

ESRC Welsh Graduate School for Social Sciences

Research in Practice 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 in the details provided below.

This placement is aimed at Postgraduate Researchers who have funding through the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership from October 2024 onwards, who must complete a Research in Practice placement as part of their award.

Name of Host Organisation	
Registered Address	Government Buildings Cardiff Road Newport NP10 8XG
Website	Home - Office for National Statistics
Brief description of the Host organisation:	We are the UK's largest independent producer of official statistics and its recognised national statistical institute. We are responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional and local levels. We also conduct the census in England and Wales every 10 years.

PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Placement role title:	Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) – How to reflect a modern and changing economy.
Background/expected impact of the project:	<p>How would you measure AI in the economy? This is a classic example of “hidden” classification or “hidden activity”, there are many such examples.</p> <p>The main difficulty in our example and many like it is that identifying AI companies is that they don't appear nicely in a given subset of SIC. The current 2026 SIC is used in</p>

	<p>classifying business establishments, and other statistical units by the type of economic activity in which they are engaged.</p> <p>Anecdotally, there have been press articles concerning AI expansion/investment in finance (risk assessment, fraud detection and financial analytics), healthcare (drug discovery, imaging analysis, patient data management and wellness technologies) and manufacturing & logistics (supply-chain optimisation, predictive maintenance, quality control and automation protocols).</p> <p>This workstream is intended to research initiatives currently in the field which are grappling with the challenges of how to effectively identify and thus measure such activities and in doing to, enable informed policy decisions.</p> <p>ONS are the custodians of the SIC Classification and we are looking for somebody to help research and write a balanced report outlining the challenges and approached being developed. This will inform ONS next steps in the space.</p>
Outline of duties/description of opportunity	<p>Our aim is to produce a comprehensive report which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly outlines the benefits and challenges of the SIC 2026 Classification. • Research and document how government, academia, commercial and international stakeholders are trying to overcome these challenges. • Provide a balanced appraisal of solutions currently in the field.
Expected output(s)/deliverable(s)	A comprehensive report circulated to and agreed by stakeholders across government.
Skills and experience required for the role	<p>You will be part of the Classification team who work primarily on industrial and occupational classifications.</p> <p>Team working. Stakeholder Management Research Skills Report writing skills</p> <p>Extensive experience on SIC is not required, there is a wide network to support the successful applicant.</p>
Please indicate which of the following skills could be developed or applied during the placement, you may select more than one.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input type="checkbox"/> Project management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy understanding or engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration / teamwork <input type="checkbox"/> Data collection <input type="checkbox"/> Specific methodologies (please specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Software skills (please specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Professional and transferable skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): Report writing skills
What support will be provided for the Postgraduate Researcher <i>e.g necessary resources, training, support and equipment for the student</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All office equipment would be provided. • Overview and training of SIC Classification. • Access to current SIC knowledge base. • A close-knit team who are very knowledgeable about SIC Classifications. • Introductions to wider ONS colleagues within economic statistics who base their outputs on SIC.

<i>to undertake their placement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions to academia, government, commercial and government department stakeholders who are active in the space.
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KEY INFORMATION	
Number of placements available:	1
Location of placement	Newport Office, home working available.
Placement duration:	3 months full time.
Full time or part-time	Full time in a single block.
Working hours or core hours	ONS operates flexible working hours.
In-person, online or hybrid:	Hybrid. There may be occasion when office attendance is required. We have suitable offices in Newport, Titchfield, and Manchester.
Anticipated start date:	4 th January 2027 (sooner if at all possible)
Security/health and safety restrictions (if relevant)	None.
Language requirements (if relevant)	English

HOW TO APPLY	
Closing date and time for applications	14 August 2026
How to submit an application	CV and a letter of application of no more than 750 words covering the skills required.
Recruitment process	Assessment of the application and informal chat with perspective candidates.
Contact name and email for any queries related to the placement:	James Evans Head of Linkage Coordination, Capability & Clerical Resolution Data Architecture Division Data Growth and Operations Directorate James.Evans@ons.gov.uk 07824 433350 / 01633 456644

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
<i>Equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace is about valuing all people equally, fairly and with respect, avoiding all forms of unlawful discrimination irrespective of their age, disability, gender</i>

reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Do you agree to uphold the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout the placement process and experience.

Yes

Does your organisation have an EDI policy?

Yes

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

WGSSS Postgraduate Researchers receive their studentship stipend whilst attending their Research in Practice placement/opportunity.

It is expected that any travel expenses incurred during the course of the placement i.e. travelling to business meetings or placement events, will be covered by the placement host.

Please confirm if your organisation would be willing to contribute towards additional expenses

Yes