

University of Manchester Q-Step Summer Project 2016

Ref: #21 UoMQStep 2016 UoMPSO Access to Higher Education

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Organisation Name: University of Manchester

Team / Department: Planning Support Team

Address: Planning Support Office, The University of Manchester, Rm: 1.025 John Owens Building, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL

Provisional title for project: Fair Access to Higher Education: the experiences of different applicant groups

100 word abstract of what the project would probably undertake, and any data to be used:

The placement is an opportunity to work at a leading research intensive University in the UK conducting research that will be used to inform policy and practice. The study will involve investigating the admissions offer-making process at the University of Manchester focusing on the offer rates for different applicant characteristics. The University is committed to widening participation and works to ensure fair access and a key feature of the study will be assessing whether the offer rate for students from disadvantaged backgrounds is consistent with other students. The student will gain experience of working with large scale datasets and applying a range of statistical techniques. The placement is suited to any student that is looking to develop their excel skills, statistical knowledge and learn how to produce a detailed research report.

Key words (up to 12):

Widening participation, Higher Education admissions, equal access, categorical data, socio-demographic variables, statistical modelling, policy development,

Essential and desirable skills that the student would need to have:

Essential:

- Computer literate with knowledge of Access, Excel, Word, and MS Outlook and experience of working with large datasets.
- Excellent numeracy skills and the ability to use initiative
- Excellent attention to detail and a high degree of accuracy

- Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to prioritise work in a busy environment and meet strict deadlines.
- Good communication skills with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing,

Desirable:

- An interest in quantitative analysis and data management.
- Experience of statistical software packages (e.g. SPSS or R)
- An understanding of current issues across the Higher Education sector

Where the work would be carried out:

The student will be based at The University of Manchester in the Planning Support Office, John Owens Building, Oxford Road, for between 8 and 12 weeks during the summer. Working hours are 9.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Preferred selection method (interview or other meeting):

Interview

Support and training offered by the organisation:

The student will receive a high level of supervisor assistance and will work within a supportive team. The Planning Support Office has previously undertaken two successful Q-Step placements and will provide an environment that a student can learn a range of quantitative research and professional skills.

Any issues of data confidentiality and/or IPR that would need to be resolved:

The student will have access to a wide range of sensitive student data and it is important he/she understands the confidential nature of the data and only accesses information relevant to the research. The student will have to sign a 'Conditional Disclosure Agreement'.

Supporting information:

The student will work with the Planning Support Office and will be primarily supported by the Research Analyst within the Team. The research project has been requested by the Student Recruitment and Widening Participation Team and the work will involve close liaison with this Team. The post will have the opportunity to disseminate findings through the relevant meeting structures and to senior staff members.

Financial assistance offered by the organisation:

The University will cover any expenses incurred through the placement.