University of Manchester Q-Step Summer Project 2016

Ref: #39 UoMQStep 2016 UoM Criminology DA Dark Net

For enquiries contact Dr Jackie Carter, jackie.carter@manchester.ac.uk or Dr Mark Brown, mark.brown@manchester.ac.uk, Q-Step Co-directors

Organisation Name: Criminology Discipline Area

Team/Department: School of Law

Address: University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

Provisional title for project: Online 'Dark Net' Drugs Markets: How Cryptomarkets Are Changing Two Years After the Closure of Silk Road

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

In September 2013, researchers scraped the contents of the drug cryptomarket *Silk Road* just weeks before the marketplace was shut by the FBI, creating the only existing snapshot of drug selling activities at its height. We have been scraping the contents of the many cryptomarkets that have come and gone since, and this 'big data' project has resulted in a dataset with over 100,000 listings for drugs and other illegal goods and services. The student will use a range of data coding and cleaning strategies (algorithms, traditional 'by hand' methods) and assist in the analysis of the data (specific topic to be decided). Any applicant with HTML/PHP coding skills may assist with scraping a new marketplace, but this is not essential.

Key words: drug markets, drug sales, drug dealers, wholesale, retail, drug policy

Essential and desirable skills that the student would need to have

Essential:

- Data analysis skills are required.
- Use of SPSS and spreadsheets.
- Good organisational skills.
- Report writing and good communication skills are essential.

Desirable:

- Multivariate modelling skills (willingness to learn)
- Programming skills
- Interest in cyber crime or online drug markets.
- HTML/PHP coding skills.

Where the work would be carried out:

University of Manchester School of Law offices

Preferred selection method:

Interview

Support and training offered by the organisation

Guidance on coding, cleaning and analysis will be provided.

Financial assistance offered by the organisation:

None