



# Working with us: Research Officer

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Job Pack – May 2021



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## A note from our CEO, Derek Mitchell

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“Thank you for your interest in joining the Citizens Advice Scotland team. Our employees play a critical role in helping to make society fairer, and in supporting our network of Citizens Advice Bureaux across Scotland.

We hope this pack will give you the information you need to decide if a role with us is right for you. We rely on each member of the team to bring their own unique skills, experience, views and commitment to our goals – it’s that combination which makes our organisation what it is.

The Citizens Advice network in Scotland provides much-needed advice and information to people of all walks of life, on a huge range of issues. We give a piece of advice every 19 seconds – face to face, online and by phone. The services we and our members provide make a difference in communities across Scotland and the rest of Great Britain, ensuring people are aware of their rights. It’s a powerful thing to be part of.

We look forward to hearing from you if you decide to apply, and to learning more about what you can bring to this role, and to the team.”



**Derek Mitchell, CEO**  
**Citizens Advice Scotland**



## About Citizens Advice Scotland

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The Citizens Advice network in Scotland is the largest independent advice service in the country. Citizens Advice Scotland is a charity within this network – we act as a national organisation supporting and representing the service as a whole and the interests of citizens.

At the heart of the network there are 59 individual citizens advice bureau organisations across Scotland, all operating as independent charities in their own right, and generally focusing on providing support directly to clients. Each of these organisations is a member of Citizens Advice Scotland. Also providing significant added value are the national elements of the service run out of Citizens Advice Scotland, such as the Extra Help Unit.

We believe that every citizen should have access to free, impartial and confidential advice that helps them make informed decisions, whenever they need it and however they choose to access it. Whether that's face-to-face, over the phone or online, people know that wherever they see the familiar blue and yellow of our brand, they are guaranteed the same high quality of free, impartial and confidential advice.

Citizens Advice Scotland is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion. We offer a range of family friendly, inclusive employment policies and flexible working arrangements to support all our staff. We are also committed to equality of opportunity for all and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

Find out more at [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk).

## About the role

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- > **Job title:** Research Officer
- > **Location:** Edinburgh\*
- > **Hours per week:** 35 hours per week
- > **Type of contract:** Fixed term contract until 31 March 2022
- > **Appointable salary range:** £24,720 - £28,000 per annum, commensurate with experience
- > **Full salary range:** £24,720-£30,214 per annum
  
- > **Closing date:** 23 May 2021, 5pm
- > **Interviews:** 17 June 2021

## About the job

The Research Officer is part of the Impact Team at Citizens Advice Scotland. The Impact Team seeks to achieve positive change through two main routes:

- informing and empowering individuals to take action through information, education and campaigning; and
- changing policy, practice and law.

In this role, you will play a key role in supporting and co-ordinating research in areas identified as priorities for the citizens advice service, our clients and the people of Scotland.

You will use a wide range of statistics, data, and evidence in order to highlight areas for action, develop and promote solutions. Working across a broad spectrum of issues, from social security to drinking water quality, you will also support Policy colleagues to develop research solutions that will deliver a sound evidence base to influence legislation and positive outcomes for bureaux clients and consumers.

Additionally, you will gain experience of commissioning and project managing research projects carried out by external parties on behalf of Citizens Advice Scotland. You will work closely with the Senior Research Officer to deliver a wide range of research projects and assist Policy Officers and other Citizens Advice Scotland colleagues to design and undertake research in different policy areas.

This role offers you the opportunity to work at the heart of supporting Scotland's largest independent advice network and to make an invaluable contribution to citizen's lives.

\*This role is normally based in our Edinburgh office. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, all CAS staff are currently working from home and we would therefore expect the successful candidate would be required to work from home initially. Re-opening our offices will be carefully planned and managed in accordance with the latest Scottish Government guidance and public health advice. Candidates should be prepared to work from home initially, but be aware that attendance at the normal office base will be required in future. We are currently reviewing our home working policy in response to the COVID-19 crisis and ongoing opportunities to work from home can be discussed with the successful candidate at offer stage.

### **Employee benefits**

Citizens Advice Scotland offers excellent terms and conditions, including a total of 40 days leave (including public holidays) and a pension scheme with an 8% employer contribution. We have a flexitime scheme which enables our employees to work flexibly in line with organisational requirements, and as an inclusive employer we are happy to consider other flexible working arrangements where appropriate. For more details of some of the other benefits on offer to our employees, please see the section on employee benefits below.



## How to apply

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To apply for this role, please send completed copies of the **Personal Details Form**, along with your current **CV** to: [recruitment@cas.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@cas.org.uk) by **23 May 2021, 5pm**.

In addition, we ask you to provide a **written statement** with examples which demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the post, as set out in the job description and person specification.

### Equality & diversity monitoring

To help Citizens Advice Scotland monitor equality and diversity statistics please return the Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form **separate** from your other application documents by emailing it to: [equalitymonitoring@cas.org.uk](mailto:equalitymonitoring@cas.org.uk)



## Job description

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- > **Position:** Research Officer
- > **Responsible to:** Coordination & Planning Manager
- > **Line manager responsibility:** No
- > **Budget responsibility:** No

### Key responsibilities

- > Effectively use, understand, interpret and analyse statistics and data from a variety of internal and external sources.
- > Assist with the development and implementation of systems in order to respond to internal and external demands for statistical data and analysis on short, medium and long term basis.
- > Within agreed priorities and using both quantitative and qualitative data, initiate, prepare and disseminate research reports on policy issues identified from a number of sources including Citizens Advice Scotland evidence bases.
- > Assist with the development policies and procedures for using research and statistics across the organisation and implement them across all sections.
- > Seek to continually improve and develop the recording, analysis and dissemination of statistics and data collated by the service.
- > Actively promote, communicate, and disseminate research findings internally and externally via appropriate mechanisms.
- > Assist in commissioning and project managing research projects carried out by external parties on behalf of Citizens Advice Scotland.
- > Assist Policy Officers and other Citizens Advice Scotland colleagues to design and undertake research in different policy areas.
- > Participate in planning and reporting of the work of the research unit including annual planning and maintenance of budgets.
- > Provide guidance, and assistance to Citizens Advice Scotland staff on questionnaire design, data collection, statistical recording and research methodologies, and how it can be utilised across different policy areas.
- > Where relevant, work with Citizens advice in England and Wales, other partner organisations, and external stakeholders on the production of any joint research/evidence reports.
- > Support the Senior Research Officers where required.
- > Undertake any other duties as may reasonably be required by the Coordination and Planning Manager.



**Accountability and Decision Making**

- > Works within accepted research methodologies, and within the evidence base available.

**Problem solving and Complexity**

- > Problems relate to choices within the research environment which will largely be judgement based on experience.
- > There is some latitude for discretion as there is not always a right or wrong answer.

The above job description is not exhaustive and is clarified to include broad duties inherent in the post.

## Person specification

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### Knowledge, skills and experience

#### Essential

- > Relevant degree level qualification or professional experience in a similar role.
- > Clear ability and knowledge of analysing complex material and a variety of different data sources.
- > Comfortable in using Excel, particularly pivot tables.
- > Experience of managing research projects within a work setting.
- > Demonstrable experience and knowledge of quantitative and qualitative statistical and data analysis, research methodologies and approaches, research tools including statistical packages outwith academic studies.
- > Demonstrable ability to effectively summarise and present in a clear concise manner to a range of audiences.
- > Experience of initiating and developing research proposals into research projects outwith academic studies.
- > Experience of writing clear and concise research reports aimed at a range of audiences out with academic studies.
- > Experience and ability of being able to organise workload priorities and meeting deadlines both individually and within a team including delegating work appropriately.
- > Good analytical thinker with ability to bring forward clear solution-based approaches to work.

#### Desirable

- > Relevant professional qualification or equivalent experience
- > Knowledge of relevant policy issues that impact on the clients of the citizens advice service
- > Ability to work on own initiative with minimal supervision

## Employee benefits

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Our people make Citizens Advice Scotland a great place to work and we offer a wide range of benefits to value their contributions. To get an idea of what benefits you receive when working with us, we have listed a few examples below.

### Work-life balance



- > **Flexible working and flexitime:** get the flexibility as to how and when you work to suit both your and the organisation's needs.
- > **Generous annual leave:** spend time away from the office to relax and unwind with a total of 40 days leave per year.

### Health and wellbeing



- > **My Gym Discounts:** join gyms, health clubs, leisure centres, yoga studios, boot camps and outdoor activities at a discounted rate.

### Financial benefits



- > **Pension scheme:** save for your future with an 8% employer and 4% employee contribution.
- > **Capital Credit Union:** access ethical financial services with a credit union membership.

### Other benefits



- > **Season ticket loan:** take out an interest-free season ticket loan to save on travelling to and from work
- > **Salary sacrifice schemes:** in addition to Cycle2Work and Childcare Vouchers, sign up to a scheme to purchase everyday technology.
- > **Recognition scheme:** thank and reward your colleagues who have gone the extra mile or delivered a great piece of work.

When joining Citizens Advice Scotland you have access to many other great benefits, all aiming to support the organisation's biggest asset – our people.

[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)



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[CitizensAdviceScotland](https://www.facebook.com/CitizensAdviceScotland)

The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux – Citizens Advice Scotland. Scottish charity (SC016637) and company limited by guarantee (89892)