

Secondary data analysis to provide evidence about the Childcare sector in Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Summary

This is an exciting opportunity to do a work placement on a project for the Welsh Government. The focus of the project is to undertake analysis of a large survey dataset of registered childcare providers in Wales. 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, apply R skills and quantitative data analysis skills to an existing dataset, 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 in the Children, Families and Childcare (CFC) Evidence branch within the Equality, Poverty and Children's Evidence and Support Division (EPCESD). This division plays a crucial role in supporting the Communities and Social Justice, and Primary Care, Mental Health and Early Years directorates, which aim to promote the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities and their economic prosperity. By providing research, evidence, planning and finance support to policymakers, we support a wide range of priorities across both directorates, including:

- Promoting the early years and ensuring children have the best start in life.
- Providing support for parents in order to secure children's wellbeing and help ensure they fulfil their potential.
- Increasing the availability of quality, affordable childcare and play provision.
- Tackling Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) by adopting a preventative approach and building resilience to withstand the impact of ACEs.
- Tackling child poverty.
- Promoting the rights and participation of children and young people.

The Internship

The project will focus on analysing survey data provided by childcare providers in Wales in their response to the Self Assessment of Survey Statement (SASS), a survey administered by Care Inspectorate Wales. The SASS annual return, is completed by all registered childcare and play providers in Wales. This information includes everything from food

hygiene ratings to staff qualifications. The full set of analysis to be run will be agreed on commencement of the internship.

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 analysts and will provide an opportunity to apply analytical 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 in the following ways:

- 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
- Developing transferable skills and knowledge, including R coding skills, quantitative data analysis skills, time management skills, presentation skills and report writing skills

The Project

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The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that every child in Wales has the best start in life. The early years are vitally important in a child's life, providing formative opportunities and setting the course for longer term learning and development. Investment in early years care and education, as set out in our vision for Early Childhood Play, Learning and Care, is key to children's happiness and well-being and sets children on the path to achieve their full potential.

The Welsh Government has two funded childcare programmes supporting children and parents in the early years. These are the childcare element of the Flying Start programme¹ and the Childcare Offer for Wales². Government funded childcare is currently available to some children from the age of two.

The Care Inspectorate Wales share the extract of the SASS survey data with the CFC evidence team every year for the analysis to be run. There is a data reporting tool³ published on the CIW website that includes data about the provision in Wales. This contains high level data only about the provision of childcare and play services in Wales.

This project aims to:

¹ [Get help from Flying Start | GOV.WALES](#)

² [Childcare Offer for Wales | Help With Childcare Costs Wales | GOV.WALES](#)

³ [Childcare and play self reporting tool](#)

- Explore the SASS data in more detail than is currently published in the childcare and play reporting tool on the CIW website.
- Determine lines of questioning of the SASS data that policy officials in the Childcare, Play and Early Years division would find useful for policy decision and delivery.
- Run the analysis on the SASS data. Some initial suggestions for questions to explore within the data could include:
 - What are the characteristics of childcare providers in Wales that are linked to higher inspection ratings?
 - What are the characteristics of childcare providers that offer government funded provision (i.e the childcare offer / Flying Start childcare) linked to higher inspection ratings?

Anticipated project outputs:

- Publication of a Government Social Research report.
- A copy of the R script / code used in the data analysis of the SASS data so this can be reproduced with future updated versions of the survey data
- A written briefing for Ministers and officials outlining the key findings from the analysis.
- A presentation to analytical colleagues and policy officials on the findings of the project.

Internship responsibilities and requirements

The internship will last for a maximum of 3 months. Full time students are expected to step back from their PhD to focus on the placement for its duration in line with ESRC guidelines ([ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide](#) p. 27). Applications are encouraged from part-time students.

It is anticipated that the successful applicant will work in a hybrid way between home and a Welsh Government office during their internship. This may change depending on Welsh Government policy. Any changes to working arrangements will be discussed with successful applicants.

The internship will last for a period of 3 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 Welsh Government is seeking a highly motivated individual with existing research skills. The ideal candidate will be driven to advance their own skills and experience by undertaking

research that will contribute to the advancement of public policy and decision-making in Wales.

Research skills:

- Working knowledge of relevant data analysis packages, such as excel or R.

Communication:

- Ability to produce analytical outputs and well written documents presenting technical material in an accessible format.
- Ability to present technical information to non-technical audiences.

Time management:

- Effective time management skills to meet project deadlines and ensure all tasks are completed by the end of the internship.

Start date of internship

January 2026 (exact date to be negotiated). There may be some flexibility dependent on individual circumstances.

Funding and costs

Reasonable travel 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 Katy Marrin Katy.Marrin001@gov.wales and Jo Coates Joanne.Coates@gov.wales.

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.

Nationality requirements

'Eligibility for taking up an internship on this scheme is dependent on meeting the [Civil Service Nationality rules](#). Please check that you are eligible before applying. Those who do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be able to take up a placement opportunity.

Queries

Any queries relating to the post or application process should be directed to:

Hannah Davies

Principal Research Officer

Hannah.Davies018@gov.wales

Privacy notice

<https://www.gov.wales/welsh-government-privacy-notice>