Data Collection Officer, Data Analytics and Statistics

London, UK

The Department for Communities and Local Government is at the very heart of some of the Government’s key priorities. Our work is focused on four main areas:

- driving up housing supply
- increased home ownership
- devolving powers and budgets to boost local growth
- supporting strong communities with excellent public services

DCLG is looking for an individual with numeracy, organisational, communication, IT and problem-solving skills to join our busy data collection team. Data collection plays a key role supporting the Department’s work. Your work will contribute to one or more of the following:

- collecting and producing National Statistics to monitor performance.
- providing evidence for informed policy development
- developing the evidence base used for the costing and evaluation of policies

Please note that successful candidates will need to pass the CTC security checks – this requires candidates to have been resident in the UK for the past 3 years.

See page 20 of the DCLG Candidate pack for a list of other conditions which may affect your eligibility for our vacancies.(Link at bottom of this vacancy).

Data at DCLG

Data is the fuel to power performance management, decision-making, partnership-working and public engagement across our wide and complex range of policy responsibilities. We use it extensively and routinely to help improving understanding of issues such as:

- How and where housing markets are and are not responding to social and economic pressures and opportunities at the national and local levels
- How and where local services are being reshaped and transformed in response to changing demands and financial constraints
- Devolving more powers to different localities
- Supporting and enabling local economic growth.

DCLG is a significant producer of data. We are the custodians of several significant official and national statistical series on Local Government Finance, Housing and Planning policies. We are the
second largest contributor to data.gov.uk, and – through our OpenDataCommunities programme – we are at the forefront of progressively releasing data in more open, accessible and re-usable forms.

The team

The post is based in the Data Analytics and Statistics division (DAS). The Division is a vibrant, fast-moving and made up of operational staff and analysts. It is at the heart of delivering critical evidence for the Department and other stakeholders. The division is split into three broad data collection areas: Data and Technical Services (covering housing, homelessness, and land use planning collections as well as open data publication), Local Government Finance data collection and CORE Social Housing data collection. You’ll gain experience in all the statistics the department produces and of every stage of the data collection and publication process, working closely with local authorities, stakeholders, and analytical and policy colleagues across the department and Whitehall.

DAS is developing a cross-team working model, and you could be working in any or all of the data collection areas. All teams are responsible for the collection of data to support policy makers and produce Official and National Statistics. Another key part of our role is engagement with a wide range of users and data providers to ensure the data collected and statistics produced meet the user requirements for data. You’ll be working in a friendly, respectful environment where challenge is welcomed, ideas for change embraced and new working procedures devised through collaboration. A key aim of the division is to improve the efficiency and quality of service to local authorities and analysts, and your input is vital.

The role

The key responsibilities of this role are:

- To develop data collection forms (returns) and their supporting guidance notes, in line with feedback and policy changes. – These electronic returns are complex and perform sophisticated validation checks at various points of the process.
- To work with local authorities to ensure they have accurately completed the returns to schedule, answering queries and responding to any problems quickly.
- To support publication of statistics across the division, ensuring they are accurate, robust and timely, and available via the best channel (statistical releases, live tables or infographics).
- To assist in producing and providing datasets to the other databanks, such as the UK data archive or Open Data Communities portal.
- To support improvements and changes to the data collection systems in line with annual changes to the data collection and new system requirements, using feedback from data providers.

We take the development of our people very seriously, equipping and enabling them to make an impact by ensuring high quality evidence and analysis is at the heart of the policy-making process. We are committed to good management and development of staff. The post holder will report to a HEO statistician line manager.
The post holder is expected to support the Division and Directorate to deliver their priorities by sharing knowledge and expertise, drawing links between different areas of work and working professionally, responsibly and collaboratively.

Opportunities

The post presents you with the opportunity to:

- To be at the heart of producing National Statistics key to policy development;
- To gain experience of managing large datasets and different relational databases;
- To gain experience of working with local authorities and other data providers;
- To develop or enhance skills in data collection and quality assurance;
- To work in a division responsible for collecting and publishing a wide range of data on housing, planning and local government finance;
- To gain exposure to work of the division on developing innovative new systems and tools for collecting and storing data, sharing results and delivering Open Data

Person Specification

You will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Strong numeracy skills, able to review the data collected, challenging anomalies and securing explanations for material discrepancies
- Sound customer focus – can build strong, positive relationships with data providers ensuring the timely and accurate delivery of returns.
- Good IT skills and ability to learn software packages used by the collection teams. (Previous experience of database management is desirable.)
- Proven record of working under pressure independently and as part of a team,

Team working is essential to the success of data collection in DCLG and you should be able to deliver your goals and objectives by working with others. If you believe you have the right skills for this role, we would like to hear from you.

Core Competences

You will need to address the core competences in your application. More details on the core competencies are in the Civil Service Competency Framework listed as a download on the job advert. Please refer to the competency framework provided as this will help you to prepare your application form and prepare for interview.

- **Collaborating and partnering** – evidence of strong team-working skills and the ability to engage with a range of stakeholders, including internal policy colleagues, other Whitehall officials, and external parties
Changing and Improving – evidence of being responsive; innovative and seeking out opportunities to create effective change by regularly reviewing processes to work in smarter, more focussed ways.

Managing a quality service – evidence of delivering service objectives and striving to improve the quality of service and taking account of diverse customer needs and requirements to deliver a high quality and efficient service, flagging up potential risks and possible areas of concern.

Delivering at Pace – evidence of delivering timely outputs, working towards an agreed goal, taking accountability for quality outcomes and dealing with challenges in a responsive and constructive way.