



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

VACANCY IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT INFORMATION CENTRE

REVIEWING THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT'S PUBLIC PETITIONS SYSTEM Temporary position for three months (July to September)

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a Masters or PHD student to work on a project for a high-profile and influential Scottish Parliament Committee, alongside researchers in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe).

This could particularly suit a student currently studying for a Masters degree looking to undertake relevant summer work, with the potential to use the experience as part of their Masters Dissertation. The annual salary for the post is £19,161 (paid on a pro-rata basis).

About the project

Interest and engagement in Scottish politics has rarely been higher. The Scottish Parliament's [Public Petitions Committee](#) is one of the key ways any member of the public can put their own issues in front of Scottish politicians, and try and make a difference. One of the early innovations of the Parliament was the e-petitioning system, which Napier University helped to establish.

The Committee now wants to review its work since 2009, look at how it engages with the public, how its work compares to other petitions committees, to do a statistical analysis of the people who have brought forward petitions and get feedback on their experiences.

The Committee has agreed that a paid 3 month student placement will take forward this work, supervised by researchers in SPICe. The work that the student does will form the basis of a final report to the Committee, prepared by SPICe.

As well as taking part in the project, the successful candidate will be working within one of the busiest parts of the Scottish Parliamentary Service during a very interesting time in Scottish politics. There will be opportunities to see the Parliament's work on the Scottish budget, attend events like First Ministers' Questions, and gain first-hand experience of working in a political environment.

About SPICe and the Public Petitions Committee

The SPICe Research Service aims to provide impartial, accurate and comprehensive briefing on all subjects within the Parliament's legislative competence, and to cover other subjects to the level required by parliamentary business. This service is

provided on an impartial basis to Members of all political parties. This placement will be within the Financial Scrutiny Unit in SPICe.

The Public Petitions Committee's role is to consider all public petitions lodged to the Scottish Parliament. The Committee is made up of a cross-party group of Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs).

Student specification

Candidates should be knowledgeable about, and have an interest in, Scottish politics, and the workings of the Parliament. However, a degree specialism in this area is not necessary.

Candidates should be used to dealing with large amounts of information and data and have the ability to communicate their findings in a clear and straightforward manner. Experience in data visualisation would be useful, but not essential.

Security

Security checks are required to work at the Parliament – this usually takes around two weeks.

Timings

It is expected that the placement will start in early July 2015, running for three months to the end of September.

Remuneration

The post will be paid on a pro-rata basis. The annual salary for a post of this type is £19,161. Given that the post is paid, the successful candidate will be expected to cover the cost of commuting to the Parliament. However, all travel and expenses incurred on behalf of the project will be covered by the Parliament.

How to apply

You should send a CV and short covering letter (no more than 2 sides of A4) via email to Allan Campbell, Senior Researcher in the Financial Scrutiny Unit, allan.campbell@scottish.parliament.uk, by Friday 5 June.

Likewise, if you have any questions prior to applying, please contact Allan at that email address, or by Telephone, to 0131 348 5459.