# Building Education Research Capacity in Wales.

Summary

As part of its action plan for education, the Welsh Government is committed to developing educational research and enquiry in Wales through *the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry (NSERE*). The NSERE has the following purposes:

* To develop capacity and quality within academic research and professional enquiry in Wales.
* To ensure that the outcomes of research and enquiry inform educational policy and practice.

This is an exciting opportunity to do a paid work placement for the Welsh Government and make a substantial contribution to developing the NSERE. Three opportunities are being offered:

1. To support the development of an Evidence-Informed Education Profession in Wales through undertaking reviews of education research and evidence.
2. To support the development of a NSERE website.
3. To support work on a policy review related to improving equity in educational outcomes.

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.

Welsh Government supports staff from diverse backgrounds. Welsh Government offers a range of network groups to support individuals with various protected characteristics should employees wish to be involved. The network groups include, but are not limited to, an ethnic minority staff group, a LGBT+ staff group and a disabled staff group. Welsh Government has a dedicated team who will help discuss workplace adjustments with employees who may require additional support or adjustments to enable them to maximum their capabilities.

The organisation has a flexible hours working policy.

The Internships

The internships will be located within Education Directorate, working closely with policy officials and a seconded Professional Adviser. They will also work closely with Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS), which provides the collection, analysis and presentation of research and data for policymakers and the general public in keeping with professional standards.

The candidate will have the opportunity to:

* apply research skills in a policy environment.
* further develop generic skills such as report writing skills and presenting findings to a range of audiences.
* enhance their knowledge of research outside academia.

The successful candidates 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
* oral and written communication skills with a range of audiences, including presentation skills and report writing.

The projects

1. One intern will support the development work for an Evidence-Informed Education Profession. The NSERE is ambitious for educational practitioners in Wales to have the opportunity to use and participate in educational research and enquiry. To that end, a development project will be taking place in 2021-2022 to develop a model for this. The work will involve Welsh Government, universities, Regional Education Consortia, local authorities and schools. The intern would provide research assistance to this project including undertaking review of educational research and evidence.
2. A second intern will work with Welsh Government staff to develop a website for the NSERE as part of Hwb. Whilst some technical work will be required this will mainly be facilitated through liaison with specialist staff in Hwb. The intern will be required to populate the site with relevant educational research and evidence and this will include undertaking research reviews and syntheses.
3. A third intern will review evidence on how the impact of socio-economic and other forms of disadvantage on educational achievement can be reduced. The will support a policy review being undertaken in this area.

Anticipated Project Outcomes

1. Evidence reviews that inform policy and practice .

2. The possibility of authoring co/authoring academic papers arising from the work.

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 literature review skills, including ability to synthesise a wide range of evidence to make it easily understandable to a non-expert audience.
* Ability to evaluate findings and assess their viability in the Welsh context.
* Ability to produce concise, well written documents, presenting complex material in an accessible format.

Start date of internship

September 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

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 david.egan@gov.wales.