

Project: PhD student placement opportunity

Title: Environmental Principles Guidance

Background:

This role presents an exciting opportunity to help develop and strengthen environmental law in Wales. This is essential in tackling the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and harm to the environment such as pollution. The January 2024 'Securing a Sustainable Future' White Paper set out proposals to introduce a Bill into the Welsh Parliament to:

- embed environmental principles into Welsh law and strategic policy making,
- strengthen environmental governance in Wales by establishing a governance body to oversee compliance with environmental law by Welsh public authorities, and
- introduce a new and ambitious biodiversity targets framework to combat the ongoing nature emergency.

Purpose of the Post:

The post-holder will have a key role in this interesting and important agenda by undertaking research, compiling information and producing reports to support the Bill's development. This high-profile and topical opportunity will particularly focus on the work to incorporate environmental principles into Welsh law. This includes working on the guidance on how these principles will be interpreted in Wales. These principles would be similar to, and build upon, those established for the European Union: (i) integration (ii) precautionary (iii) prevention (iv) rectification at source, and (v) that the polluter pays.

The role will involve liaison with a wide range of colleagues and external stakeholders. For example, academia, public bodies, non-governmental organisations and the Welsh and UK governments. With support and direction, the post holder will help to build valuable working relationships.

You'll see at first-hand how legislation is made and join a friendly and supportive team with plenty of opportunities to develop.

The exact tasks required of the post holder will depend on the focus of the team at the time of the placement. It's likely the post holder will have the chance to become involved in other work areas where they have a specific interest.

Details

Skills required:	<u>Key Skills</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent research skills • Ability to analyse and evaluate complex information • Good writing skills, particularly the ability to write clearly, accurately and concisely • Presentation skills • Creative thinking • Ability to apply an innovative approach
Outputs:	As agreed with line manager and in relation to the above priorities.
Host Organisation:	Welsh Government

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Number of posts available:	<p>1</p>
Placement Start Date	<p>Early to mid-2025: The start date will be agreed following successful Welsh Government security clearance. <i>Please note this process can take up to 8 weeks.</i></p>
Development Opportunities	<p>This placement is a great opportunity to enhance existing transferable skills and develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge and understanding of the functioning of the Welsh Government and evidence-based policy development at the highest level. As a result, contributing to the shaping of a future policy direction • skills in the exciting process of preparing, introducing and implementing legislation including an understanding of how the Welsh Parliament works. • expertise in the interesting and important environmental agenda • links with a range of Welsh Government teams and external stakeholders • team working and project management skills <p>With support from their Welsh Government (WG) supervisor, the post-holder will be expected to take responsibility for managing and delivery of work commitments and to work independently within parameters and guidelines provided by the WG.</p> <p>Testimony from a previous PhD placement student in the team:</p> <p><i>“I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working within the team, from day one the work was exciting, topical and engaging. I have learned a huge number of transferable skills over the course of the last three months which are directly applicable to PhD and will allow me to be more employable after I have finished.</i></p> <p><i>I particularly enjoyed the research and report writing aspect of the placement because it has allowed me to consider other ways of conducting research and writing reports other than the standard academic template that we as PhD students are encouraged to adhere to. It has allowed me to develop skills that I would not have attained from just undertaking a PhD and overall enhanced my employability as a researcher and as a professional.</i></p> <p><i>Some of the skills that I developed and attained during this placement include: a professional report writing technique, research skills directly pertaining to environmental legislation (something I would never come across in the area of my PhD), attention to detail when analysing evidence, team work and the development of interpersonal relationships, development of an understanding of a big picture when completing a task and enhancement of both my written and verbal communication.”</i></p>
Duration, location, working arrangements and environment:	<p>The placement is likely to be available on a full-time or part-time basis and is normally based with the policy team in one of Welsh Government’s regional offices. In line with the flexible working policy, the post-holder would be able to work from home, and office working would also be an option.</p> <p>Post-holders will be provided with a laptop to facilitate regular contact with colleagues. The policy team will ensure the post-holder is fully supported during the placement.</p>

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	<p>The placement will be for a 3-month period and will focus on delivering the objectives set out in the job specification. The option to extend for a further 3 months is possible if the project team feel there is merit in doing so and if it is compatible with the post-holder's university research schedule and Doctoral Training Programme (DTP)/Centres for Doctoral Training (CDT) arrangements.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is a bilingual organisation. Although Welsh language skills are not essential for this post, they would be an asset.</p>
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Application criteria	<p>Welsh Government can only accept applications to the PhD student placement programme from registered PhD students living in the UK.</p> <p><u>All applicants must seek approval from their academic supervisors before applying.</u></p> <p>International students with a visa are welcome to apply on a part-time basis due to visa restrictions – Visa holders must seek approval from their DTPs / programme coordinators.</p>
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Funding

For PhD students applying for a voluntary placement (Funded - voluntary): Funding will be provided by Welsh Government and will match the current UKRI PhD stipend rate, payable in one sum at the beginning of the placement (to minimise financial administration). The payment process aims to complement PhD student university stipend payment structures, i.e. WG pay the university and the funds are passed-on to the student's account. To avoid delays to students receiving payments, it is preferable that the student's PhD stipend is not paused during the placement and that, instead, it continues and that WG reimburse the university for the time the student is not undertaking research. **Please note: we do not pay students directly.**

For PhD students with a placement requirement as an essential part of their PhD programme / PIPS (Unpaid - required placement): Funding for this type of placement is expected to be covered by the research council as per the applicant's programme. Welsh Government will pay the cost of hotel, subsistence, travelling and any other additional expenses incurred by the PhD candidate in connection with the Project Support Services, subject to the limits in Welsh Government's travel and subsistence policy.

Contact

Name:	<p>Contact Dr Simon Baldwin (Head of Research & innovation) via researchplacements@gov.wales</p> <p>The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our <u>Privacy Notice</u> explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy.</p>
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Application process

Please submit CV and covering letter to Simon Baldwin and indicate the type of placement (funded – voluntary or Unpaid – required placement) and the type of role: full or part-time.

NOTE: All applicants must confirm that they have received authorisation to undertake a placement from their academic supervisor and/or programme coordinator.



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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding

If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of the placement programme, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you are to be successful, please contact the research and innovation team via the email provided as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.