

Candidate brief: Evaluation Officer

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 (HE). Our mission is to improve lives 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.

The Role

The Evaluation Officer will work on TASO's Research and Evaluation (R&E) programme to develop a better understanding of what works to support widening participation and student success. Under the guidance of the Evaluation Manager, the Evaluation Officer will help develop a suite of high-quality resources and step-by-step guidance to support universities and colleges to better evaluate the activities and programmes they deliver. This will include developing evaluation guidance documents, pages for our website, webinars and training materials. The Officer will help deliver training based on these materials to a wide range of external stakeholders.

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 Evaluation 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.

Among other responsibilities, the role will include:

- Helping develop a suite of high-quality guidance to support universities and colleges to better evaluate the activities and programmes they deliver.
- Using these 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 Evaluation 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 Evaluation Manager to develop TASO's relationships with key stakeholders in the HE sector.
- Develop/maintain 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 Evaluation 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 an Evaluation Officer

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate their skills and experience against the following criteria in their written application and at interview, for those short-listed.

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education / qualification and training		
Undergraduate degree in relevant discipline	X	

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Postgraduate level qualification in relevant discipline (e.g. applied research, public policy)		X
Knowledge / skills		
Ability to collate and analyse complex information for reporting purposes.	X	
Ability to critically evaluate the strength of causal research/evaluation, both academic and practitioner, particularly the quality and reliability of the research/evaluation.	X	
Ability to develop theories of change and design evaluation plans.	X	
Ability to analyse quantitative data.	X	
Confident using software (such as Microsoft Office suite and R/Stata/SPSS) to analyse and present research findings in a variety of formats.	X	
Confident and clear written and verbal communication, including report-writing and presentation skills.	X	
Understanding of widening participation and student success policy agendas.		X
Experience of research and evaluation relating to widening participation and student success.		X
Experience		
Working on multiple projects and managing competing demands and timescales.	X	
Collaboration and coordination of project stakeholders, communicating persuasively to ensure smooth implementation of research projects.		X
Stakeholder engagement including convening and running meetings.		X
Developing and delivering presentations and workshops for professional audiences.		X

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Personal characteristics/other requirements		
Ability to both use your own initiative and follow instructions and recognise when a problem should be referred to others.	X	
Ability to work collaboratively in small teams.	X	
Values		
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.	X	
Driven, with a personal style that supports the achievement of team goals.	X	
A natural collaborator and convener who makes connections and brings others together.	X	

Initial Terms and Conditions of Appointment

- Remuneration: £33,000 to £36,250 per annum - depending on experience
- Location: Central London. This post will be hybrid with the expectation that the post holder will be in the office one or 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 and supporting statement (maximum 1 A4 page) outlining clearly how you meet the above criteria to info@taso.org.uk, citing "Evaluation Officer" 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.

Shortlisted applicants may be asked to complete a task before or during the interview stage.

TASO welcomes applications from all under-represented communities and groups. As part of our commitment to increasing diversity within both our own workforce and the policy making sector in general, we offer pre-application discussions to candidates from black, asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds. Please contact omar.khan@taso.org.uk for more details.

Deadline for applications: Monday 27th March 9.00am

Interviews are expected to be held on w/c 3rd of April and candidates will be issued the task to complete in advance.