JOB DESCRIPTION

Role:	**Policy & Insight Associate**
Location:	The role will be based primarily remotely with some travel to Oxford SU's office and Oxford colleges.
Working hours:	Casual; no set or standard hours per week but expected to average around 4 hours a week and not exceed 8 hours a week during term time (with scope for additional work outside term time as discussed). We know that some students may not get permission to work during term time, and we will factor this in for the right candidates.
Contract:	This is a zero-hours, casual contract until 31st July 2027. Hours will vary depending on the project work allocated and are not guaranteed every week. We expect the role to start as early as Week 9 of Michaelmas Term 2026, with most project work taking place in Hilary Term 2027.
Salary:	Oxford Living Wage (currently £14.06 per hour) paid 1 month in arrears, plus holiday pay at 12.07% of your wage.

Oxford SU is a student-led organisation. You'll be working with exceptional elected leaders and student volunteers across a wide range of projects, balancing your experience and expertise with active student representation and input. We work in a high-support, high-challenge environment: we are a small and relatively flat staff team, which means our staff use their initiative and work together as a high performing team.

Policy & Insight Associates are paid student researchers who build the evidence behind Oxford SU's representation and policy work. They carry out structured research projects commissioned by our elected Presidents, which feed into University and College committees and the SU's longer-term advocacy. This role is separate from our Impact Associates, who support the Conference of Common Rooms (CCR).

We are looking for two Policy & Insight Associates. Each Associate will be allocated defined, time-bound research projects. Initially, one Associate will mainly support projects commissioned by the President for Postgraduates, and the other will mainly support projects commissioned by the President for Welfare, Equity & Inclusion. Further projects may be allocated during the year as priorities arise from officer mandates, University and College committee work, Student Voice priorities and institutional consultations.

What you will work on

Each project comes with a short brief agreed before work starts, setting out the commissioning President, the research question, your tasks and deliverables, approved hours, timeline, and any ethics or training requirements. Projects this year are likely to cover themes such as:

- postgraduate education and research experience, including funding and suspensions
- academic workload, assessment timing and student wellbeing
- college and University facilities and access
- equality, diversity and inclusion, and student views and values

Surveys and access to participants will mainly be arranged through the SU's existing networks, including Divisional and Course Representatives, Common Rooms and University staff, so that your time is spent on research, analysis and producing clear outputs.

You'll be part of the Student Voice team, which will mentor and supervise you and give you access to the tools and training you need. This may include induction and training in CoSy, research ethics and informed consent, data protection and confidentiality, safeguarding where relevant, survey and interview methods, and data analysis. You'll work closely with the commissioning President on each project, and you'll also be encouraged to engage with other opportunities across the SU. No previous formal research experience is required. You will be line managed by Student Voice Coordinator.

Job Purpose

To carry out defined research projects that give Oxford SU's elected officers the evidence they need to represent students, by collecting, analysing and presenting student insight that feeds into University and College decision-making.

Responsibilities

Carrying out the research projects allocated by the Student Voice team and commissioning officers, collecting and analysing the evidence elected officers need to represent students effectively.

- Plan and deliver agreed research tasks, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, desk research and structured data collection
- Help design or refine research questions, survey and interview questions, and data collection tools
- Collect, record and check information accurately, and prepare clean, well-organised datasets that others can use
- Analyse qualitative and quantitative data, including thematic coding and descriptive analysis, identifying patterns, differences between student groups and the limits of the evidence
- Produce clear outputs such as evidence summaries, briefings, datasets and student-facing information resources, and contribute to recommendations led by elected officers
- Work with Divisional and Course Representatives, Common Rooms and University staff who help reach students and distribute research
- Follow research ethics requirements, including University ethics (CUREC) approval and informed consent where needed, and handle personal data in line with GDPR and Oxford SU policies
- Keep the Student Voice team and commissioning officers updated on progress, risks and deadlines
- Any other duties commensurate with the role

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	• None	• Study involving research, data or evidence (any subject)
Experience	• Experience, from study, work, volunteering, representation or societies, of gathering information and drawing conclusions from it • Experience of managing your own work to deadlines • Lived experience of studying at Oxford University	• Experience of surveys, interviews, focus groups or other research methods, for example in a dissertation or project • Experience of qualitative coding or thematic analysis • Experience of student representation, campaigning or working with elected officers • Experience of writing briefings, reports or summaries
Skills, Knowledge & Expertise	• Ability to analyse information and identify patterns, themes and gaps • Good research judgement, including understanding what evidence can and cannot show • Clear, concise written communication • Organised, with attention to detail when recording and checking data • Basic confidence using Excel or similar tools to organise data	• Confidence with descriptive statistics or data visualisation • Understanding of how the University, its divisions, departments and colleges work • Understanding of research ethics, confidentiality and GDPR • Knowledge of postgraduate research or academic workload issues
Values & Behaviours	• Passionate about supporting and enhancing the student experience • Curious, with the initiative to take ownership of defined tasks • Willing to learn new research methods and take part in training • Collaborative and team-oriented, fostering a positive and inclusive work environment • High-support, high-challenge approach to working as part of a team • Ethical and acts with integrity in all interactions and decisions, including handling confidential information and representing views fairly	• A commitment to supporting and enhancing student leadership • Passionate about social justice and social change • Passionate about access and social mobility in higher education

Date Completed:	November 2026