

TASO

Transforming Access
and Student Outcomes
in Higher Education

Candidate information pack

Research Officer

Follow us



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

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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 aim is to help eliminate equality gaps in higher education (HE) through evidence-informed practice.

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 and we encourage the HE sector to do the same by providing higher education professionals access to research, toolkits, evaluation guidance, networks, evaluation training and more.



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 Officer will work on TASO's Research and Evaluation programme to develop a better understanding of what works to support widening participation and student success. Under the guidance of a Research Manager, the Research Officer will be involved in a wide range of research and evaluation activities.

One key focus will be to work with the Research Manager to deliver impact evaluation projects with project partners (namely higher education providers). These typically involve randomised controlled trials (RCTs) or quasi experimental designed (QEDs), but also include theories of change and qualitative research methods.

The Officer may also help commission new projects designed to develop evaluation guidance for practitioners, evaluators and researchers from multiple institutions. They will work across these projects to manage and monitor progress, collate findings, analyse data and help steer the overall programme of work. They may also undertake internal research projects themselves, including synthesis of secondary research; conducting qualitative, quantitative and/or survey research.

The role will involve substantial stakeholder management, liaison with various interested parties outside TASO, convening of stakeholder groups and supporting training sessions. The Research Officer will have strong communication skills and be able to convey their findings, including complex quantitative information and advanced evaluation methods (particularly causal impact evaluation methods), clearly and will support TASO to influence broader policy discussion. They will work both independently and—on more complex tasks—under supervision.



Responsibilities

- Supporting the delivery of causal impact evaluations in higher education.
- Using TASO resources and materials to deliver training - in-person and online - to a wide range of external stakeholders.
- Helping develop theories of change and evaluation plans for individual interventions and multi-intervention programmes.
- Conducting desk-based research, reviewing existing literature to synthesise the quality of evidence on a given topic and collate examples of sector good practice.
- Providing support to the Research Manager in the commissioning of external research and evaluation.
- Overseeing funded projects, ensuring delivery to timelines, value for money for TASO, and timely and proactive risk assessment and mitigation.
- Helping design, run and analyse the results of research projects in collaboration with multiple external organisations. This may include qualitative and quantitative research.
- Contributing to the administration and secretariat for a number of advisory panels formed of external stakeholders.
- Working with the Research Manager to develop TASO's relationships with key stakeholders in the HE sector.
- Developing/maintaining knowledge of cutting-edge research and evaluation which is relevant to TASO's work. Use this knowledge to contribute to the delivery of blog posts, literature reviews and research briefings, working with the Research Manager.
- Contributing to the delivery of external training courses and events to disseminate the work of TASO's wider research programme.



The attributes we are looking for in a Research Officer

Education/qualification and training

Essential

- Undergraduate degree in relevant discipline

Desirable

- Postgraduate level qualification in a relevant discipline (e.g. economics, applied research, public policy)

Knowledge/skills

Essential

- Familiarity with impact evaluation designs, particularly randomised and quasi-experimental evaluations.
- Ability to collate and analyse complex information for reporting purposes.
- Ability to analyse quantitative data.
- Confident using software (such as Microsoft Office suite and R/Stata/SPSS) to analyse and present research findings in a variety of formats.
- Confident and clear written and verbal communication, including report-writing and presentation skills.

Desirable

- Experience developing theories of change and contributing to evaluation plans.
- Understanding of widening participation and student success policy agendas.
- Experience of research and evaluation relating to widening participation and student success.



The attributes we are looking for in a Research Officer

Experience

Essential

- Working on multiple projects and managing competing demands and timescales.

Desirable

- Collaboration and coordination of project stakeholders, communicating persuasively to ensure smooth implementation of research projects.
- Stakeholder engagement, including convening and running meetings.
- Developing and delivering presentations and workshops for professional audiences.

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

Desirable

- Commitment to eliminating equality gaps in higher education; a passion for the agenda 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 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: Starting salary £36,383 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.
- Holiday: 27 days per year, plus public/bank holidays.
- Pension: Employer contribution 8%



How to apply

To apply, please send a CV (no longer than two pages, excluding a 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 Officer" in the email subject.

We also ask that you fill out our online [EDI monitoring form](#) when you submit your application. The form is anonymous.

The deadline for applications is on **Monday 10 March, 09:00 (GMT)**.

Interviews are expected to be held during **w/c 24 March**, and candidates will be issued the task to complete in advance.



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

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Frances Wright



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