

## Placement opportunity

The following information has been provided by the host organisation and outlines the opportunity available. Any queries about this placement should be addressed to the host organisation at the details provided below.

<b>Name of host organisation:</b>	Office for Statistics Regulation <a href="https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk">Office for Statistics Regulation (statisticsauthority.gov.uk)</a>
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### Brief description of the host organisation:

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) is the independent regulatory arm of the [UK Statistics Authority](https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk), which is a non-ministerial government department.

OSR provides independent regulation of all official statistics produced in the UK. As regulators, it is our role to support public confidence in statistics and their use by government, by addressing harms and making sure that statistics serve the public good.

Part of the OSR's role is to promote and safeguard the use of statistics in public debate. We use our independent voice to stand up for statistics and to represent the public, reporting publicly where we have concerns and highlighting good practice.

### Placement opportunity/opportunities available

Summary the project(s) available to interns to include:

- the types of activity that they will engage with and the expected outputs/deliverables
- what support the student will receive during their placement

**Background:** The work of OSR is underpinned by the conviction that official statistics should serve the public good. This means that when statistics and quantitative claims are used in public debate, they should enhance understanding of the topics being debated and not be used in a way that has the potential to mislead. To help government departments, public bodies and others do this day-to-day, OSR created a set out principles in February 2022 which it calls '[Intelligent transparency](#)'. These demand that statistical claims and statements are based on data to which everyone has equal access, that are clearly and transparently defined, and for which there is appropriate acknowledgement of any uncertainties and context that people need to be aware of if they are realistically to interpret what they mean.

Since its creation, OSR has continued to promote intelligent transparency across government, working with a range of organisations and professions to embed the approach. The principles are now widely adopted across analytical functions in government. However, there is still further to go for transparency to be the default approach for the use of statistics in public communications and debate. For example, intelligent transparency was a key theme in OSR's [interventions](#) during the 2024 UK General Election.

This need was recognised in a May 2024 report by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) on '[Transforming the UK's Evidence Base](#)'. One of the recommendations states: "We commend the OSR for its work on Intelligent

*Transparency and recommend that it publish an annual report card on departments' compliance with its guidance, so that Parliament and external bodies might support it in holding departments to account and making the case for well-informed policy."*

**Outline:** This project seeks to develop a monitoring and reporting approach for intelligent transparency. The project offers an opportunity to improve the way OSR regulates official statistics across the UK statistical system, by creating greater accountability for government departments to comply with the intelligent transparency principles. To inform this project, the student would be required to carry out a literature review of existing monitoring and reporting frameworks used across government, as well as interviews with heads of analysis in government departments to understand what approaches are taken to adhering to intelligent transparency and to identify incentives for voluntary reporting.

**Expected output:** The development of a monitoring and reporting approach which is summarised in a report. This report should detail the findings and recommendations for how OSR can meet the PACAC recommendation on annual intelligent transparency reporting, and should consider incentives and format for departmental reporting, as well as the potential for automated tools for OSR to monitor intelligent transparency on a rolling basis (supported by work being undertaken by OSR's data and methods team).

**Support:** The student will be supported by team members in OSR, and regular catch ups will be arranged with a dedicated project sponsor. The student would also be welcome to attend some wider team meetings, such as the all-OSR team meeting each Wednesday and team training opportunities. We are dedicated to our work but feel very strongly about the importance of well-being and work-life harmony.

## **Skills and experience required for the role**

We are a close-knit team who enjoy collaborating but also work well on solo projects, so the ideal student would enjoy collaboration but also be motivated to work independently.

Someone with experience of using research or regulatory frameworks, carrying out and writing up literature reviews, and conducting interviews with individuals would also be well suited to this role.

In terms of qualifications, someone with a background in research, statistics or any social science may find this project interesting.

## **Working arrangements and location of the placement**

We anticipate that this project will last for 3 months, and it can be completed on either a full time or part time basis.

This placement will be completed remotely. OSR may on occasion suggest team wide events or meetings that the student may want to attend in person. If the student chooses to attend, OSR will cover travel and subsistence.

The student will not have access to the host organisation's IT systems. However, the assigned activities can be completed without this access. The student will need to have access to a computer/laptop of their own and be able to access Microsoft Teams to join calls.

This opportunity is open to ESRC-funded students who must ensure that the stipend and fee costs can be accessed through their Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP), and the studentship must be extended by the duration of the placement.

## How to apply

To include:

- The closing date and time for applications
- Application format (i.e. CV, cover letter, application form, etc)
- How to submit an application

**Closing date for applications:** 31 October 2024 – We can be flexible on start dates but would like the project to be completed by March 2025.

**Application format:** Please submit a CV and a cover letter (max 500 words), which include why you are interested in the role and why you are suitable for it, along with a completed ESRC placement and funding permissions form.

We recruit based on your knowledge and skills, and not background, gender or ethnicity - this is called name blind recruitment.

Please remove references to your:

- name/title
- educational institutions
- age
- gender
- email address
- postal address
- phone number
- nationality/immigration status

**How to submit an application:** please send your application to [regulation@statsitics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statsitics.gov.uk), marking your email for Nicky Pearce.

## Recruitment process

*The host organisation is responsible for processing the applications received for this opportunity and applications will be processed as follows:*

Applications received will be independently reviewed by two members of OSR. After reviewing all the applications, the reviewers will converse and agree the candidate who sounds best suited to the opportunity, based on how well the material provided in the CV and cover letter aligns with the opportunity on offer and skills required to undertake it.

The most suitable candidate will be invited for a virtual, informal chat before they are engaged. This will serve as an opportunity for both parties (OSR and the student) to check understanding and hopes for the project are aligned.

## Security restrictions (if relevant)

**Host contact details**

*Any queries about this opportunity should be addressed to the host organisation.*

Please send any queries about this opportunity to [regulation@statsitics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statsitics.gov.uk), marking your email for Nicky Pearce.