

PhD Policy Internships at the Department for Education



Department
for Education

A new PhD internship programme for doctoral researchers who want to experience policymaking at the heart of government.

Application deadline: 18 September 2026

AT A GLANCE



DURATION

Minimum
three
months



LOCATION

Fully remote
or hybrid
working



FUNDING

Must have
external funding
to support the
placement



SECURITY

Subject to
BPSS
security
clearance

QUESTIONS?

esther1.outram@education.gov.uk

WHAT YOU'LL DO

Working on higher education policy, you'll work alongside officials to:

- ✓ **Contribute** to policy development
- ✓ **Review** and synthesise evidence
- ✓ **Engage** with experts
- ✓ **Prepare** briefings, advice and presentations
- ✓ **Organise** activities for collaboration

Placements are designed to support the Department's policy priorities. While these may not align directly with your PhD research, you'll have the opportunity to apply your skills and subject expertise to a range of real-world policy challenges.

WHAT YOU'LL GAIN

As a PhD Policy Intern, you'll:

- Gain first-hand experience of policymaking in central government.
- Develop skills in communicating research to non-specialist audiences.
- Build relationships across government and academia.
- Deepen your understanding of how evidence informs government decision making.
- Develop experience valuable for a career in academia, the Civil Service or elsewhere.

WHO CAN APPLY?

We're looking for PhD students who:

- Are enrolled on **any** PhD programme at a UK university.
- Have funding (for example through UKRI or their university) that supports a placement of at least **three months**.
- Have the support of their supervisor and university to undertake the placement.
- Can complete the placement before their viva.
- Have the right to work in the UK.
- Are interested in applying research skills to public policy.
- Can communicate complex ideas to non-specialists.
- Enjoy working collaboratively in a fast-paced environment.

HOW THE PROGRAMME WORKS

Successful candidates will join the Department for Education on a full-time placement, typically working at a level equivalent to the Civil Service Fast Stream.

Each intern will receive an induction, a line manager and ongoing support throughout their placement.

Appointments will be subject to the appropriate Civil Service security checks before the placement begins.

Placements are expected to begin from **January 2027**, with further opportunities available throughout the year.

HOW TO APPLY

We're currently building our first cohort of interns.

To express your interest, please send:

- A short CV of maximum 2 pages.
- A 500-word statement explaining your interest in the opportunity and why you would be a good fit.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview before placements are agreed.

Please submit your application to:

esther1.outram@education.gov.uk

Apply by 18 September 2026