

## 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</a> <a href="https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk">(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.

Our statistics regulators work in topic domains evaluating the trustworthiness, quality and value of official statistics and upholding the Code of Practice for Statistics. We also have four key functions to explore cross-cutting issues: Insight, Automation and Technology, Policy and Standards, and Research.

### 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 and inspire public confidence. The Code of Practice for Statistics sets the standards that those producing official statistics should meet, to fulfil this aim. The Code has three core concepts: Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV).

Central to upholding TQV is a commitment from producers of official statistics to provide transparent, clear information about the quality of their statistics for users. This includes explaining any uncertainty in the statistics. However, it is not always easy or obvious how to effectively communicate quality for different audiences. This is especially true as the variety of formats by which statistics are disseminated increases, with more common reliance on dashboards and social media statements, for example. While there are some excellent examples of communicating quality across the UK statistical system, OSR has repeatedly identified this as an area where statistical producers could do more to strengthen their approach.

**Outline:** This project will explore how organisations producing official statistics can best summarise information about the quality of their statistics, to help users understand how they can or cannot be used. It will consider general principles, but also how these can be applied to different formats of statistical communication. The project offers an opportunity to improve the presentation of official statistics across the whole UK statistical system.

**Methods:** The student will review past work by OSR and other institutions (such as the Winton Centre), along with academic literature, to build a picture of how information on

the quality of evidence can be effectively conveyed. This could be supplemented by expert interviews and interviews with producers of statistics, as well as desk research to review how quality is currently communicated across statistical releases. OSR would expect the student to lead the project, deciding what literature to review and then how to best expand the project after the initial desk literature review. The OSR sponsor would provide steers as needed and facilitate introductions with individuals or organisations where possible.

**Expected output:** A report detailing findings from the student's research into how the quality of evidence can be effectively portrayed. This could include recommendations on quality scales or summaries that could be tested with producers and user of statistics. The research questions to be answered by the report will be agreed with the project sponsor, but the format can be determined by the student. The student is likely to require qualitative analysis skills to deliver this report, although the exact skills required will depend on the research methodology used.

**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. Previous placement students have told us how much they enjoyed working in OSR because we're a supportive team. 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 carrying out and writing up literature reviews, conducting interviews with individuals and giving presentations would also be well suited to this role.

In terms of qualifications, someone with a background in psychology, sociology, 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) or Centre for

Doctoral Training (CDT), 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:** 16:00 GMT, 24 January 2025

**Anticipated start date:** OSR can be flexible regarding the start and completion date for this project. Statistical communication is an ongoing, high-priority area of work for our organisation. We would be happy for someone to start from March 2025 onwards.

**Application format:** Please submit a CV and a cover letter (max 500 words), which includes 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@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk), marking your email for Helen Miller-Bakewell.

### **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.

The most suitable candidate will be invited for a short, 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.

### **Host contact details**

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

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