



# Value for Money analyst opportunities



National Audit Office

### Introduction

Thank you for your interest in joining the National Audit Office as a Value for Money analyst. This pack will give you a better idea of who we are, what you'll do when you join us, and what we offer. It also gives more details about the application process. We are looking for people with a variety of backgrounds and experience, who have analytical skills and can work in a team to deliver our high-quality, authoritative projects on time. You should be able to think creatively, communicate clearly and evaluate and interpret information from a range of sources to draw evidence-based conclusions.

Our position is unique, and our work is influential. We are independent of government and the civil service and scrutinise public spending for Parliament and on behalf of citizens and taxpayers. This means we work for, and for the good of, everyone in the country. We help society work better – supporting improvements in the way services are delivered right across the public sector. The recommendations from our work can result in financial savings and positive changes in government to improve services and achieve value for money for the taxpayer.

For you, this means interesting work that has value and offers a challenge. You'll contribute to projects that inform debates and influence some of the biggest decisions that government makes. You'll collaborate with dedicated and talented people toward shared and important goals. You will have numerous and varied learning and development opportunities. By taking on new opportunities and challenges, you'll build a rewarding and fascinating career – one that will allow you to make an impact that you, and the nation, can clearly see.

If you like what you see and can meet our requirements, then we want to hear from you.

More about the NAO is available on our [website](#).



## The Role

### Purpose

Each year we produce around **60 major reports** examining government programmes and projects. These reports are multi-method audits focusing on the cost, effectiveness and efficiency of government programmes and projects. Our work must be timely, and we work to clear timetables, typically taking between 3 and 8 months to report.

Our work can cover any area where government spends public money, ranging from **how government is responding to the challenges facing adult social care in England** to how government is **maintaining schools** and **hospital buildings**. Our **lessons learned reports** bring together what we know on important recurring issues to make it easier for others to understand and apply the lessons from our work, such as **government interventions to support companies in distress** and **key issues for government to consider when attempting to increase its efficiency**.

We are recruiting several Value for Money (VFM) analysts. As a VFM analyst you will help us deliver our reports to Parliament. We are looking for people with analytical skills who can work in a team to deliver a project on time. You should be able to think creatively, communicate clearly and evaluate and interpret information from a range of sources to draw evidence-based conclusions. You will work as part of a small team with sector or topic specialists and qualified accountants and contribute throughout from planning to drafting our reports. You will also work on good practice guides drawing together insights from across our published work and help your team reply to correspondence from MPs and members of the public.

### Responsibilities

The main responsibilities include:

- Gathering evidence by applying a variety of methods such as interviews of government officials and other stakeholders, reviewing documents and data sources, and directly collecting data such as through surveys.
- Analysing and interpreting evidence and data (using qualitative and quantitative methods) from many sources on a wide range of public policy topics and sectors.

## 4 CHANGE YOUR WORLD

- Maintaining an evidence trail and providing advice to your team about the quality of evidence we use to develop our findings.
- Presenting findings clearly and succinctly and contributing to planning and drafting value for money reports.
- Providing written and oral briefings to managers and senior staff.
- Gaining insight and knowledge of the bodies we audit and developing and maintaining good relations with them, for example through engaging with analysts in government and with wider external stakeholders.
- Supporting wider assurance work and assisting teams during engagement with Parliament and its select committees, particularly the Public Accounts Committee.
- Providing advice and support to other teams by using your subject matter or analytical expertise and engaging with opportunities to share learning across the NAO.

### **Relationships and accountability**

You will work in a value for money audit team delivering work to time and budget. Your team leader may be a Senior Analyst or Senior Auditor and you will work with other people of all grades. The Senior Audit Manager supports and manages the team to deliver high-quality reports. The Director is accountable for the overall quality and impact of the audit. You will commonly meet and interact with senior people in the NAO and in government bodies.

### **The impact you'll make**

Our work responds to government's plans and particularly those with long-term implications for public spending. Right from the start, you will contribute to work that examines the cost, effectiveness and efficiency of government programmes and projects. All our work helps hold government to account for the way it uses public money and helps to promote improvements in public service delivery. The scope of our impact is huge – from health to education to justice to overseas development to the BBC and Bank of England and much more.



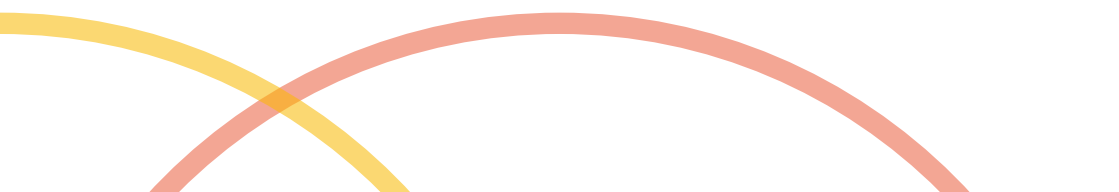
Our recommendations and reports on good practice help government improve public services, and our work led to:

- Positive financial impacts of £1.59 billion in 2023-24;
- £17 of positive financial impact for every pound spent in 2023-24; and
- 95% of our recommendations from April 2019 to March 2023 being accepted or partially accepted by government.

You can find out more about us and our work from [our website](#). Here are some recent examples of our work:

- We examine the performance and costs of core public services across all areas of government, including:
  - [plans to improve urgent and emergency care services](#) such as general practice and ambulance services;
  - [work to improve outcomes for women in the criminal justice system](#); and
  - [how the supported housing system in England works](#) for people with care needs such as older people, people with a learning or physical disability, people at risk of or who have experienced homelessness, or people recovering from drug or alcohol dependence.
- We are focusing on assessing efficiency and productivity within government, and the resilience of public services, operations and infrastructure. We have examined key issues across government including:
  - [how well-prepared government is for extreme weather events](#);
  - [government's counter-fraud capabilities](#); and
  - [government's approach to monitoring and responding to companies in distress](#).
- The government has set out its long-term environmental and climate change ambitions. Our work has considered the value for money risks in this area, and we have:
  - examined the robustness of government's plans to fulfil Net Zero emissions targets with a report on the management and performance of the [Green Homes Grant scheme](#); and
  - reported on how effectively [central government and local authorities in England](#) are collaborating on Net Zero and on the government commitment to [increase tree-planting rates](#) across the UK.

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- We provided timely reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic to help Parliament understand government's response and hold it to account. We continue to provide expert insight to help ensure that appropriate lessons are learned for the future. Highlights include:
    - examining government's plans for recovery with reports on the [employment support grant scheme](#) and backlogs in the [NHS](#) and [criminal justice system](#);
    - updating our [COVID-19 cost tracker](#), setting out government's spending commitments on its response to the pandemic;
    - focusing on government's [procurement activity](#) and the [vaccine programme roll-out](#);
    - drawing out wider learning for government from the pandemic with reports [on initial learning](#) and [risk management](#); and
    - using our audit opinions to point out disclosures made by government departments about uncertainties in their financial positions and issuing extra [reports on accounts](#) to draw issues to Parliament's attention.
  - The Government Major Projects Portfolio, which brings together government's largest, most innovative and riskiest projects and programmes, contains around 180 projects with a total whole-life cost of around £540 billion. We regularly report on the value for money with which government departments and agencies carry out their projects and programmes, building insights and lessons for government along the way including:
    - reporting on long-term infrastructure programmes, such as [Crossrail](#) and the [decommissioning of advanced gas-cooled reactor nuclear power stations](#); and
    - generating lessons from our audit work in recent years to deliver a [framework to review portfolios](#) and lessons learned on [delivering programmes at speed](#).
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## The people we are looking for


### Education/work experience

You should have:

- a minimum of a 2:1 degree in a relevant discipline e.g. social science research methods, management science/operations research, economics, statistics, mathematics or data analytics, or a research based postgraduate qualification; or
- relevant experience in research, analysis or performance audit. This may include but is not limited to experience in management or other consultancy experience, internal audit or working as a researcher.

### Abilities

It will be essential that you can demonstrate the ability to:

- Gather, analyse and interpret evidence from a range of sources on time and to a high standard.
  - Produce clear, well-structured and succinct written work which can be easily understood by non-technical readers.
  - Draw valid and succinct conclusions that are clearly evidence based.
  - Present complex and nuanced findings from your analysis in a way which can be easily understood by various audiences.
  - Engage confidently and communicate effectively with colleagues and clients at all levels, for example to gather evidence or to support knowledge sharing across teams.
  - Work co-operatively and collaboratively as part of a team to deliver our reports.
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### Attributes

In addition, we are looking for the candidates with the following attributes:

- Intellectual curiosity, especially about using a range of evidence sources to answer questions.
- Flexibility to make a significant contribution across a range of topics and outputs in a variety of teams.
- Strong interest in the work of the NAO and public policy across a range of sectors.
- Attention to detail in documenting and maintaining a reliable audit trail for your work to support the delivery of high-quality audits.
- Drive and determination to overcome obstacles, resistance or challenges to achieve goals.
- Commitment to personal development and keeping technical skills up to date.
- Interest in influencing people and identifying opportunities to improve public services.

### Equal opportunities and diversity

#### Disability and Reasonable adjustments

Applicants with a disability who wish their application to be considered under the Disability Confident scheme should confirm this when submitting their application. Under this scheme we guarantee an interview to an applicant with a disability who meets the minimum requirements for the role. You should also let our HR team know if you wish us to consider any Reasonable Adjustments at any stage of the process ([Analyst.recruitment@nao.org.uk](mailto:Analyst.recruitment@nao.org.uk)).

Applicants will not be discriminated against on the grounds of any protected characteristic or any other extraneous factor.

We are open to considering candidates who wish to fill posts on a part-time basis or as a job share. Part-time candidates should indicate their proposed availability, and any flexibility they would either want to have or be able to offer.



## Our People

In our open and inclusive working environment, you'll work with, and learn from, all kinds of people. Here are just a few of our people:



*I joined the NAO as an Analyst in August 2021. I trained as a social researcher, and was attracted to the variety of work the NAO engages in.*



*Since joining I have worked on many high-profile, cross-cutting Value for Money audits including looking at the government's response to COVID-19 and the Home Office's plans to transform the asylum system. I have been able to learn through each stage from scoping to publication and have been able to use technical skills to inform our analysis. It's been great to see the personal impact of my work, as well as reflect on the wider impact of my work on public services.*

*The NAO's emphasis on professional development has encouraged me take on great opportunities to develop my interests in data analytics through training courses. I've been able to grow my network with other colleagues and have regular discussions about my growth in the organisation.*

**Gigs Banga – Senior Analyst**



*I studied Economics at university and trained as an internal auditor before joining the Regulation, Consumers and Competition team at the NAO in 2018. Since joining the office as an Analyst, I have worked on several cross-cutting studies on consumer issues, including on private renting and gambling. My work is interesting and enjoyable – we make meaningful changes to the outcomes people experience in public service markets.*

*The NAO actively supports continuing development and offers a range of secondment opportunities. In 2023, I worked in Parliament and saw first-hand how our work supports accountability, while building up my networks across the civil service and Westminster. I enjoyed regularly working with the media, which developed my communication skills and was a great insight into impactful messaging.*

**Simran Nijjar – Senior Audit Manager**



*I joined the NAO in 2021 as an Analyst and was promoted to Senior Analyst the following year. My background is in biomedicine and I worked as a Public Health Intelligence Specialist within local government. I was initially drawn to the varied profile of work at the NAO and saw it as an opportunity to influence meaningful change across public services by working to hold government to account.*

*In my time at the organisation, I have been able to gain a breadth of experience delivering insightful analytical work as part of the Justice VfM team. As a Senior Analyst, I have the opportunity to lead on areas of work I find both interesting and challenging. There are also a multitude of development and training opportunities that enable me to further my quantitative and qualitative research skills.*

**Darya Bordbar – Senior Analyst**



*I started at the NAO as an Analyst in 2021. Prior to that, I was a history lecturer. Like many here at the NAO, I was drawn by the chance to make a genuine impact for the public good. In less than a year, I helped to produce several reports that have been debated in Parliament. It is evident to me that our work is meaningful.*

*I appreciate the variety of the work. I have had a chance to investigate such diverse issues as the government's response to COVID-19, oversight of arm's-length bodies, management of government property, tax debt, registration of young voters, and propriety in government. The job is certainly not monotonous.*

*I have also already learned a lot in my time at the NAO. In addition to developing my skills while working on reports, I have also become involved in several parts of the Analysis Hub, which offers opportunities to learn new skills and utilise them.*


**Brian Kennedy – Senior Analyst**

## What we offer


### Salary and benefits

- A very competitive salary: c.£42,715 per annum (London) or c.£36,199 per annum (Newcastle).
- You are also eligible to join an excellent **pension scheme** – either the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) or a stakeholder pension scheme known as the Partnership Pension Account.
- 35 days annual leave per annum, inclusive of public holidays. This rises to 40 days after 5 years continuous service.
- We offer flexible working with the current expectation that you will work at least two days a week from one of our offices.

### Learning and development


- We offer a broad range of opportunities to support your learning and development including training on Value for Money audits e.g. how to scope and plan our audits, personal effectiveness skills training and secondments to Parliamentary Select Committees.
  - You will have a performance coach to support your development and can take up mentoring opportunities.
  - You will be able to develop expertise to contribute to more specialist networks across the office. This includes providing analytical insight and support to others outside of your team on your areas of expertise such as analytical techniques and methods, commercial and regulatory issues, digital transformation and data use in the public sector, financial and risk management, major project delivery, and people and operational management.
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### **Other benefits and facilities**

- Modern open plan offices, centrally located in London and Newcastle and equipped with a range of excellent on-site facilities including an on-site canteen.
  - Access to a wide variety of social activities, from quizzes to sporting events, coordinated by the NAO Sports and Social Association.
  - On-site gym in our London office and subsidised gym membership for those based in Newcastle.
  - Free Employee Assistance Program for confidential wellbeing support and advice.
  - Interest Free Season Ticket loan.
  - Cycle to Work Scheme.
  - An online staff discount scheme.
  - The NAO will pay for professional subscriptions, health checks and eyesight tests.
  - In addition to the death in service benefit already provided under the PCSPS, the NAO has an additional death in service benefit. The scheme is non-contributory and equal to 1 year's salary.
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## How to apply

### Please read the following instructions:

- a** Please click on the apply button in the advert.
  - b** Register by filling out your online profile.
  - c** To submit your application, you will need to complete the following screening stages by the closing date:
    - Submit an up-to-date CV.
    - Answer four competency-based questions.
    - Complete the online verbal and numeracy tests.
  - d** Once you have completed the screening stages, please make sure to press the submit button to confirm your application. You will then receive the written case study exercise to complete within 7 days.
  - e** If you pass our screening stage, you will be invited to attend a final interview.
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## Contact us

If you have any queries, please email our recruitment team on: [analyst.recruitment@nao.org.uk](mailto:analyst.recruitment@nao.org.uk)

For further information, please go to our website or follow us on social media:

[www.nao.org.uk/](http://www.nao.org.uk/)

[www.nao.org.uk/report\\_types/value-for-money/](http://www.nao.org.uk/report_types/value-for-money/)

[www.nao.org.uk/insights/](http://www.nao.org.uk/insights/)

[www.nao.org.uk/about-us/jobs/](http://www.nao.org.uk/about-us/jobs/)

[twitter.com/NAOorguk](https://twitter.com/NAOorguk)

