



Job Description
Research Assistant
HM Inspectorate of Prisons

About The Role

These posts offer a unique opportunity to develop practical social research skills as part of a close-knit team working in a fast-paced environment. Much of the day-to-day work of the 12-strong Research, Data & Thematics (RDT) team involves conducting surveys in places of detention and analysing the results for use by inspectors. Reporting to one of our Research Officers, the post holders will also help to maintain HMIP's databases, provide analysis for thematic and other reports, and act as an ambassador for the Inspectorate while on inspections. The job involves regular travel and time away from home carrying out surveys in places of detention - on average one or two nights per fortnight.

Responsibilities

- Organising and attending visits to custodial establishments on a regular basis to conduct detainee surveys
- Processing and analysing survey data
- Checking survey findings for publication in inspection reports
- Collating and presenting data to inform inspections and other projects
- Updating and maintaining HMIP databases and providing analysis for governance meetings and annual report.



Knowledge, Experience and Skills

Essential

- An Honours degree or post-graduate qualification in a relevant social or statistical science (e.g. Sociology, Statistics, Psychology, Criminology or similar) with a substantial social research methods component.
- Candidates successful at the application stage will be invited to complete an exercise which will test analytical skills and knowledge of research methodologies relevant to the role.

Desirable

- Experience of using IBM SPSS or other statistical analysis package
- Experience of using MS Office applications, specifically Word, Excel, OneNote and Outlook
- Interest in the criminal justice system
- Commitment to the values of HM Inspectorate of Prisons

Physical requirements of the role

The role of the Research, Data & Thematics team at HMIP can be physically demanding. While undertaking detainee surveys researchers are required to spend a lot of time on their feet, which will include ascending and descending multiple sets of stairs, crouching down to post questionnaires under doors if required, and carrying upwards of 70 paper questionnaires. They also need to be able to respond quickly if necessary, for example exiting a wing if there is an emergency.

Success Profiles

You will be tested against the Success Profiles used across the Civil Service at application and/or at interview stage. Candidates successful at the first sift will be invited to complete an online task (for which no special preparation is required).

Essential behaviours:

Delivering at pace: Regularly review the success of activities in the team to identify barriers to progress or challenging objectives. Identify who and what is required to ensure success, set clear goals and areas of responsibility and continually assess workloads considering individual needs. Follow relevant policies, procedures and legislation to complete



your work. Ensure colleagues have the correct tools and resources available to them to do their jobs. Have a positive and focused attitude to achieving outcomes, despite any setbacks. Regularly check performance against objectives, making suggestions for improvement or taking corrective action where necessary. Ensure that colleagues are supported where tasks are challenging.

Working together: Develop a range of contacts outside own team and identify opportunities to share knowledge, information and learning. Show genuine interest when listening to others. Contribute to an inclusive working environment where all opinions and challenges are listened to and all individual needs are taken into account. Ensure it is clear that bullying, harassment and discrimination are unacceptable. Offer support and help to colleagues when in need, including consideration of your own and their wellbeing. Change ways of working to aid cooperation within and between teams in order to achieve results.

Communicating and Influencing: Communicate clearly and concisely both orally and in writing. Take time to consider the best communication channel to use for the audience, including making the best of digital resources and considering value for money. Interact with others in an enthusiastic way. Express ideas clearly and with respect for others. Listen to and value different ideas, views and ways of working. Respond constructively and objectively to comments and questions. Handle challenging conversations with confidence and sensitivity.