



Government
Social Research



Government Social Research Research Officer Graduate Scheme

2025 Candidate Pack

Contents

Introduction	P3
Why join Government Social Research (GSR)?	P4
What is the GSR Research Officer Graduate Scheme?	P5
Qualification requirements	P6
Nationality requirements	P8
The application process	P9
Filling out additional question 1	P11
Onboarding	P10
Key dates	P13
Useful resources	P14

Introduction

Hello. We are Government Social Research (GSR) the analytical profession within Government for Civil Servants that produces social and behavioural research and advice.

GSR members use and generate data and analysis to understand issues relating to society, groups and individuals, supporting policy debate and decision-making through a variety of approaches, advice and evidence.

GSR has over 2,500 professionally-accredited members across 35+ government departments and organisations.



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 and there are lots of opportunities for learning and development.

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 working environment



Wide range of government departments on offer



Ongoing learning & 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 GSR Research Officer Graduate Scheme?

The GSR Research Officer Scheme is open to graduates interested in **starting a career in social research**.

We are recruiting Research Officers to play a critical role in **gathering, analysing and interpreting the information** forming the foundation of government decision-making.

As a Research Officer, you will be assigned to a government department for your first position within the GSR.

Your work might involve developing surveys, analysing data, producing statistics, reviewing existing research evidence and working with other analysts in Government to provide **timely, relevant and robust briefings** to policy colleagues and ministers.



Qualification requirements

To be eligible to apply for a Research Officer role you must be eligible for Government Social Research (GSR) membership. This can be through one of **two routes**:

- The Qualification Route
- The Experience Route

1. The Qualification Route

You are eligible to apply for this route if you meet the following criteria:

- Hold an undergraduate or a postgraduate degree at a minimum of a 2:2 in a relevant subject by August 2025
- The relevant degree must contain a minimum of 30% in social research methods covering all the criteria outlined below (it is not sufficient to hold the majority in one area – coverage across all areas is required)

It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate these criteria clearly on the application.

Social Research Method Degree Content Criteria

To qualify as a relevant subject, a degree must include quantitative research methods including research design, data collection (i.e., questionnaire design, sampling, weighting) and data analysis (e.g., statistical analysis).

It must also include at least three of the following:

1. Qualitative methods, including research design, data collection (i.e., interviewing, focus groups, ethnographic), data analysis (e.g., thematic analysis)
2. Study design, hypothesis formation, testing and evaluation
3. Systematic/literature reviews
4. Interpretation of data (qualitative and quantitative), presentation of results, provision of recommendations/ conclusions
5. Application of ethics to research

It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate these criteria clearly on their application. Please ensure you indicate the number of credits associated with the relevant modules covering your social research methods training. Please ensure you include comprehensive details of your Degree / Experience in the section labelled “Additional Question 1” on the application form. We receive a high volume of applications for the scheme, so please ensure you are clear and concise in outlining the relevant modules for consideration.

Qualification requirements

2. The Experience Route

You are eligible to apply for this route if you meet the following criteria:

- Hold an undergraduate degree, at a minimum of 2:2 in any subject; and have at least 4 years social research practice experience
- To apply via this route, you must make explicit the breadth and depth of your research experience and skills, which must include the social research method degree content criteria noted in the qualification route section. You need to provide evidence of quantitative research methods and three of the following:
 1. Systematic/literature reviews
 2. Qualitative methods
 3. Interpretation of data and presentation of results
 4. Study design and hypothesis testing and application of ethics to research.



Nationality requirements

You are eligible to apply if you are a:

- British citizen
- European Economic Area (EEA) national
- Commonwealth citizen
- Swiss national
- Turkish national, in some circumstances

Individuals will need to demonstrate that they **meet the relevant immigration requirements** and demonstrate their eligibility under the **Civil Service Nationality Rules (CSNRs)**, guidance on which can be found **[on the government's website](#)**.

Individuals must have **the right to work in the UK**, we do not offer visa sponsorship for these vacancies.



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**. 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. **Please use these practice tests to help you prepare.**

Based on the performance of all applicants, a final pass mark will be set for the online tests. This may be higher than the minimum standard for both tests.



#3 | FULL APPLICATION FORM

If you meet the minimum standard for both online tests, you will be invited to fill out the **full application form**. The form will ask you for information including details about your degree.

The application process



#4 | KNOWLEDGE TEST

After applications close, if you pass both online tests, you will be invited to sit the **GSR knowledge test**. The test is online, multiple choice and timed. We can make reasonable adjustments. Full details of this test will be provided if you reach this stage.

If you pass the GSR knowledge test your application will be sent on to sifters, who will consider whether you have demonstrated that your degree contains sufficient social research content. If you pass the sift, you will be invited to a virtual interview.



#5 | VIRTUAL INTERVIEW

Interviews will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams. The first part of the interview will be a **5 minute presentation**. Follow up questions will be asked to assess technical professional skills as a Social Researcher. These questions will be in line with the whole **GSR Technical Framework at Research Officer Level.**

The second part of the interview will be questions based on the following **Civil Service Behaviours:**

- Managing a quality service
- Communicating and influencing
- Working together

Further information will be sent to candidates invited to attend.

Filling out Additional Question 1

As part of your application, you will need to answer **additional questions**.

The question will ask you to list your **degree modules and/or experience** in social research.

Name each module, indicating where the module includes social research elements and what these elements are.

Remember to include the number of credits each module is worth and include the total number of credits in your degree.

For those applying via the experience route, please outline your experience and the length of time you have been employed in this area.

This information allows sifters to clearly see if a degree contains a third of social research methods or if your work experience meets the necessary criteria.

Remember that while they are social researchers, they won't know what your degree modules were unless you provide as much information as possible.



Onboarding

If successful at the interview stage, you will be offered a role and **allocated to a government department.**

Roles are allocated based on your **location preferences** where possible. It is not possible to express a preference for a Government department, as Government Social Research will meet the needs of all departments equally.

Your employing department will commission **security checks**, and allocate you your new role. They will be able to advise you regarding office location, start date and salary.

Generally, you will be able to start your new role in **September/October**, once your security checks are clear.



Key dates

3 February 2025

Applications open.

27 February 2025

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

w/c: 17 March 2025

Government Social Research Knowledge Test.

w/c: 12 May 2025

Interviews

June 2025

Allocation to government departments.

July / August 2025

Onboarding and security checks (can take up to three months).

September / October 2025

Start role.



Useful Resources

[Practice Civil Service Numerical and Verbal Reasoning Tests](#)

[Video guides to the Civil Service Numerical and Verbal Reasoning Tests](#)

Learn about the Higher Executive Officer (HEO) Research Officer criteria used to assess candidates at interview:

- [Information on the Civil Service Behaviours](#)
- [Success Profiles - Civil Service Behaviours](#) (Please see the HEO level criteria, which is used at interview.)
- [Information on the technical skills being assessed at interview](#) (Please see 'Research Officer' criteria.)

For structuring your answers at an interview, consider using: [The STAR method](#)





Government
Social Research

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:



[@governmentsocialresearch](#)



[@governmentsocialresearch.uk](#)



[@gsr_uk](#)