

Job Description

Research Analyst

Salary:	Grade 7
Contract:	Fixed term to 30/09/2029
Location:	Canterbury Campus or remote working
Responsible to:	Research Analyst Manager or their nominee
Job family:	Administrative, professional and managerial

Job purpose

To contribute to high quality quantitative research for the HEAT membership. The post holder will provide high level research and analytical capability advising on data collection and analytical techniques that yield the robust evaluation and impact reporting required by the sector. On a day to day basis, they will, design robust pieces of evaluation for HEAT's Outreach Provider members as well as directly contributing to the design and production of standard reporting outputs (reports and data-tables). The post-holder will be expected to hold an understanding of quantitative and qualitative analysis for monitoring and evaluating widening participation projects and how evaluation should be designed to meet the highest standards possible in the context. The post will have experience of translating data to information for a wide audience.

The University of Kent hosts the Higher Education Access Tracker Service (HEAT), which provides a member-based service supporting the targeting, monitoring and evaluation of activities delivered by more than 100 providers of higher education (HE) across the country. For further information, visit our website www.heat.ac.uk.

Key accountabilities

The following are the main duties for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Produce evaluation datasets and reports using robust analytical methods to support evidence-based decision making by HEAT members.
- Develop business intelligence dashboards using tools such as Power BI to translate complex data into accessible insights.
- Apply advanced analytical techniques to longitudinal datasets to generate evidence on the impact of educational interventions.
- Undertake secondary research projects using HEAT data to maximise its value and inform sector-wide practice.
- Deliver training and analytical guidance to stakeholders to improve their understanding and use of HEAT outputs.
- Present research findings to internal and external audiences to communicate insights and influence practice across the sector.
- Implement quality assurance processes for data and outputs to ensure accuracy, reliability and validity of HEAT reporting.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- Balancing methodological rigour with practical constraints when designing evaluations, requiring judgement on appropriate analytical approaches and data limitations.
- Interpreting large and complex longitudinal datasets to produce meaningful insights, often with incomplete or imperfect data.
- Communicating complex analytical findings to diverse stakeholders and determining the most appropriate level of detail and transparency.
- Ensuring compliance with data protection, ethical and governance requirements while enabling effective use of sensitive data for research and reporting.

Facts & figures

Manage longitudinal tracking data recorded by over 145 Outreach Providers. Work with datasets consisting of over 3 million records.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: The post holder will be required to work closely with the Research Analyst Manager and Data Analyst within the HEAT Team

External: The post holder will also work closely with HEAT member Outreach Providers and stakeholders such as the DfE, OfS and TASO.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Repetitive limb movements
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

You will be an experienced research analyst with knowledge of analysing large, complex, datasets within the field of education. You will have experience in translating the findings from such dataset into meaningful intelligence for different audiences using data visualisation techniques. You will have excellent verbal and written communication skills; you will be able to relay complex information to non-experts in an engaging and accessible way.

You will be able to demonstrate the following skills, experience, abilities and personal interests:

Essential Criteria:

- BA/BSc in a relevant degree (Social Science) or equivalent (A)
- Experience of the HEAT System (A, I, T)
- Proven experience of designing evaluation based on large datasets to examine the impact of a social intervention (A, I)
- Experience of building Power BI or other dashboards (A, I)
- Experience of applying analytical techniques to data to generate meaningful information on a social issue (A, I, T)

- Experience of data analysis software e.g. R, SPSS, Excel (A, I, T)
- Knowledge and empathy with the issues surrounding widening participation and inclusiveness in Higher Education and policy issues (A, I)
- Outstanding communication skills both verbal and written (I, T)
- Experience of high level report writing for a range of audiences (A, I)
- Diplomatic communicator with the ability to translate information solutions to a range of partners/HEAT members (I)
- A firm commitment to fostering a working and learning environment that is respectful, inclusive and values diversity, including diversity of thought, and which enables staff and students from a wide range of backgrounds to thrive (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- Masters or equivalent (attained Masters or at least undertaking PhD) (A)
- Experience of complex project management (A, I)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage