# Analysis of survey data on socio-economic disadvantage and protected characteristics

# Summary

This is an exciting opportunity to do a paid work placement on a project for the Welsh Government. The aim of this project is to analyse data from large-scale social surveys in order to support the implementation of the [Socio-economic Duty](https://gov.wales/socio-economic-duty). The successful applicant will work closely with Welsh Government officials and stakeholders to research and develop a varied range of research outputs, and support the Welsh Government in their research process. The applicant will have the opportunity to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop generic skills (such as report writing or making presentations), and to enhance their knowledge of research outside academia.

# The Organisation

The Welsh Government is the devolved Government for Wales with responsibility for the economy, education, health and the Welsh NHS, business, public services and the environment of Wales.

Specifically, the internship will be based within Knowledge and Analytic services (KAS). KAS provides the collection, analysis and presentation of research and data for policymakers and the general public in keeping with professional standards. They offer independent evidence to understand, develop, implement, monitor and evaluate government policies. KAS also supports policy colleagues with policy development, implementation and delivery.

# The Internship

The intern will be part of the team working on equalities analytical unit. The internship will provide an exciting opportunity to work at the heart of Welsh Government. The internship will require working closely with policy officials and researchers, and will provide an opportunity to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop generic skills (such as report writing or making presentations), and to enhance policy knowledge.

The successful candidate will benefit from development opportunities offered centrally by the Welsh Government, potentially including mentoring, shadowing, peer support and training.

Interns will benefit from the experience of working closely with the Welsh Government:

* Gaining a better understanding of the world outside of academia and increasing employability, using their knowledge and skills to contribute to the work of the Welsh Government.
* The intern’s colleagues at the Welsh Government can offer an insight into the intern’s PhD project that can contribute to the success of their thesis’, as well as networking opportunities within the policy arena linked to their research area
* Transferable skills and knowledge
* Time management skills
* Report writing skills

# The Project and policy context

Socio-economic disadvantage means experiencing some or all of the following:

* living in a deprived area;
* having little or no savings;
* having little or no income; and/or
* experiencing material deprivation (that is, lacking the things which most people would say are needed for an acceptable standard of living – such as the ability to replace worn-out furniture or to afford adequate heating).

The [Socio-economic Duty](https://gov.wales/socio-economic-duty) will come into effect at the end of March 2021. It means that when taking long-term decisions, public bodies in Wales will have a legal responsibility to consider how their decisions will improve outcomes for people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. This duty will be key in supporting the most vulnerable people in our society, as we recover from the coronavirus situation and for the longer term.

If public bodies are to meet the socio-economic duty then they need a good understanding of the views, behaviours, and circumstances of people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. The National Survey for Wales, along with other large-scale social surveys such as the Labour Force Survey, is a valuable source of high-quality evidence on these topics.

**Background to the National Survey for Wales**

The [National Survey for Wales](https://gov.wales/national-survey-wales) is the main social survey commissioned by the Welsh Government and its partners across Wales. It gathers information about a wide range of topics, from views on education to health and the NHS, wellbeing, personal finances, employment, and council services. The survey is designed to capture information that is needed to feed into policy decisions, so that the survey results make a difference to life in Wales.

The survey is designed and overseen by a small team in Welsh Government, in which the internship will be based. Survey fieldwork is carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and has run continuously since March 2016. Until March 2020 the survey involved face-to-face 45 minute interviews with a random sample of around 12,000 people each year. Since March 2020, given the coronavirus situation the survey has been carried out by telephone.

**The project**

The project will involve carrying out regression analysis and potentially latent class analysis to identify the key drivers of disadvantage (such as demographics, housing, material and area deprivation, qualifications, well-being, experiences and views). A key focus of the analysis should be on protected characteristics as socio-economic status often intersects with other areas of disadvantage.

The role will involve:

1. Discussing with policy teams to understand their needs for information.
2. Identifying relevant social survey sources in addition to the National Survey.
3. Analyse the results using methods such as logistic regression and latent class analysis to identify and understand disadvantaged groups.
4. Report to policy and analytical colleagues on findings, including similarities and differences in patterns found between the National Survey and other sources.

*Anticipated project outcomes:*

* High quality data and analysis to aid an understanding of the project
* A short, publishable report, focusing on presentation of findings in terms accessible to non-specialists rather than on technical detail.
* Annotated syntax for carrying out the analysis, including any data preparation work (e.g. recoding of variables)
* A presentation to policy officials on the findings of the report

To give you an idea of what’s needed, you can take a look at outputs from previous PhD internships working with the National Survey data such as: Short “key predictors” research reports on [material deprivation](https://gov.wales/material-deprivation-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019), [influencing local decisions](https://gov.wales/influencing-decisions-local-area-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019), [feeling of safety](https://gov.wales/feeling-safe-local-area-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019), [sense of community](https://gov.wales/sense-community-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019), and [speaking Welsh](https://gov.wales/speaking-welsh-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019). Statistical bulletins on [poverty](https://gov.wales/poverty-national-survey-wales-april-2016-march-2017), [loneliness](https://gov.wales/loneliness-national-survey-wales-april-2016-march-2017), and [volunteering and caring](https://gov.wales/volunteering-and-caring-national-survey-wales-april-2016-march-2017).

# Internship responsibilities and requirements

The internship will last for three months, with the option of extension, during which time the students PhD project will be paused by their home institution. The student will be paid the equivalent of their stipend during their internship. Over and above leave policies, time for existing PhD commitments can be arranged on discussion with line managers. E.g. research groups meetings and conference presentations. Applications are encouraged from part-time students.

It is anticipated that the successful applicant will be working from home during their internship. This is based on our current understanding of the situation and what is possible in terms of research work. This may change as the Covid-19 situation develops. Should the Covid-19 situation develop and allow for a return for a phased return to offices this will be discussed with successful applicants.

The internship will last for a period of three months full-time or the part-time equivalent. For students registered on a part-time studentship, this internship is available on a part-time basis over a longer time frame (no fewer than three days a working week), this would be negotiated between the WG and the successful applicant. If you would like to be considered on a part-time basis, please specify your preferred working hours on the application form.

Student specification

## The student must have:

* Strong data analysis skills including of regression analysis and experience of working with quantitative survey data.
* Experience in handling/manipulating data, in Stata or SPSS, or the ability to get up to speed quickly with it.
* The ability to produce cross-tabulations, well designed charts and to produce concise, well written documents presenting technical material in an accessible format.
* Ability to discuss with policy team to understand their needs and to carry out desk research to identify relevant factors.
* Ability to give concise and engaging presentations that are suitable for a non-technical audience.

The internship provides an opportunity for you to work on this new and high-profile policy area. You will gain an insight into the work of the Welsh Government, use your research and statistical skills to analyse large, high-quality datasets in order to influence policy decisions, and further develop essential research skills such as writing and presenting for a non-technical audience.

# Start date of internship

March 2021 (exact date to be negotiated). There may be some flexibility dependent on individual circumstances.

# Funding and costs

Reasonable travel and accommodation costs for students not normally based in Cardiff can be met. Requests should be consistent with Wales DTP guidelines. Applications from students requiring additional funding for travel and accommodation will not be treated less favourably. For any queries on this please contact Carole Baker at the Wales DTP on: [enquiries@walesdtp.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@walesdtp.ac.uk)

# Security

The Welsh Government’s vetting procedures (which apply to temporary as well as permanent staff) involve the completion of a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) application form and a Security Questionnaire for the purpose of security vetting.

This process requires the applicant to produce in person three original forms of identification documents, one of which should be photographic (passport, new driving license), one document should showing their current address, plus one of: a utility bill, birth certificate, P45 or P60.

# Queries

Any queries relating to the post or application process should be directed to ellie.brodie@gov.wales