

TASO

Transforming Access
and Student Outcomes
in Higher Education

Candidate information pack

Research Manager

Follow us



“

**Until we get equality in
education, we won't have an
equal society.**

”

Sonia Sotomayor

About TASO

The Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO) is an affiliate What Works Centre, and part of the UK Government's What Works Movement. Our vision is to eliminate equality gaps in higher education.

TASO was set up in 2019 and became an independent charity in April 2021. Our work focuses on the generation, synthesis and dissemination of high-quality evidence about effective practice in widening participation and student outcomes. We primarily focus on developing and disseminating causal evidence.



Our values

Continue to challenge

We are honest and transparent in every element of our work.

Integrity is everything

We challenge the status quo, push boundaries and strive for better.
from ourselves, from the team and from our stakeholders.

Always learning

We remain open-minded and curious, ever-ready to learn, develop or find out something new.

Stronger together

We support each other and believe in the strength of teamwork, partnership and collaboration.

Committed to equity

We strive to achieve fairness in everything we do.

Act with empathy

Our approach is driven by kindness, understanding and respect.



The role

The Research Manager will join our Research and Evaluation (R&E) team. The post-holder will be responsible for managing multiple research projects and evaluation initiatives and contributing to team and project development.

Responsibilities include:

- Scoping and designing new research projects and impact evaluations in collaboration with higher education providers (with a particular focus on RCTs and quasi-experimental evaluation designs)
- Developing theory of change models and evaluation plans for interventions run by higher education providers.
- Managing research and evaluation projects in collaboration with multiple external organisations.
- Review evaluation protocols, study plans, statistical analysis plans and research and evaluation report
- Commissioning of external research and evaluation projects and collaborating with external partners e.g. research agencies, evaluation consultancies, or specialist academic advisors.
- Overseeing funded projects, ensuring delivery to timelines, value for money for TASO, and timely and proactive risk assessment and mitigation.
- Conducting desk-based research, reviewing existing literature to synthesise the quality of evidence on a given topic, and collating examples of sector good practice.
- Developing/maintaining knowledge of cutting-edge research and methodological developments that is relevant to TASO's work. Using this knowledge to contribute to the delivery of blog posts and research briefings.
- Contributing to practical evaluation guidance and tools to support practitioners within universities and colleges to better evaluate the activities and programmes they deliver.
- Planning and delivering external training courses on evaluation and presenting research during workshops and other stakeholder engagement events.
- Developing TASO's relationships with key stakeholders in the higher education sector and contributing to the running and administration of advisory panels formed of external stakeholders.
- Managing junior colleagues to help deliver research projects, providing in-role development of appropriate research skills and other competencies.

The attributes we are looking for in a Research Manager

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate their skills and experience against the following criteria in their written application and at interview, for those shortlisted. That said, we welcome applications from candidates with a range of skills and experience and encourage you to apply even if you do not meet each and every criterion specified on the following pages.



Education / qualification and training

Essential

- Degree and postgraduate degree in a relevant discipline (e.g. economics or other appropriate quantitative and social science disciplines).

Desirable

- PhD in a relevant discipline or demonstrable track record publishing policy research and evaluations.



Knowledge / skills

Essential

- Managing research projects, including scoping, planning, delivering and reporting.
- Ability to design and conduct impact evaluation studies, including experimental and/or quasi-experimental methods.
- Confident in using software (such as Microsoft Office suite and R/Stata/SPSS) to analyse and present research findings.
- Confident and clear written and verbal communication, including report-writing and presentation skills.

Desirable

- Understanding of widening participation and student success policy agendas.



Experience

Essential

- A minimum of 3 - 5 years experience working in a research or evaluation role (PhD research included).
- Collaboration and coordination of project stakeholders, communicating persuasively to ensure smooth implementation of research and evaluation projects.
- Working on multiple projects and managing competing demands and timescales.

Desirable

- Line management experience.
- Developing and delivering presentations and training courses for professional audiences on a variety of topics e.g. theory of change and impact evaluation approaches. Related experience - e.g. teaching quantitative or qualitative research methods - will also be considered.
- Commissioning of research or evaluations or contract and grant management.
- Experience of research and evaluation relating to widening participation and student success.



Personal characteristics/other requirements

Essential

- Ability to both use your own initiative and follow instructions and recognise when a problem should be referred to others.
- Ability to work collaboratively in small teams.

Values

Essential

- Commitment to eliminating equality gaps; a passion for the mission of What Works Centres and the broader agenda around evidence-based policy and practice in public services.
- Driven, with a personal style that supports the achievement of team goals – a natural collaborator, networker and convener who makes connections and brings others together.



Why work for TASO?

The HR Officer role is an exceptional opportunity for the right candidate to achieve real impact in a growing organisation. Besides coordinating our HR projects and programmes, you will have a chance to work in a small and friendly team of people who are genuinely committed to the charity's mission. Other benefits include:

- **Annual Holiday** - 27 days per year, plus public/bank holidays and a day off for your birthday.
- **Pension Scheme** - TASO will contribute 8% to your pension.
- **Flexible working** - We are committed to flexible working where possible, with core hours of 10:00 - 16:00.
- **Hybrid working** - Currently, a two-day requirement to work from our London office.
- **Team days** - Regular team days in the office and team building days.
- **Training and Development** - Systematic performance reviews, personalised learning and development objectives and access to a training and development fund plus team training days.
- **Volunteering** - One day a year off to volunteer for an organisation of your choice.
- **Wellbeing** - Free employee assistance programme that offers webinars, courses, and counselling sessions. A yearly personal wellbeing budget.
- **Sick Pay Scheme** - 3 months full pay and 3 months half pay after probation has been passed.

Staff Discounts - Discounts are available via Perks At Work from a wide range of retailers for shopping, dining, experiences, car maintenance, study, etc.



Initial terms and conditions of appointment

- Remuneration: £43,000 - £45,000 per annum
- Location: Central London. This post will be hybrid with the expectation that the post holder will be in the office two days a week in addition to attending office-based project meetings. Candidates must have the right to work in the UK.
- Term: Permanent. Full-time, 35 hours per week.



How to apply

To apply, please send a CV (no longer than 2 pages, excluding list of authored reports and publications) and your response to the four questions in the [application form](#) (DOCX) to people@taso.org.uk, citing "Research Manager" in the subject of the email. We also ask that you fill out our online [EDI monitoring form](#) when you submit your application. The form is anonymous. We encourage interested candidates to inquire if you have questions or want to discuss your suitability for this role. We will facilitate brief online conversations with the TASO team, please email info@taso.org.uk to request a call.

Deadline for applications: **23:59 on Wednesday 12 February**.
Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview and complete a short pre-task on a rolling basis on the **w/c 3 March**.



“

Equality! Where is it, if not in education? Equal rights! They cannot exist without equality of instruction.

”

Frances Wright



TASO

Transforming Access
and Student Outcomes
in Higher Education