

Q-Step Summer Project 2017: Department for Education

Ref: #43 UoMQStep 2017 Department for Education Exam Grade Analysis

Team/Department: Schools Analysis and Research

Address: Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, LONDON, SW1P 3BT OR 2 St Paul's Place, 125 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2FJ

Provisional Title for Project: "Analysis of GCSE and A-Level Results Data and Reforms to Qualifications"

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

The Department for Education analyses GCSE and A level results of pupils taking exams each year, to understand the latest patterns of attainment in England and monitor the impact of the department's policies.

This year, pupils will be taking new grade 9-1 GCSEs in English and Maths for the first time, alongside further new AS and A level qualifications. We are seeking a strong quantitative analyst to support our unit in interrogating the latest data to understand the national picture of attainment. This is a high-profile project, and an ideal candidate would be skilled in using statistical software packages to deliver robust analysis.

Key Words (up to 12): Official Statistics, Government, Education, Analysis, Policy, Schools, GCSE, A-Level, Attainment, Performance, Qualifications

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

Essential: Data-set manipulation skills; data analysis skills and experience with quantitative data-sets; statistical software and coding skills; Microsoft Office skills; excellent communication skills and ability to summarise and present complex data and analysis

Desirable: Expertise in SQL or R; experience of education data or policy

Preferred selection method: Interview

Support and training offered by the organisation:

Line manager and data expert support for the project including an introduction to the data source, and analytical software on the job training where required. The placement student will be working directly with civil service analytical professionals but will also gain valuable experience of the policy interface.

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

All outputs and any IP generated by the student will remain the property of the Department.

Supporting Information:

London or Sheffield. Please state in the application whether you would prefer to be based in London or Sheffield and whether you would be able to take up a full-time position.

The Department will set initial questions for the student to answer through their analysis. The placement student will also be expected to identify further questions to address based on discussions with analytical and policy officials. Outputs will include policy facing briefings as well as a possible presentation of their findings to an internal audience - which will be developed with analytical colleagues.

Financial assistance offered by the organisation:

We will pay for any travel that is necessary in the course of the placement that is over and above the usual working day. Commuting expenses will not be paid.