**PhD Secondment Opportunities in DWP**

**Department Profile**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the UK’s biggest public service department, responsible for the design and delivery of the welfare system, and for addressing social policy challenges ranging from tackling family conflict to supporting the ageing population. DWP is responsible for delivering the State Pension, working age benefits, disability and sickness benefits to 22 million citizens, and the Department’s broader policy remit affects the lives of everyone in the country.

DWP’s ministers and senior officials must make a huge number of important decisions, affecting the lives of millions. Decisions require evidence, and this is generated and translated by the Department’s analysts and scientists, who work in all parts of the organisation. The Department is a large employer and offers many opportunities for graduate and postgraduate analysts who are employed as Government specialists. Analysts in Government work closely with policy makers and operational decision-makers at all levels, including Ministers. Analytical work has a great deal of influence over policy and operations and can have a substantial impact on the lives of large numbers of people. This is especially true of DWP analysts who work in the evaluation and analysis of very large programmes impacting on labour market policy, poverty reduction, disability, ageing society and welfare reform.

The Analytical Community in DWP is large and multi-disciplinary with over 800 members split between four core professions: Economics, Operational Research, Social Research and Statistics. The Department also employs a growing number of data scientists and expert advisers in Behavioural Science, Psychology, Medicine, Science and Engineering. Many analysts join the Department having completed degrees and doctorates, attracted by the excellent opportunities for professional development and promotion within the Civil Service. Analysts in DWP are based in hub sites: Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield and Treforest. Analysts at these sites can work on a variety of topics and areas of work are not restricted by site. Hybrid, remote and flexible working opportunities are possible in accordance with business need, in agreement with your DWP Line Manager.

**Objectives**

* DWP offers a unique opportunity to experience an organisation that is directly responsible for both the design and the frontline delivery of its policies and services
* A DWP secondment will support the development of a broad range of analytical, presentational and professional skills
* Each person will be matched with an area to lead, with support, on a priority analytical project to support the development of policy or facilitate senior decision-making, via the innovative usage and translation of evidence, data and information
* The work of a DWP PhD Placement will directly address and impact the research questions outlined in our [DWP Areas of Research Interest 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-areas-of-research-interest-2023/dwp-areas-of-research-interest-2023#:~:text=The%20scope%20of%20DWP%20analysis,and%20people%20of%20pension%20age.)
* Successful candidates will participate in their team’s wider responsibilities and gain a broad and rich insight into life in DWP as well as an overview of working in the Civil Service

**Areas and projects**

DWP has a range of secondment projects available across a variety of areas, covering but not limited to:

* Labour Markets
* Universal Credit
* Working Age Benefits and Housing
* Disability and Employment Support
* Work and Health DWP/DHSC Joint Unit
* Pensions and Later Life
* Income, Families and Disadvantage
* Operations
* Strategy
* Digital
* Modelling and econometrics

Projects vary by DWP area but can be broadly categorised as follows:

1. Literature/evidence review/synthesis
2. Quantitative analysis
3. Qualitative research/analysis
4. Specialist modelling or econometrics

Candidates can indicate their suitability for the above project types in the application form, as well as the substantive research topic area that most interests them. We can accommodate specific research skills and will endeavour to accommodate topic preferences where possible, however all secondments offer the same core professional development. We also encourage the development of new skills where possible through in-house seminars and other learning opportunities.

**Behaviours and essential skills**

The ideal candidate needs to be able to work in a fast-paced team environment, planning and balancing multiple project tasks and communicating effectively with colleagues. Candidates should have a strong grounding in their academic discipline, as well as the ability to effectively operate beyond these boundaries in areas they are not specialist in.

Candidates are required to demonstrate an interest in, and understanding of, analytical and research methods; approaches to reviewing and assimilating data, evidence and information from different sources; and communicating outputs to non-technical audiences.

There is no restriction on academic discipline, with applications welcome from a broad range of backgrounds. Past candidates have come from the social sciences, mathematics and computer science, the humanities, and the natural sciences– transferrable skills are more important than specific research interests.

The exact skills required will vary according to the project on offer, but essential core skills required for any PhD secondment project are as follows:

* Strong analytical skills in own academic discipline
* Evidence assimilation and synthesis
* Project planning and organisation
* Oral and written communication and presentation
* Ability to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team

**Terms and conditions**

Full terms and conditions will be included in a secondment agreement for successful candidates; a summary of the key points is included below.

**Eligibility:** The secondment cannot extend beyond a student’s funded period; as such we recommend a minimum of six months remaining study time at the point of application.

**Duration and timing:** Three months (full or part-time), start date to be mutually agreed with on-boarding throughout 2025.

**Remuneration:** During the secondment the Doctoral Training Partner/Centre or Home University agrees to pay the PhD Student their normal stipend in accordance with the terms of the governing Research Council’s funding guidelines and agrees to extend the PhD Student’s funded studentship and registration for a period equal to the secondment duration. Unfortunately, we cannot accept applications from self-funded students.

**Expenses:** Travel and related expenses incurred in relation to the secondment will be reimbursed by DWP, up to a value of £3,172 for the duration of the secondment.

**Location and travel:** Successful candidates will be fully embedded in an analytical team. This role is suitable for a hybrid working arrangement, a type of flexible working arrangement, blending a combination of all workplace options (including home) with an office identified as a base and which remains the contractual place of work. The number of days that anyone will be able to work at home will be determined primarily by business need, but personal circumstances will be considered. We have staff in DWPs main hubs in Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield and Treforest. Travel to other locations to meet team members and stakeholders face-to-face is encouraged. Some travel to other locations may be necessary, as dictated by the specific project.

If you have any questions, please contact [evidence.strategyteam@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:evidence.strategyteam@dwp.gov.uk)

**Application and assessment process**

The candidate should obtain the necessary permission from their Lead Supervisor and University or DTP/C (as appropriate) and apply by requesting the documents listed below from, and submitting them to [evidence.strategyteam@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:evidence.strategyteam@dwp.gov.uk)

* CV – this should be no longer than 2 pages and must include your education and employment history for the last 3 years (minimum)
* Completed application form
* Completed permissions form

**Interviews**

* Interviews will take place during late November 2024. You should be given 2 weeks’ notice.
* Candidates are expected to provide examples of where they have demonstrated the essential skills outlined in this advert, both at application and interview. Candidates will be shortlisted for interview based on information provided within the application form.
* Interviews are likely to take place via video on Microsoft Teams or over the telephone. If you are unable to participate in the interview in either of the ways described, or if you have any other accessibility requirements, please let us know.
* Before Interview you will be asked to provide proof of nationality and address – full details will be given if you are invited to interview.
* We want to make sure no one is put at a disadvantage during our recruitment process because of a disability, condition, or impairment. To assist you with this, we will reduce or remove any barriers where possible and provide additional support where appropriate.
* If you need a reasonable adjustment or a change to be made so that you can make your application, contact [evidence.strategyteam@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:evidence.strategyteam@dwp.gov.uk) as soon as possible. as soon as possible.

If you have any queries, please contact us on the above email address.

**Deadline for applications: Friday 1st November 2024, 23:59**