

Apprentice Economist - Policy Analysis

Recruitment pack

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A message from our CEO, Vivienne Stern

Universities UK (UUK) is the collective voice of universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We bring them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

My journey at UUK started as a Parliamentary Officer and I have progressed through the organisation from there, with the opportunity to work across a range of different teams, up to becoming CEO. This is testament to the fact that at UUK we support our people to succeed, helping us achieve our ambitious goals as an organisation as a result.

At UUK we believe that supporting our people to succeed involves prioritising wellbeing at work and being an inclusive employer. We employ a total of just under 160 staff across the UUK Group. In our 2023 staff survey, I am proud that we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

I am continually inspired by the passion and talent of the team at UUK. If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and its impact on wider society, then, in my opinion, there is no better place to do it than here.

Who are we?

At Universities UK, we harness the power of the UK's universities and create the conditions for them to thrive. We are the collective voice of 142 universities, bringing them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

This mission forms the core of our [strategic plan](#) which runs to 2030 and sets out our ambitions for the sector. Our influence, convening power, and insight will enable our universities to:

- transform the lives of more people from the UK and around the world through high-quality education.
- drive greater growth and prosperity through the knowledge and skills they generate, creating places that allow communities to flourish.
- be globally competitive centres of research, at the forefront of making ground-breaking discoveries with the power to change our world.

To help them achieve this we will:

- secure sustainable funding that enables our universities to serve society better.
- build trust and confidence that our universities are a national asset to be proud of and are acting in the best interests of society.



Role description

Post title: Apprentice Economist - Policy Analysis

Responsible to: Policy Adviser (Analysis)

Accountable to: Head of Analysis

Salary: London Living Wage (currently £26,936 pa and updated in February each year). All the costs of your study and associated travel costs will be paid for as part of this role

Location: London. Universities UK operates a hybrid working policy with the opportunity to work from home and in the office. Typically employees will work remotely on average 60% of their working week. All employees are welcome to use the contractual office for their whole working week if that is their preference.

Contract: Fixed-term (4 years, aligned to apprenticeship duration)

Job summary: We are looking for an inquisitive, data-driven individual to join the UUK policy team as an Apprentice Economist. This role is designed for someone looking to launch a career in policy and economics, combining high-impact work at the heart of the UK higher education sector with a formal degree-level apprenticeship delivered by the University of Kent.

You will work within the UUK analysis team delivering robust, evidence-based insights that underpin UUK's influencing work. This role is adapted from the responsibilities of the Policy Officer (Analysis) role, scaled for an Economics degree apprenticeship pathway with structured learning and supported delivery. You will gain practical experience in

- Data analysis, visualisation, modelling and interpretation
- Data security, privacy, and ethics
- Problem-solving and analytical thinking
- Higher Education policy issues, with the chance to influence government decisions on economic growth, opportunity, industrial strategy and more.
- Communication and stakeholder collaboration
- Learning and continuous development

About the team: UUK's Policy Group is a team of around 25 staff working in multi-disciplinary teams to influence policies that matter to universities.

The analysis function plays a critical role in ensuring policy positions are grounded in credible evidence and communicated effectively to government, stakeholders, and the public.

Eligibility requirements: Be 18 years or older before the start date (September 2026)

Be a UK resident or have the right live and work in the UK for the entire duration of the programme

Not be registered on another government-funded course ending August 2026 or later

Meet the University of Kent's requirements for the degree apprenticeship programme, which are to hold at least five GCSE passes (or equivalent), including Mathematics at grade B / 6 or above and English at grade 4 or above. You are also required to have achieved at least 120 UCAS points at A level (equivalent to three Bs).

Hold (or be predicted to hold) at least one A Level or equivalent qualification, in Mathematics

Apprenticeship programme and learning: You will complete a degree apprenticeship, combining structured learning with on-the-job delivery.

Over this four year programme, you will work towards a BSc economics and a Professional Economist Degree Apprenticeship (ST0603). Further information is available from the [University of Kent](#).

Study time: This role is set at 0.75 FTE on the job training and 0.25 formal study, to protect time for apprenticeship learning and study.

Training and development: As well as the degree apprenticeship programme, UUK will provide::

- Structured on-the-job training and mentoring from your line manager
- Access to a wider community of analysts across UUK, and stakeholders including government and Universities, with opportunities to learn from others
- Oversight, coaching, and strategic direction from the Head of Analysis
- The opportunity to develop a portfolio of analytical work demonstrating applied skills, with the potential to publish your analysis.

Main responsibilities:

As an apprentice, your role is a blend of practical contribution and structured learning. You will:

- Support Policy with Economic Evidence: Apply economic theory and analytical skills to address policy challenges, helping to explore issues affecting universities, staff, and students.
- Manipulate Data: Assist in gathering, interpreting, manipulating and modelling data to identify trends and generate insights that inform UUK's policy positions.
- Communicate and Visualise: Help produce clear, accessible analysis and communicate this through accessible outputs — including data visualisations and briefings—for specialist and non-specialist audiences and media enquiries.
- Share Knowledge: Proactively share updates on new research methods and output or changes in data collections within the team as your expertise grows.
- Commit to Professional Development: Dedicate 25% of your time to your degree-level studies, ensuring that new techniques learned in your course are applied directly to UUK projects.
- Collaborate on a range of projects: Balance multiple priorities across different policy issues, working closely with colleagues to ensure a robust analytical foundation for our advocacy.

Compliance and governance

- to take responsibility for own health and safety in line with UUK H&S policy and current legislation and undertake such responsibilities as they relate to any employees, volunteers or contractors for which the post is responsible.
- to ensure compliance with UUK's internal procedures and all external legal requirements.

Personal effectiveness

- to take responsibility as far as is practical for own personal development to ensure that personal knowledge and skills are updated to ensure effectiveness in meeting work objectives.

General

- to show respect to colleagues, external partners and stakeholders, and to understand and adhere to UUK's Equal Opportunity policy, UUK Staff Standards of Conduct, and UUK's organisational capabilities.
- to work collegially, and to support all the teams which the post has contact with, in achieving the organisation's objectives.
- any other duties commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the necessary experience and/or training.
- This job description will be reviewed and amended in the light of changing professional demands. A job description is not a rigid or inflexible document but acts to provide guidelines to the duties expected while in post.

Person specification

Essential skills:

Essential skills	Assessment
<u>Analytical aptitude</u> : Ability to interpret data and draw logical conclusions, with demonstrable interest in data, analysis, or evidence-led decision-making.	Application form, Interview, Test
<u>Communication</u> : Ability to explain ideas clearly in writing and verbally. Willingness to learn how to present complex information accessibly, tailor communications and explain technical findings clearly to a wide range of audiences	Application form, Interview, Test
<u>Organisation and motivation</u> : Ability to manage time effectively across work and study commitments. Proactive approach to learning and professional development	Application form, Interview
<u>Collaboration and delivery</u> : Willingness to build positive and constructive relationships across skills and seniority, within and outside the organisation.	Application form, Interview
<u>Values</u> : Understanding of, and commitment to, UUK values including those related to equality and diversity as set out in UUK's Equal Opportunity Policy.	Interview

Desirable skills:

Desirable skills	Assessed by
Knowledge or experience of working with stakeholders to influence policy.	Application form, Interview

Working at UUK: Benefits

If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and impact wider society, joining our team is a great opportunity.

Universities play a huge part in our everyday lives, and we want to help them make even more of a difference. We bring together leaders of UK universities to discuss higher education issues and represent and campaign on their behalf to the government, business, the media and beyond.

People drive our success, and we value everyone's work.

Universities UK operates a hybrid working framework involving the opportunity to work from home and in the office. There will be a small number of roles where employees will be required to work from an office, but typically the majority of employees will be able to work remotely on average 60% of their working week. All employees are welcome to use their contractual office for their whole working week if that is their preference.

"I joined Universities UK three months after leaving university, and I immediately felt so welcomed and supported. I've been given opportunities to develop new skills, get involved in such a variety of interesting projects and work with colleagues across the organisation. It's a really friendly place to work and I feel trusted and valued to put my own views and ideas into practice."

Sofia Henderson, Senior Content Producer

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT STAFF BENEFITS AND WELLBEING, VISIT OUR [WORKING AT UUK PAGE](#)

Staff benefits

Leave



- 27 days annual leave rising to 30 days after 3 years' service and 32 days after 5 years' service plus bank holidays.
- 4 closure days between Christmas and New year.
- 2 days paid leave each year for volunteering activities

Well being



- Access to 24 hour 7 day a week Employee Assistant Programme which extends access to close family.
- Virtual Medical Care – 24 hour access to GP consultations.
- Mental Health First Aiders.
- Staff network groups.

Financial wellbeing



- Interest free season ticket loans after 6 months.
- Staff benefit fund loan scheme
- 'learn for you' – claim £75 each year tax free towards hobbies and activities outside of work.
- Funding support for continuing development, up to 2/3 of course costs paid with the remaining funded through an interest free loan recovered through monthly pay.
- Generous pension scheme (USS or SAUL depending on role).
- Salary sacrifice Cyclescheme.
- Salary progression plans.
- a £45 contribution every two years towards eye tests and the purchase of glasses where required.

Home working



- Hybrid Working policy – 40% of time averaged over a month to be spent in the office or meeting face to face with stakeholders, allowing 60% of time to be worked from home.
- Support for homeworking set up.

External schemes



- Charity worker discounts.
- Apple hardware discount scheme.
- Access to Able Futures for mental wellbeing support.

Our office facilities



- Tea/coffee/milk provided for refreshments.
- Kitchens available in all offices with access to fridges and microwaves.
- Shower facilities available (London and Cardiff).
- Cycle storage facilities.



Equality, diversity and inclusion

We want every member of staff to feel that they belong, can be themselves and that their opinion counts.

We can only reach our ambitious goals with multi-skilled, multi-experienced teams. Different perspectives make our work better.

What unites us is a passion for higher education and the enthusiasm to spread the message about the positive impacts UK universities have on our society.

We are committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and do not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership. We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join UUK.

An equal, inclusive and diverse place to work

Equality, diversity and inclusion help create new ideas and approaches to teaching, learning and research. With that in mind, we're building a culture where difference is valued. We're constantly evolving the programmes and tools that help all employees grow and manage rewarding careers.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT UNIVERSITIES UK, READ OUR [INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN](#)

Staff engagement and wellbeing at work

Staff engagement

In our 2023 staff survey, we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

Wellbeing at work

We care about the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff. Having open and honest conversations about mental health is important to us. Our commitment to staff wellbeing includes:

- Training some members of staff to become mental health first aiders so they are there for colleagues who need support and advice.
- Raising awareness by recognising Mental Health Awareness Week with external speakers, opportunities to come together and talk and take part in activities
- Training for managers and all staff on mental health awareness
- Employee Assistance support helpline.



Universities UK is the collective voice of 142 universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our mission is to create the conditions for

UK universities to be the best in the world; maximising their positive impact locally, nationally and globally.

Universities UK acts on behalf of universities, represented by their heads of institution



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