

Cabinet Office – Our role at the centre of HM government

The Cabinet Office acts, alongside HM Treasury, as the strategic centre of government. That means supporting the Prime Minister in ensuring the Government's programme is delivered successfully and helping the Minister for the Cabinet Office to make Government work better and to deliver more efficient services for the public. It's a fast-moving environment where analysts will face professional challenges and engage in interesting and influential analytical work. Most important, working in the Cabinet Office provides analysts with a number of insights and opportunities that are unique to working at the centre of government.

The main objectives of the Cabinet Office are to:

1. Support the Prime Minister and Cabinet to deliver the Government's programme
2. Drive efficiencies and reforms that will make Government work better
3. Create a more united democracy
4. Strengthen and secure the United Kingdom at home and abroad

You can read more about what each of these entail [here](#).

Impactful analysis in an innovative policy environment

In delivering these objectives the department drives innovative approaches to policy across Government. Examples include the Government Digital Service leading the digital transformation of Government and Constitution Group moving the UK to an online system of individual voter registration.

Economists support all of these dynamic areas and more by assessing the impacts they're having and helping to shape the policy choices made. Economists also work closely with the Cabinet Secretary, and collaboratively across and beyond government, to identify long-term policy challenges and then to help departments to design innovative policy, governance and technological responses. A key part of our role is to bring innovative techniques and emerging trends to the heart of Government decision-making.

Examples of work in which economists have played a leading role include:

1. Advising on the economic implications of constitutional change;
2. Working with No.10 Policy Unit to assess the implications of technological advances on the long-term future of the labour market and develop a policy package to ensure we are prepared for change;
3. Leading strategic analysis to build scenarios for how global governance in a range of spheres may evolve over time, and identify the implications for UK Government;
4. Quantifying the wider economic costs and benefits of key programmes including the Government Property Hub;
5. Identifying and analysing data to understand the barriers to delivering priority policy areas such as housing building and childcare;
6. Measuring the benefits of major digital programmes being rolled out across Government;
7. Appraising the economic merits of alternative options for sharing government data;

8. Incorporating economic principles into the management of national security risks;
9. Developing new international indicators of civil service effectiveness;
10. Developing new models of procurement for services, such that voluntary and charitable organisations can compete for government contracts.

Opportunity to learn new analytical tools and techniques

Developing analytical proficiency in undertaking business cases and impact assessments - the bread and butter of all Government economists - is an important part of what we offer to analysts. Alongside this is the chance to expand your analytical toolkit by drawing on new, often experimental techniques. Monthly peer-to-peer sessions, run across an analytical community which has grown rapidly over recent years, have included sessions on learning the VBA programming language, using propensity score matching to assess policy interventions, and applying advanced techniques in Excel. The department also holds licenses for specialist data visualisation software packages and has hosted training sessions from data visualisation experts. There are also opportunities to develop expertise in futures and horizon scanning techniques to support decision-making under uncertainty.

Responsibility and senior exposure from the start

We regularly provide advice and analysis for Ministers and senior officials, including the minister for the Cabinet Office, the Cabinet Secretary and the Permanent Secretary. By providing the analytical basis upon which decisions are made, one of the core skills you will develop is the ability to communicate technical analysis to decision makers quickly and effectively. Economists are based either in specialist analytical units (alongside statisticians, operational researchers, and social researchers) or embedded in policy teams across the policy areas they support. Either way, you will be given the responsibility and opportunity to influence the decision making of senior people and through doing so will quickly learn the core skills essential to being an effective Government economist.

Further information

The starting salary of an Assistant Economist in Cabinet Office is £27,543. Salaries for Economic Advisors start from £48,000.

You need to apply through the Government Economic Service to become an Assistant Economist. You will be assessed using online tests, presentations, interviews and written tests at an Economist Assessment Centre. If you pass this stage, you will be invited to take part in the Fast Stream Assessment Centre which tests a more general range of fast-stream competencies. Once appointed, you will be both a member of the Government Economic Service and the Civil Service Faststream.

For further information on working as an economist in Cabinet Office please contact Leena Phillips, Deputy Head of Analysis and Insight: leena.phillips@cabinetoffice.gov.uk