

About the Department for Work and Pensions

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the biggest Government Department. What we do matters to millions of people every day.

The Department has an ambitious agenda of reform which aims to create a new welfare system for the 21st century; to transform the opportunity for people without jobs to find work and support themselves and their families; and to ensure that the most vulnerable in society are protected. Our aims are to:

- tackle poverty and welfare dependency through a simplified welfare system that encourages and incentivises people to find work, rewards responsible behaviour and protects the most vulnerable;
- promote high levels of employment by helping people who are out of work, including people in disadvantaged groups, to move into work;
- help people meet the challenges of an ageing society and maintain standards of living in retirement; and
- provide opportunity, choice and independence to enable disabled people to take an equal role in society.

The role of economists within DWP

You will become part of a community of around 150 economists working at DWP. Economists are at the heart of policy making in DWP which has an outstanding reputation for evidence-based policymaking. All of the work areas provide opportunities to engage in a fast-moving policy debate where analysis and evidence has a major role to play. As an Assistant Economist, you will be expected to engage with Ministers and officials at the top of the decision making chain, colleagues across Whitehall, including HM-Treasury and the Office for Budget Responsibility, as well seeing how the policies your analysis informs are implemented on the ground.

Most of our economists work alongside policy colleagues, statisticians, social researchers, operational researchers and the growing community of data scientists across the huge range of job roles within the department. Economists develop an array of skills and will undertake a variety of tasks these include:

- briefing to very tight deadlines, for example around labour market performance;
- applying economics to public sector problems in analysis of policies that affect the whole population from cradle to grave;
- developing our cutting edge micro-simulation models, or enhancing our dynamic modelling capabilities and forecasting benefit expenditure to ensure we remain within the Governments Welfare Cap; and
- producing robust in-depth econometric analysis to ensure that the effectiveness of our policies is robustly evaluated and assessed using the departmental cost benefit framework.

There is a lively culture of learning and debate within the department and with strong links to other departments and external experts. Alongside this there is an embedded support structure in place led by senior economists from across the department to enable DWP economists fulfil their potential and progress in their careers. You will have access to events provided by the Government Economic Service as well as a varied programme of internal and external training.

Some examples of what DWP economists do:

- Work as part of high-profile policy teams, such as the design of the new Work and Health programme
- Feed into the Government's Welfare Reform Agenda and the design of Universal Credit: a once-in-a-generation reform to the welfare system
- Provide analysis and briefing on key drivers on the numbers of people on out of work benefits
- Work alongside private sector contractors, who deliver many of the Department's programmes
- Work to further develop the cutting-edge models which predict benefit expenditure and claimant behaviour

For further information on working for DWP please contact economist.profession@dwp.gsi.gov.uk