



Government
Social Research



Government Social Research Degree Apprenticeship Programme

2025 Candidate Pack

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Introduction

Hello. We are Government Social Research (GSR), the professional body for social researchers in the Civil Service. Our 2,400+ members work across over 30 departments and organisations.

GSR members enable government to **understand issues relating to society, groups and individuals**. They support policy debate and decision-making through a variety of approaches, advice and evidence.

Our members come from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines. Our work **puts people at the heart of government decision making** by providing expertise in applied quantitative and qualitative design and analysis approaches, evaluation and interventions to solve complex problems.



A message from Jenny



“Would you like to take up one of the best opportunities in government?

I truly believe that this Social Research Apprenticeship offers that.

GSR is a respected and impactful profession that has contributed to some of the biggest decisions the country has faced in decades past. We are incredibly proud of the brilliant community of social researchers we have built and look forward to welcoming you into this.

We have an ongoing commitment to create an environment in which talented people from all backgrounds realise their full potential and bring diversity of thought and experience to the profession. We are therefore pleased to introduce this apprenticeship, which can help launch your Civil Service career.”

Jenny Dibden, Head of Government Social Research

Why join the Government Social Research profession?

We take your career and development seriously. You'll benefit from **regular performance and development reviews** with your line manager, as well as learning support from the University of Kent.

Both the University of Kent and the Civil Service offer **wellbeing support for all**, as well as support for those with disabilities. The GSR is an inclusive place to work, so don't let anything physical or mental hold you back from applying! [Read more on disability in the Civil Service.](#)

We always encourage those in the GSR to feel comfortable to come to work as themselves. We're a social bunch and you'll have the opportunity to be **part of a fun community**.



Meaningful work that benefits society



An inclusive and diverse working environment



Wide range of government departments on offer



Career development opportunities



Opportunities across the UK



Flexible working patterns



Competitive contributory pension scheme.



Facilities including fitness centres and staff canteens (where applicable.)

What is the Government Social Research Degree Apprenticeship?

The Government Social Research Degree Apprenticeship Programme is the **first degree-level social research apprenticeship in the UK**. Here's what makes it great:

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

The programme offers you a unique opportunity to work in a central government **department or agency** on some of the most important social, environmental and research issues our country faces, whilst studying for a BA degree in social research.

UNIVERSITY OF KENT

You will complete your studies with the University of Kent over 4 years. Kent were selected to deliver the programme because of their social research expertise and the **support they will offer to apprentices** like you throughout your time on the programme.

FULLY FUNDED DEGREE

Your level 6 apprenticeship will be funded by the department or agency you are placed in, via the apprenticeship levy. This means **you will not have to pay any tuition fees** for your degree!

PERMANENT JOB

If you successfully complete your apprenticeship with a 2:2 or above, you will be offered a **permanent position in the GSR**, earning a minimum of £27,000 (2024 figure).

What is an Apprentice Social Researcher?

Here are some of the things you can expect as an **Apprentice Social Researcher** in the Government Social Research profession:



The minimum salary will be **£28,579** in London, or **£26,337** nationally.



The apprenticeship programme has **opportunities nationwide**.



37 hour working week, with 20% of this time spent on studying.



Part of a vibrant and fast-growing **community of over 2,000** government social researchers.



You would start your apprenticeship in **September 2025** (exact date TBC).



Supported by a range of colleagues and staff at the University of Kent and in your government department.



Work on on important policy areas, such as **how government can improve education**, or how government can tackle climate change.

What will I learn on the GSR Degree Apprenticeship?

You will get first-hand experience of **how government works and how policies are made**. 80% of your time will be spent working, while the remaining 20% is dedicated to studying.

Working as a member of the GSR involves development and use of:

- Quantitative skills: manipulating and presenting data
- Writing and presentation techniques: communicating research clearly and succinctly to senior officials and ministers
- Applied research skills: using data insights to inform decisions on anything from the environment to transport

The degree in Social Research will comprise:

- A broad range of contemporary quantitative and qualitative research methods and skills
- How these skills can be applied to bring about real-world change and help government and organisations make better decisions
- Covering how to design impactful research projects and make use of modern research software.



Entry requirements

Academic requirements:

- You must have a minimum of five GCSE (including Maths and English at grade C (4) or above). Or equivalent.
- Have or expect to gain (by August 2025) a minimum of 96 UCAS points under the 2017 tariff point system (e.g., CCC at A Level or equivalent qualifications, not including General Studies). [Calculate your UCAS Tariff Points.](#)

Eligibility requirements:

- You need to have the right to work in the UK.
- You need to have resided in the UK for at least the previous 3 years before the start of the apprenticeship.
- You need to meet the [Civil Service Nationality Rules](#).
- We do not offer sponsorship for this programme.
- [Please click here for more information](#)



The application process

#1 | Registration

To begin your application, you'll need to apply on Civil Service Jobs.

#2 | Online tests

You may be required to complete two online tests: verbal and numerical tests. You will move from one test to the other only if you meet the minimum requirement at the completion of each test. You will need access to a laptop/desktop computer. [Click here for practice tests to help you prepare.](#)

#3 | Personal statement

If you have met the minimum requirements of the online tests, you will be invited to complete a personal statement (1000 words max.) Your statement should include the following:

- Why are you interested in the apprenticeship?
- How are you planning to balance work and study?
- How will you keep motivated and track your performance?

If you are successful at the online tests and the personal statement sift, you will receive an outcome by the end of March 2025 and will be invited to the assessment centre. **YOU MUST COMPLETE STAGES 1 to 3 BEFORE 13.55pm on 30 JANUARY 2025.**

#4 | Assessment centre

As part of the virtual assessment centre, we will evaluate your suitability for the job in two sections through a combination of tasks and activities. Initially, you will undertake a written exercise and following this you will be invited to complete a presentation and interview.

Application tips



James, Apprentice Social Researcher, 2024 Cohort

There are times in the application process when there isn't much to do as the relevant people are reviewing what you submitted, but then sometimes there's lots to do.

My top tip is to do as much as you can as soon as you can, it reduces stress and makes you look keen!



Helena, Apprentice Social Researcher, 2024 Cohort

My top tip for the application process is to be yourself. If you are passionate about the role and what the work involves and believe you would really thrive in that environment, then I think it will come naturally to you.

There is also lots of helpful info online about the process!



Archie, Apprentice Social Researcher, 2024 Cohort

My top tip is to use the prep materials they provide you with prior to the online tests.

And to stick with it because parts of the process were quite long and required lots of time and effort!

Frequently asked questions #1

Question: I have previously applied for last year's apprenticeship scheme, and I wasn't successful can I apply?

Answer: Yes, if you have applied last year, you can apply again. It's not unusual to succeed after 2 or 3 attempts. However, you can only apply once in each recruitment campaign. Information from previous applications will not be available to assessors.

Question: Is security clearance required?

Answer: Yes. If successful you must hold, or be willing to obtain, security clearance to CTC/SC/DV level. Certain departments require a 5-year footprint in the UK.

Question: I am currently doing an apprenticeship, can I apply?

Answer: Yes, but you will need to finish your EPA and have your grade by the GSRDAP start date in September 2025.

Question: I am a current Civil Servant, can I apply?

Answer: Of course, if you meet the entry requirements!



Frequently asked questions #2

Question: Is there an age limit for applying to this programme?

Answer: The scheme is open to people of all ages. We encourage applications from BTEC & A-Level students, apprentices, existing civil servants and those seeking a new career.

Question: Can I choose which department I will work for?

Answer: We take into account your location preferences when assigning you to a department, but we cannot guarantee that you will get your choice of location/department. Some departments including Home Office, Ministry of Defence and Office for National Statistics require candidates to have lived in the UK for 5 years and to have spent a period no longer than 3 months or more at any given time outside of the UK to obtain security clearance.

Question: Can I apply if I already have a degree?

Yes, as long, as the degree does not contain substantial social research training, and you are not eligible to join the GSR through our other recruitment routes. A degree is not a requirement for this apprenticeship and no applicant will be disadvantaged for not having one. The apprenticeship is specifically designed to be accessible to those who cannot apply to Government Social Research through our other recruitment routes.

Question: Why has someone received their online test results before me?

Answer: Some tests are staggered to give the recruitment team time to review the scores. Don't worry, the latest you'll hear about your results will be early February and you'll be given plenty of time to take the next parts of the assessment process.

Frequently asked questions #3

Question: What happens if I appeal my grades and apply for a remark?

Answer: Students who are applying for a remark cannot be guaranteed a place. GESR may be able to offer a place subject to:

- A role in one of our participating Government departments being available.
- Whether any further security/onboarding checks can be completed promptly (different departments have different security and onboarding requirements and processes.)
- Consideration from University of Kent and the new line manager on whether they will be able to accommodate a delayed start date (there will be significant learning lost in the first few weeks and University of Kent and the new line manager need to consider whether anyone starting late will have the aptitude, time and support to catch up.)



Key dates

6 January 2025

Applications open.

6 January 2025 - 30 January 2025

During this time you will complete your qualifications, online tests and personal statement.

30 January 2025

You must have **completed your online tests and submitted your full application form** (personal statement) before **13.55pm**.

31 March - 4 April 2025

Successful candidates will take their written assessment

22 April - 2 May 2025

Online Assessment Centre (presentation and interview).

May 2025

You will find out if you are successful by the end of May.

September 2025

Apprenticeship starts.





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Thank you for reading.

If you have any questions, please email us at
GESRRecruitment@hmtreasury.gov.uk

For more information on Government Social
Research and our recruitment schemes please follow:



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