

# **Welsh Government**

## **Research in Practice Project Placement Proposal**

### **Millenium Cohort Study: Welsh thematic analysis**

#### **Summary of project**

The internship offers an exciting opportunity to analyse Welsh data from the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) to produce thematic research outputs to inform policymakers in the areas of post-16 education, employability and skills. The MCS, led by UCL's Centre for Longitudinal Studies, tracks around 19,000 people born in the UK in 2000–02. It covers key social policy areas including education, health, and employment. Data collection for Sweep 8, at age 23, has recently concluded.

The placement offers the chance to conduct data analysis, produce outputs, and develop presentation skills while working with Welsh Government analysts and policy makers. Central to the internship will be translating quantitative data into clear, accessible outputs for officials and stakeholders, highlighting key messages for different policy areas. This internship provides an opportunity to apply and strengthen research skills and gain experience beyond academia.

#### **About Welsh Government Research in Practice Placements**

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

A placement in Welsh Government offers a unique opportunity to work alongside policy officials and researchers, applying your research skills in a live policy environment. You'll have the opportunity to develop a range of research skills while deepening your understanding of how evidence shapes decision-making in Welsh Government.

The placement will be based alongside the members of the Government Social Research (GSR) profession. GSR provides high-quality analytical advice and independent evidence to inform key policy decisions. Their work supports the full policy cycle—from understanding and development through to implementation,

monitoring, and evaluation. Placement students will also contribute to wider efforts to support policy colleagues in shaping and delivering effective policy.

## **The Project: Millenium Cohort Study: Welsh thematic analysis**

Labour Market Intelligence is used by Skills Division to inform prioritisation of skills needs. Having an appropriately skilled workforce is fundamental to growing Wales' economy. The purpose of this internship is to make further use of data from the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) to inform Welsh Government policy analysis and development across the areas of post-16 education, employability and skills.

The MCS is a UK longitudinal birth study run by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) at University College London. It is following the lives of around 19,000 young people born across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2000-02. The MCS provides evidence on how early life experiences, family background, and educational pathways influence later outcomes such as qualifications, employment, and skills development. The CLS produces thematic papers outlining initial findings for each sweep, with breakdown of findings by nation, and the data is also made available to other researchers.

The internship will provide an exciting opportunity to explore this evidence at the heart of Welsh Government. This work placement will involve working on data for Wales, which now includes the age 23 sweep, and the production of thematic papers for policy stakeholders in the areas of post-16 education, employability and skills. Data is expected to be released in early 2026 and will be available via the UK Data Service. It will involve agreeing a project plan, analysing data, and presenting findings in a non-technical manner through the production of a thematic report and delivering presentations to stakeholders.

The internship will require working closely with policy officials and researchers in the area of post-16 education, employability and skills, 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 across the aforementioned areas.

It is anticipated that the successful candidate will lead the development of a *report* and slide-deck summarising the MCS analysis conducted during the internship. It is expected that, providing the report is of suitable length and quality, it will be published as a Government Social Research report on the Welsh Government website. The student will also be asked to present the findings to research colleagues and one or more policy teams. The successful candidate will be supported by the Welsh Government lead throughout the project.

### **What skills do we need**

We welcome individuals who can bring the following skills and experience to the role:

- The ability to analyse quantitative data, drawing out key findings, and to then be able to present that data in an engaging manner that will be accessible to a range of audiences.
- The ability to produce a narrative that explains the data and what it means for Wales in a non-technical manner.
- Strong report writing skills to ensure drafts are of a high-quality
- The ability to work closely with other research and policy colleagues

### **Placement timescales**

The placement will be for a period of 3 months. The placement is expected to start no earlier than May 2026.

The start date will be discussed with the successful applicant and there may be some flexibility dependent on individual circumstances.

### **Funding and expenses**

This opportunity is only open to students funded through the WGSSS Studentship scheme (awarded from October 2024 onwards) who are required to complete a Research in Practice placement. The placement is unpaid, however you will continue to receive your ESRC stipend. Welsh Government is not able to cover any relocation costs associated with the placement.

Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred while carrying out placement-related activities may be claimed, subject to prior agreement with your placement supervisor and in line with the Welsh Government's Travel and Subsistence Policy

### **Working arrangements**

Welsh Government working hours are 37 hours per week, 7 hours 24 minutes per day on average. With prior agreement with the placement supervisor, you may be able to work flexible hours in accordance with Welsh Government practices. For students registered on a part-time studentship, this placement may be available on a part-time basis over a longer time frame, this would be negotiated between the Welsh Government 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.

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

## **Nationality requirements and security vetting**

Eligibility for taking up this placement in Welsh Government 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.

Successful applicants will be required to undergo Welsh Government's vetting procedures (which apply to temporary as well as permanent staff). This will involve the completion of a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) application form and a Security Questionnaire.

## **Contacts**

For more information about this placement project, here are the contact details:

Dr Lydia Lewis, Senior Research Officer, Labour Market Intelligence

[Lydia.lewis010@gov.wales](mailto:Lydia.lewis010@gov.wales)

If you require information about Research in Practice placement opportunities in Welsh Government please contact:

Katy Marrin and James Carey, Joint Head of GSR Workforce Planning and Professional Standards [headofgsrworkforceplanningprofessionalstandards@gov.wales](mailto:headofgsrworkforceplanningprofessionalstandards@gov.wales)

If you have any other queries about Research in Practice Placements please contact:

Sian Shepherd at Wales Graduate School for the Social Sciences

[esrcrip@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:esrcrip@bangor.ac.uk)