

# Advantage West Midlands

## Job Description and Person Specification

### 1. Particulars of the Job

Job Title & Location: Research Assistant  
Level 3, Millennium Point, Curzon St, Birmingham

Manager's Title & Location: Senior Research Analyst  
Level 3, Millennium Point, Curzon St, Birmingham

Directorate/Team: West Midlands Regional Observatory

Date Description prepared: 08 April 2010

Approved by Job Holder: **Date:**

Approved by Manager: **Date:**

### 2. Job Description

#### 2.1 Context

- The Regional Observatory is an independent organization, established in September 2002. The Observatory reports to a Partnership Board composed of key regional stakeholders including the West Midland Local Government Association, the Regional Assembly, the Government Office for the West Midlands, Advantage West Midlands and many others
- The purpose of the Observatory is to facilitate the adoption of evidence-based policy through the more effective identification, qualification and dissemination of regional data and intelligence. It aims to provide high quality and timely information to those who need it, in a form that is both accessible and usable
- The Observatory achieves its objectives in partnership with regional and sub-regional organisations. Operating under a principle of subsidiarity, it supplements rather than replaces the activities of partners, and strives to act as a catalyst for joined-up thinking and action in the region. Support from partners, in terms of access to both people and to data and intelligence resources will be an essential contribution towards our success

#### 2.2 Job Purpose

- To provide technical and administrative support to the Research Team, especially in the activities of dataset compilation and maintenance, report presentation and enquiry handling.

## **2.3 Main Duties and Responsibilities**

- To source, assemble and maintain datasets. (30%)
- To perform analysis of datasets using both quantitative and qualitative techniques and to present the results of this analysis in tabulated, graphical or textual form. (25%)
- To prepare or assist in the preparation of reports. (25%)
- To provide general support to the Research Team, especially in areas such as handling research enquiries, dealing with project paperwork and providing support to research steering groups. (20%)

NB As the job evolves these percentages are likely to change.

## **2.4 Specific or Detailed Responsibilities**

### **Supporting Research Work**

- Source, assemble and catalogue data and intelligence resources.
- Develop, maintain and manage associated datasets on the Observatory's IT systems.
- Prepare tables, charts and supporting graphics.
- Provide analysis, commentary and interpretation of issues.
- Produce high quality reports to Observatory standards.
- Contribute to the emerging regional catalogue of data and intelligence resources held on the Observatory's website.

### **Support Work**

- Develop and maintain website content in defined areas to reflect the developing work of the WMRO Research Team.
- Produce good quality minutes for any research project steering group (or similar) meetings.
- Any other reasonable activity asked.

## **2.5 Resources**

- None

## **3. Person Specification** (for full competence, not all required on entry)

### **3.1 Education & Formal Qualifications**

- NVQ level 3 (e.g. 'A' levels or ONC/OND), in a subject with numerical content, or equivalent work experience.
- GCSE English & Maths, grade C or above.

### **3.2 Work Experience/Background**

- One year's experience in a similar role, undertaking data analysis, compiling, interpreting and reporting on the results. Candidates newly graduated will also be considered where they have gained relevant experience during their studies.

### **3.3 Specific skills, aptitudes, knowledge**

- Computer literacy, including a good working knowledge of MS Excel, Word and PowerPoint.
- Ability to use the internet as a tool to find and access data and intelligence resources
- Good communication (both oral and written) and presentation skills, including the ability to produce reports to a good professional standard.
- Good problem solving skills, including the ability to think laterally and to find innovative solutions to difficult problems.
- Good team working skills and the ability to create and maintain good relationships with staff both in and outside the Observatory.
- Good attention to detail, with the ability to produce work with low levels of errors.

### **3.4 Personal Qualities**

- Ability to work flexibly and to be comfortable with multiple tasks to perform and different work streams to support.
- A customer-focused outlook with a desire to interact with our customers and clients.
- A good eye for detail with the patience to ensure that both graphical work and data supply have low levels of errors.
- Well organised with good time management skills.