain experience of working in a dynamic team and to help shape the development of new policies.

Reducing regulatory burdens on business (deregulation) is a key policy objective of the current Government. There is now a presumption that conventional 'command-and-control' regulation should be a last resort. The Government has adopted the following general principles (from the "Principles of Regulation in the Coalition Government"):

The Government will regulate to achieve its policy objectives only:

- having demonstrated that satisfactory outcomes cannot be achieved by alternative, self-regulatory, or non-regulatory approaches
- where analysis of the costs and benefits demonstrates that the regulatory approach is superior to alternative, self-regulatory or non-regulatory approaches
- if the regulation and the enforcement framework are to be implemented in a fashion which is demonstrably proportionate; accountable; consistent; transparent and targeted

The deregulation policy agenda means there is reduced scope to introduce regulatory measures even if they have wider social benefits. The challenge for policy makers is to introduce policies that deliver wider social benefit at minimal (regulatory) cost.

Alternative to regulation policies aim to alter behaviour without the need to legislate. DCLG would like to develop its capacity in this area so it can better meet the challenges of delivering welfare enhancing policies at minimal cost.

The role will be about researching policies and evidence on alternatives to regulation. The role will focus on reviewing national and international evidence on alternatives to regulation, focussing on those which are most relevant to DCLG's policy areas. The intern will need to identify;

- what the alternative to regulation approach is
- the appraisal and/or evaluation evidence associated with these policies
- whether the alternative achieved its given objectives or not
- why it was "successful" or not.

The types of interventions we are interested in (though not limited to) include: the use of market instruments such as incentives, behavioural nudge-based interventions, the design of a product or service, insurance-based schemes, the role of technology, self and co-regulation and information and education interventions.

A key part to this research will be about using the evidence gathered by the intern to demonstrate why particular behaviours are observed and how they can be changed. For example, in order to alter landlord behaviour, the researcher would need to know why some landlords are unwilling to comply with particular regulations and why some are not more sensitive to monetary fines.

The placements will also give the intern the opportunity to experience life in the civil service and conducting research and analysis in a non-academic environment, and to see how research and analysis shape policy making. It is also a chance to develop core skills such as presentations and briefings.

This placement would be ideal for someone with an interest in behaviour change and / or behavioural economics.

Student specifications

The successful candidate will be numerate, have strong analytical and research skills and an interest in behavioural economics and / or behaviour change. In particular, they will have:

- Strong analytical and numerical skills
- Sound understanding of microeconomic principles
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Good project management skills
- A good understanding of behavioural economics would also be desirable.

Start date of Internship

January 2014 or earlier if possible.

Security

A basic level security check will need to be carried out by DCLG. This will include:

- Identity check
- Residency check
- Reference check
- CRB check through disclosure Scotland

Applications

Online applications must reach ESRC by **18 October 2013**. Late applications will not be accepted. Applications will be checked for eligibility by the ESRC, before being forwarded to the relevant organisation for them to review the applications, hold interviews and select an applicant to complete the internship.

Queries

Any queries relating to the application process should be directed to escinternshipscheme@esrc.ac.uk.

Understanding the Barriers to Public Service Transformation: the Role of Data Sharing between Local Services at the DCLG

Organisation/ department background

The roles will be based in the DCLG in the Analysis and Innovation Directorate. The fellows will be working in the Strategic Analysis Team (SAT), made up of economists and social researcher analysts supporting one of the Department's priorities: public service transformation. The Team undertakes cross-cutting and forward looking analysis for the Department with an aim to influence policy development in upcoming areas.

Project brief

We are seeking a PhD student intern to conduct a review of existing evidence and undertake fieldwork research to build the evidence base on the role of data sharing between local agencies in improving public service delivery and outcomes.

The intern will be working in the Department's central analytical directorate which will bring the chance to see how analysis is used to develop and influence policy development. The role will also require the intern to engage with senior analytical and policy colleagues on some of the Department's priorities including public service transformation and the Troubled Families Programme. The intern will also engage with academics and other external stakeholders. Additionally, the fieldwork component of the role will entail working closely with at least one local authority, providing a unique perspective on policy delivery in practice.

The placement will provide an excellent opportunity to experience how analysis is undertaken and used in the civil service as well as the role of analysis in policy development. There will also be important opportunities to develop skills such as communicating analysis to non-technical audiences and briefing senior colleagues as well as learning to work in a fast pace environment and engaging stakeholders in central and local government and academia.

The Role of Data Sharing in Public Service Transformation: Barriers, Costs and Benefits

The Department is leading the Whitehall agenda on Public Service Transformation and is undertaking several innovative programmes to implement reform of public services. These include:

- The £448m Troubled Families Programme (a Payment by Results model to spur joined up interventions around whole families).
- Community Budget Pilots; the Public Service Transformation Network.
- A recent announcement of £100m fund for incentivising public service transformation in 2015-16.

However, the evidence base, especially at the local level, on the different ways of achieving public service transformation and their impact still needs to be developed. The intern would work with the SAT to tackle this evidence gap by looking at the role of data sharing.

Data sharing has been identified as a potentially important way of achieving service transformation and thus better outcomes at a local level by reducing redundant data collection and allowing increased integration of services around individuals. Data sharing across local agencies can facilitate public service transformation and is being considered by some local authorities in the

implementation of the Troubled Families Programme. In particular, local multi-agency safeguarding hubs (“mash”), made up of representative from local agencies (eg police, social services, health), offer an example of how local areas are looking to improve data sharing to provide more integrated and effective public services.

The intern would work with the Team to develop and undertake a research project on the barriers, costs and benefits to sharing data at the local level for delivering public services.

This would involve working with the Team to:

- conduct a review of the evidence and synthesise this information to inform the field work
- design and undertake qualitative fieldwork with at least one local authority
- identify any relevant quantitative data for analysis on individual outcomes or fiscal cost/benefit implications of data sharing
- analyse qualitative and quantitative data (depending on the data available)
- produce an evidence-based report (along with other suitable outputs for dissemination)
- disseminate findings to policy and other relevant stakeholders.

Duration of the project

The internship will be for a period of four months full-time/or on a pro-rate part-time basis.

The specifics of the project will be agreed with the intern at the commencement of the placement to make the most their skills and research interests. Given the early stages of this work, the student’s contributions on shaping the scope and design of the project will be highly valued. The intern will be asked to produce a policy relevant output which supports the Department’s evidence base on datasharing and public service reform.

We expect there may be some UK travel involved with the role (the cost of which will be covered by the Department).

This placement would be ideal for someone wishing to undertake fieldwork and data analysis while also understanding how evidence and analysis can impact on policy making and development.

Student specification

The skills most relevant for this role include:

- Familiarity and experience using qualitative research methods (particularly interview/ focus group design and analysis)
- Ability to synthesise and interpret information from a variety of sources (qualitative and quantitative)
- Ability to work independently as well as collaboratively within a team
- Strong ability to communicate analysis clearly and concisely to technical and non-technical audiences both orally and in writing
- Interest in working in a fast-paced environment with a diverse group of policy and analytical colleagues
- Desirable but not essential is an ability to undertake quantitative analysis of secondary analysis (this would enable analysis of fiscal data or analysis of the impact of data sharing on individual outcomes depending on the data available)

The most relevant discipline areas for this internship include (but are not limited to): public policy, economics, sociology, social policy or management. Students with a particular interest in the role of technology and administrative data integration in public policy would be particularly well suited for the internship.

Start date of Internship

Early January 2014.

Security

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Statistical analysis of the English Housing Survey on the private rented sector

Organisation/ department background

The DCLG has two core objectives: driving forward the Government's localism agenda, which means empowering communities and enabling decisions to be taken at the lowest practicable level; and creating the conditions in which places can succeed and prosper through their own leadership. The Department sets policy on supporting local government; communities and neighbourhoods; regeneration; housing; planning; building and the environment; and fire.

This role is in the Strategic Statistics Division, a multi-disciplinary team of over 20 statisticians, social researchers, operational researchers, geographers and IT professionals within the Analysis and Innovation Directorate.

The Division's responsibilities include:

- management and analysis of the Department's English Housing Survey;
- statistical and spatial analysis including the Indices of Multiple Deprivation;
- the collection of local authority housing and planning data, and leading on transparency and open data; and
- fulfilling the responsibilities of the Head of Profession for Statistics.

Project brief

We are looking for an intern to join the English Housing Survey (EHS) team within the Strategic Statistics Division for a period of up to two months. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to work in a fast-paced policy-facing department and to gain insight into how analysis is used to inform policy making.

The EHS is DCLG's flagship survey and covers people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England. The survey provides valuable information and evidence to inform the development and monitoring of DCLG's housing policies. More information on the survey can be found on the EHS pages of the DCLG website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/departments-for-communities-and-local-government/series/english-housing-survey>).

The successful candidate will be responsible for conducting statistical analysis of the EHS to explore and explain the large increase in size of the private rented sector, which has happened alongside a gradual decline in the owner occupied sector. In particular, they would be responsible for:

- Consolidating existing EHS evidence on the private rented sector
- Briefly examining how this evidence base fits with the wider evidence on the private rented sector
- Conducting detailed multivariate analysis of the EHS to explore the characteristics of private renters, the condition of their housing, their aspiration to buy, the barriers to buying etc
- Producing a short, accessible and plainly written report of key findings to be published on the EHS pages of the DCLG website
- Presenting a seminar of findings to key DCLG officials

We are particularly keen to explore innovative ways of analysing the data and presenting the results.

This is a key topic of interest across the department and the successful applicant will have plenty of opportunity to discuss the wider implications of their research findings with analysts and policy officials.

Student specification

The successful candidate will be highly numerate and have excellent communication skills. In particular, they will have:

- Strong analytical and numerical skills and a good understanding of a range of analytical methods
- Experience analysing survey data (ideally using SPSS)
- Strong written and oral communication skills, especially explaining statistical terms to non-specialists
- Good project management skills
- A good understanding of housing trends in England is highly desirable.

Start date of Internship

January 2014

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Policy and programme monitoring and evaluation

Organisation background

The DCLG has two core objectives: driving forward the Government's localism agenda, which means empowering communities and enabling decisions to be taken at the lowest practicable level; and creating the conditions in which places can succeed and prosper through their own leadership. The Department sets policy on supporting local government; communities and neighbourhoods; regeneration; housing; planning; building and the environment; and fire.

Project brief

Since the coalition government came to power, DCLG has undertaken a wide range of policy reforms and implemented a range of government programmes in the areas of housing, planning and local growth. Many of these have been radical departures from approaches taken in the past, are ambitious in their scale and delivery and are key to the department achieving its key objectives. As such, it is vital that we have in place sufficient processes to ensure that these policies and programmes are able to be monitored over time, and that we have plans in place to review and evaluate them to ensure any lessons learnt are fed back into continuous policy improvement, and that we demonstrate value for money to the tax payer.

The department has a wide range of public commitments and responsibilities to carry out monitoring and evaluation, and is often subject to significant scrutiny in this regard from bodies such as the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee.

Aims and objectives of the project

The aim of this project is to provide the evidence base to support the monitoring and evaluation of DCLG's key housing, planning and local growth policies and programmes. The successful intern would work within a small social research team within a wider multi-disciplinary analytical division to support the delivery of our monitoring and evaluation commitments and responsibilities. The work of the post graduate is likely to involve:

- Undertaking literature reviews and/or scoping studies of respective policy areas to provide context and to include existing external evidence
- Analysis of a range of secondary and primary data sources to monitor progress over time and help inform any review or evaluation
- Design, commission and where possible undertake primary research with key actors in the respective policy areas. This might include carrying out face-to-face interviews, or providing support to undertake focus groups or undertaking online quantitative surveys
- The "triangulation" and synthesising of a range of different evidence sources to inform the write up of an overall interim or final assessment or evaluation of policies and programmes

Number of interns required

The project will involve one intern working alongside other analysts to gather monitoring information, as well as designing and undertaking secondary and primary research. The intern will contribute to a range of different policy areas at different stages of development. For example, some work may involve the design of an evaluation strategy or approach, others may involve the gathering of existing evidence and data, and other work may involve the pulling together of an existing evidence base to involve an interim or final evaluation.

Duration of the project

The work of the intern will be carried out over a three month period.

Anticipated project outcomes

Outcomes from the project will include:

- The delivery of monitoring and evaluation strategies and approaches
- Discrete analytical outputs from various analyses such as literature reviews, data analysis, findings from qualitative or quantitative research
- Contributions and write ups of interim or final evaluations or reviews of policies and programmes
- Where relevant, outcomes will include the dissemination and presentation of results to policy colleagues and possibly ministers and external stakeholders

By the end of the project, the intern will have gained valuable a valuable insight into a number of key high profile policy areas and agendas in the areas of housing, planning and local growth. They would also have gained experience and skills in designing approaches to monitoring and evaluating government policy, as well as the application of primary and secondary analysis in a government policy context.

Student specification

Please use the following space to provide details about the skills and expertise required by the intern.

Start date of Internship

The preferred start date for the internship is for early January 2014.

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