

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title:** Group Senior Policy and Research Officer

**Responsible to:** Group Director of Policy and Research

**Salary:** SP 31

**Hours of work** 37 hours per week but we are open to consider part-time and flexible working

**Location:** Primary Site Orpington, plus all other sites part of the London and South East Education Group. We currently operate a hybrid working arrangement which includes a blend of office and remote working.

**London and South East Education Group**

London & South East Education Group which comprises, London South East Colleges (LSEC) is a leading further and higher education provider, with seven campuses across Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lambeth, 13-school Multi-Academy Trust (London South East Academies Trust) and a charity (LASER Education Foundation). As set out in our 2024-2030 Group Strategy, we are committed to transforming lives through the power of learning.

The College delivers a wide range of vocational courses, apprenticeships and degree programmes to over 12,000 students, designed to meet employer and industry needs. The College is also the sponsor of London South East Academies Trust, a growing Multi-Academy which is rapidly developing a track record of academic and financial success. With a combined turnover of circa £150m and ambitious growth plans of the group, there has never been a better time to join this exciting organisation.

As anchor institutions in our communities, we generate significant social value and support social mobility for all. Central to this is a focus on progression, ensuring that every learner in every setting, regardless of background or educational stage, develops the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to succeed.

The College, Trust and Foundation play a vital role in this mission. With state-of-the-art facilities, community support, strong partnerships with employers and universities, we equip students with the skills, confidence and opportunities needed for success as they transition and progress through school and post 16 through vocational education to positive destinations careers and their lives. London South East Colleges is a successful and innovative College operating with sites across Bromley, Bexley, Orpington, Greenwich and Lambeth. With nearly 12,000 students and 1,000 members of staff, the College is a major employer in the area and makes a significant impact on the lives and future prospects of its learners who travel from across London to study with us.

**Overall job purpose**

You will carry out a range of research and policy-related projects to further the work of the Group including London South East Colleges, London South East Academies Trust and LASER Foundation. This will include:

* Designing and undertaking research and evaluation projects
* Providing a range of policy advice and briefings
* Developing and using an evidence base to support the wider work of the Group

This role will be key in helping us develop our policy, research and insights team, working in a small dynamic team working across the Trust’s schools and London South East Colleges. This is an ideal opportunity for someone with a number of years’ experience in an applied policy and research setting to use their skills to help the organisation support our learners and staff.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Scan the external policy and institutional environment for opportunities to influence decision makers and change in line with the Group’s strategic objectives.
2. Identify, research and support the engagement of key decision makers and influencers, in target policy and development areas.
3. To lead in setting up and managing research projects on a variety of topics to support the Group PMO across our five group strategic projects, using the most appropriate research methods, ensuring projects are delivered on time and produce learning outcomes.
4. As a key member of the research unit to assist and lead on developing a research culture across the Group, though the establishment of a research strategy and framework.
5. To provide operational support and services in preparing correspondence and communications to various internal and external stakeholders, co-ordinating responses for the CEO.
6. To play a key role in the development of strategic projects and policies supporting the Group CEO Directorate on the development of policy briefings for political and wider stakeholders, supporting targeted stakeholder communications, researching Group sector issues and preparing high quality briefing materials as directed.

**Key Accountabilities**

1. To design, deliver and be responsible for the day-to-day management of a mix of quantitative and qualitative research projects on a variety of topics using the most appropriate research methods to produce findings which improve our understanding of the Group’s work and ways to improve learner outcomes. To promote and disseminate findings to ensure key learning feeds into development of projects and programmes.
2. To oversee the collection of data to measure our Group social value and promote a narrative about our social impact
3. To support the development of a research culture across the Group, supporting staff undertaking research, running the Trust Research Programme, and other actions in line with the research culture implementation plan.
4. To maintain a watching brief on relevant policy developments and research findings and produce summaries of policy documents, research reports and outputs for senior colleagues across the Group. To critically review policy and research to draw out implications for practice.
5. To lead the organisation’s input to policy consultations and other external briefing as required.
6. To report on the progress towards the Group’s strategic objectives.
7. To evaluate projects and programmes to build an evidence base of our impact to support income generation via the LASER Foundation.
8. To assist in the development of strategic projects and policies, through the use of evidence and analysis
9. To keep up to date with internal and external evidence to inform institutional strategies.
10. Assist in the development of ongoing relationships with partners, collaborators and key stakeholders in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, and represent the Group externally.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **EXPERIENCE and SKILLS** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| A degree or equivalent in a relevant subject | X |  |
| Experience of working in a relevant applied policy or research related role, preferably within an educational organisation | X |  |
| Experience of designing and leading policy research or evaluation projects translating policy requirements into robust specifications that will meet customer needs. | X |  |
| Experience of using a range of research methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative and evaluation methods in the design, delivery and management of research projects. | X |  |
| Proven ability to rapidly understand political narratives and policy opportunities |  | X |
| Experience of drawing on research evidence and quickly distilling the key points for particular audiences  | X |  |
| Experience of engaging decision makers to influence change |  | X |
| Excellent communication skills, both oral and written | X |  |
| Experience of preparing policy-related briefs, consultation submissions and other relevant written material to a high standard | X |  |
| Excellent IT Skills across MS Office applications, statistical analysis software, and aptitude to use new technology and systems.  | X |  |
| Knowledge of research or policy areas relevant to teaching, educational disadvantage, social or economic issues.  |  | X |
| **PERSONAL QUALITIES** |  |
| Motivated, committed, and with a deep empathy for our mission. |  X |  |
| Ability to move rapidly between different thematic areas, and between detail and the big picture. | X |  |
| Methodical and well-organised, able to juggle multiple priorities and to work to short deadlines | X |  |
| Able to work collaboratively with colleagues from across the organisation, from frontline staff to senior management. | X |  |
| Ability to network and communicate actively and effectively with a wide range of people, face-to-face and through other media, in a variety of formal and informal situations. | X |  |
| Ability to present complex information in understandable formats, and to identify and convey key messages. | X |  |
| Energetic, enthusiastic and tenacious | X |  |
| Demonstrate personal integrity at all times | X |  |
| Willing to work outside normal office hours, e.g. to attend breakfast and evening events | X |  |