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| Job Description |  |
| Senior Post Graduate Teaching Assistant in Quantitative Research Methods (Multiple) | Grade: 6 |
| Department: Political Science | Location: Bloomsbury |

#### Reports to

**LONDON’S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY**

Dr Per Engzell (POLS0007).  
Dr Stephen Jivraj & Dr Anwar Musah (POLS0008)   
Prof James Cheshire, Dr Stephen Jivraj & Dr Indraneel Sircar (POLS0010)  
Dr Indraneel Sircar & Dr Michal Ovadek (PUBL0055)

#### Context

**UCL Department of Political Science**The Department of Political Science wishes to appoint multiple Senior Postgraduate Teaching Assistants in Quantitative Research Methods for the 2024-25 academic year**.**

Founded in 2005, the Department of Political Science has quickly established itself as a leading international centre for political research. It was ranked fifth in the UK in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework and second when proportion of research active staff was taken into account. It offers a uniquely stimulating environment for the study of all fields of politics, including international relations, political theory, comparative politics as well as public policy and public management.

UCL has a commitment to promoting global citizenship and leadership, and the School of Public Policy acts as a bridge between UCL's world-class research and the policy-making community in Britain and internationally. As well as the Department it contains the UK’s main research centre devoted to constitutional matters, the Constitution Unit and is the host department of the Global Governance Institute and the UCL Centre on US Politics.

The School of Public Policy runs a range of postgraduate and undergraduate programmes: details can be found at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/teaching/masters> and <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/study/undergraduate>

The School collaborates in teaching with other departments in UCL, including Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care and Social Research Institute, Economics, Geography, Laws, Philosophy, Centre for European Studies and the School for Slavonic and Eastern European Studies.

In recent years, the Department of Political Science has also made a growing contribution to undergraduate teaching. A BSc degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics started in 2015, aiming to provide a breadth and depth in the understanding of social and political phenomena with a specialist interest in Public Policy, and a BSc degree in Politics and International Relations started in 2019, aiming to address theories and issues of global concern. The Department’s affiliate programme currently consists of some 10 options and contributes a Politics Pathway to the European Social and Political Studies degree.

In any one year there are some 480 masters students, 500 undergraduate students, 50 affiliate students, and some 25 doctoral (PhD) students.

#### Main purpose of the job

The purpose of this job is to support teaching and learning in our modules, working with the academic modules leads through the delivery of small group teaching for students taking modules in the Political Science Department.

Main duties of the post include being the seminar leader for seminar/s each week. Expect to generate weekly workshops, provide demonstrations, facilitate discussion, and answer questions for material presented in lecture. The Senior PGTA will be expected to first and/or second mark assignments, exam and essay scripts (in line with the department’s procedures, at the appropriate times during the academic session) and are expected to attend the weekly lecture given by the course tutor and be available for office hours each week as required.   
  
Please find modules below that we are looking for Senior PGTAs in:

* [Principles of Social Science Research (POLS0007)](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/module-catalogue/modules/principles-of-social-science-research-POLS0007)
* [Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods (POLS0008)](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/module-catalogue/modules/introduction-to-quantitative-research-methods-POLS0008)
* [Data Analysis (POLS0010)](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/module-catalogue/modules/data-analysis-POLS0010)
* [Introduction to Quantitative Methods (PUBL0055)](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/module-catalogue/modules/introduction-to-quantitative-methods-PUBL0055)

**Principles of Social Science Research (POLS0007)** *Term 1, lectures & seminars Tuesdays (TBC)*  
The course’s main objective is to introduce students to social science research. To do so we will focus on how we use facts and observations to make and evaluate statements about the world and the forces which appear to account for human interactions. What will become quickly evident is that academic discourse and scientific debate is more involved and cumbersome than everyday reasoning.

Over the course of the ten weeks students will learn how to fruitfully use data to make inferences about the world. We will spend a considerable amount of time on various threats to valid inferences and how one can overcome them. The second part of the course is focused on experimental designs, lab, field, and natural experiments. Students will be familiarised with the gold standard for internal validity and will see how we can use such approaches to answer relevant real-world questions.

Rather than providing an in-depth theoretical treatment of these topics this class strives to inspire and enthuse students for the scientific endeavour. A number of practical exercises will help to contextualise some of the more abstract concepts and theories.  
  
**Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods (POLS0008)** *Term 2, lectures Tuesdays, seminars Thursdays (TBC)*  
This module introduces students to quantitative methods in the social sciences. It assumes no knowledge of quantitative methods or statistical software. The module caters for students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and adopts a practical hands-on approach to learning, with tutor supported computer tutorials. The module covers descriptive statistics (central tendency and variation), data visualisation, data access, probability, sampling, hypothesis testing, inferential statistics and ends with an introduction to simple linear regression. Students will be introduced to the R statistical software and work with real-world data.  
  
**Data Analysis (POLS0010)** *Term 1, lectures and seminars Mondays (TBC), Term 2, lectures Tuesdays and seminars Thursday and Fridays*This module aims to build skills in applied statistics using a variety of methods, including regression, spatial analysis and quantitative text analysis. It starts with an introduction to multiple regression, advanced survey methods and missing data before going to look at a host of spatial analysis methods. In term 2, students will begin with an introduction to the quantitative analysis of text, including methods of document classification and web scraping. They will then be introduced to a wider range of regression techniques, including models for binary dependent variables, panel data, multilevel models, and poststratification. The module caters for students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. Students will become proficient users of statistical software (R) and be able to identify, analyse and interpret regression output. Throughout there is an emphasis on the use, interpretation and understanding of results.  
  
**Introduction to Quantitative Methods (PUBL0055)***Term 1, lectures Mondays and seminars Thursdays and Fridays (TBC)*This module is designed to introduce you to and help you become familiar with quantitative methodologies critical to your development as a social scientist. The introductory methods module has two primary aims.

First, students will be introduced to quantitative methodology that researchers and policymakers use in answering social, political and economic questions. Second, the module will equip students to use one or more of the discussed techniques in their MSc dissertation.

By the end of the module, you should be able to understand basic research methods, apply them to real world problems and evaluate their use in published research. Students will also acquire competency in performing statistical analyses using a popular statistical program (R).

The staff member has a responsibility to carry out their duties in a resource efficient way and actively support UCL’s Sustainability Strategy, policies and objectives within the remit of their role

We encourage applications from those who are underrepresented in the sector and at UCL including but, not exclusive, disabled, D/deaf and neurodiverse people, LGBTQ+ people, people from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds, especially women.

#### Duties and responsibilities

Specific teaching duties will include:

* Seminar leader for seminars each week. Each seminar class will comprise up to 20 students and the seminar leader will be expected to generate weekly workshops, provide demonstrations, facilitate discussion, and answer questions for material presented in the lecture. The number of seminars to be led may vary and will be confirmed at the start of the spring term.
* First and second marking of assignments (in line with the department’s procedures, at the appropriate times during the academic session).
* The teaching of methods and skills and material that students found particularly challenging in lectures; this may include the presentation of model answers, demonstrating techniques and participating in field trips.
* To monitor student progress, achievement and attendance returning data to the administrative office in a timely manner;
* To generate and deliver formative feedback directly to students
* Attending the weekly lecture given by the course tutor and be available for office hours each week.
* Participation in regular meetings with the course lecturer to discuss arising issues and problems;
* Participate in the module delivery team assisting the module lead in the collection and review of module feedback
* Involvement in ad hoc meetings organized by Lecturers or the PGTA Administrator/Representative;
* May be required to supervise or support Grade 5 PGTA’s.
* To actively follow and promote UCL policies, including Equal Opportunities;
* To uphold confidentiality in regards to students records and marks;
* To engage with all training required to support the role.

The above is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities but covers the main components of the role. The post holder may be asked to carry out other specific tasks and duties as required by Programme Director or the Head of Department.

# Person Specification

| **Criteria** | **Essential or Desirable** | **Assessment method**  **(Application/Interview)** |
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| **Qualifications, experience and knowledge** |  |  |
| A current PhD student in a relevant discipline | **Essential** | **Application** |
| Excellent working knowledge of R and RStudio (not required for Module POLS0007) | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| Knowledge of basic social science statistics up to panel data and limited dependent variable models (*required for module PUBL0055*) | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| Educated to the Master degree level in the relevant field of the module being taught | **Desirable** | **Application/Interview** |
| Previous experience teaching a similar module at university | **Desirable** | **Application/Interview** |
| Previous experience of teaching Quantitative Research Methods at the postgraduate level (*required for module PUBL0055*) | **Desirable** | **Application/Interview** |
| Experience in using GitHub for teaching (*required for module PUBL0055*) | **Desirable** | **Application/Interview** |
| **Skills and abilities** |  |  |
| Ability to communicate clearly both orally and in writing, with students, academic and administrative staff at all levels | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| Excellent organisational and time management skills | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| Ability to explain course material clearly to students | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| **UCL Ways of Working** |  |  |
| Having a positive and helpful approach to work. | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| Innovating and sharing with new ways to work efficiently. | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
| Working methodically, prioritising and managing tasks. | **Essential** | **Application/Interview** |
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# Apply

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| To apply for this position please submit a CV and cover letter including modules you would like to teach and email to [polsci.staffing@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:polsci.staffing@ucl.ac.uk) |