

# INSIGHT – PROFESSIONAL ADVISER

## SECONDMENT OPPORTUNITY

This role provides essential senior-level professional input to engage proactively and constructively with the Scottish education community around Insight and the value it can add to improvement work in schools and local authorities. The requirements are for strong, credible communication and engagement skills, balancing a very outward-facing role and internal working with the Insight project team and other Scottish Government colleagues. The post-holder also needs strong analytical skills and competency at interrogating Insight for reflective enquiry and self-evaluation at school and local-authority levels.

Insight is an online tool for secondary schools and local authorities to benchmark and improve the performance of learners in the senior phase. It has been developed by the Scottish Government and its partners with input from a range of stakeholders including teachers, school leaders, Directors of Education and Quality Improvement Officers. It went live in August 2014 and represents a significant step forward in providing teachers with the data they need to identify areas of success and where improvements can be made. Insight is intended to support the principles and purpose of CfE by helping local authorities and schools to focus on understanding and reducing the gap between higher and lower attainers and raising attainment for all.

For more information see [www.scotland.gov.uk/insightbenchmarking](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/insightbenchmarking).

### **Role:**

This is a dynamic and challenging but highly rewarding role within the Scottish education sector, suited to an experienced educationalist with a passion for achieving practical improvements to learners' experiences and outcomes. Working with a broad range of external partners, the post holder will have a real opportunity to make a difference in an area with considerable political interest.

The post-holder will deliver essential support to the Insight project's Communication, Culture Change and Engagement workstream, promoting awareness and understanding of Insight's potential across the Scottish education system and its constructive use in professional dialogue and evaluation. This work constitutes one of several workstreams within the Insight project, and is essential to leveraging the significant value of the tool, as a catalyst for improvement work in schools and local authorities in the Senior Phase.

### **Main Tasks:**

1. Working with project colleagues, develop and deliver a robust programme of user engagement and support. This will aim to ensure proper awareness and understanding of Insight on an on-going basis across the year. The professional adviser role is key to building momentum, support and confidence in the use of the Insight tool as it continues to evolve in line with user need.
2. Play a 'support and challenge' role with users as part of building positive engagement with Insight and bring about culture change in the robust use of data to support improvement planning for school attainment. Stakeholders include: school staff (Heads, Deputes, Principal Teachers, and others such as guidance teachers); Local authority officers (Quality Improvement Officers, Heads of Service and Directors in education authorities); national stakeholder representatives (e.g. statutory delivery bodies, teaching unions, the college sector, parental organisations etc).
3. Identify opportunities to promote the Insight tool through a wide range of appropriate channels, with a planned programme of communication activities.
4. Maintain and develop wider stakeholder networks, seeking opportunities proactively for positive engagement and participating in relevant events.

5. Maintain and develop a user training strategy for Insight and keep this under review as the Insight tool's features evolve. This will include on-going training with the range of users, work on identifying and assessing their needs, and developing and delivering a plan of training activities, including a suite of tailored training materials.
6. Maintain and develop a robust system to gather user feedback and assess understanding of Insight as a tool to encourage self-evaluation and support performance improvement. Act on user feedback to provide recommendations to the Project Board to incorporate user feedback into the design of the Insight tool.
7. Work with other Project Workstream leads, on an on-going basis, to support further development of the Insight tool in line with user requirements (e.g. around the presentation of its benchmarking measures and the dashboard commentaries to aid user interpretation of performance information). Provide advice to the technical development of the tool to develop the user interface, including recommendations on the options for analysis available to users as they navigate through the Insight data set.
8. Work with the Insight Project Manager and partner organisations to develop and regularly update Culture Change activity plans. This will include on-going assessment of the coherence and consistency of planned activities, identifying gaps and the need for further planned activities as appropriate.

***Essential criteria***

1. High credibility within the professional education sector with significant experience at a senior level in a relevant Insight-user role (whether school or local-authority based).
2. Ability to use constructive challenge, feedback and coaching skills for high-impact stakeholder engagement.
3. Communicate complex information clearly, presenting information and ideas in a clear and positive way via a range of media – at events, stakeholder meetings, in print, online etc.
4. Self-aware, recognising impact on others and creating a positive environment for innovation and learning.

***Desirable criteria:***

1. Experience of successfully planning, managing and delivering projects to achieve culture change.
2. Use of data and relevant evidence, recognising validity and limitations.

**Essential competencies:**

Achieving - being clear about objectives and priorities, focusing on results and managing risks, ensuring that the Insight Project delivers all of the stated objectives on time and to the required level of quality.

Analysis and use of evidence - seeking views and expert advice and thinking creatively and innovatively to ensure analysis reported on the Insight Tool is intuitive and accessible for all.

Working with Others – promoting cooperation, resolving difficulties and conflicts to assist project stakeholders reach consensus on key decisions, working effectively to achieve common goals.

Communications and engagement - developing and maintaining constructive working relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders; presentation of technical ideas and information in a clear and positive way.

## Information about the Branch/Unit/Team

The Insight Project Team is part of the Scottish Government Learning Directorate, based at Victoria Quay in Edinburgh. It is composed of a matrix of colleagues, including analysts in the ScotXed Unit in Education Analytical Services Division as well as a Project Manager and Project Support Officer based in Strategy & Performance Division. The team currently comprises: a technology lead, a Statistician, an Assistant Statistician, a Professional Adviser (seconded), a Project Manager and a Project Support Officer.

## Location, Working Pattern and Duration

Applicants on any working pattern are encouraged to apply for this secondment opportunity. The duration of the secondment is expected to be for two years.

Whilst the core project team is based in Edinburgh, there is flexibility over the location of secondees, given the Scotland-wide need for user engagement and support in use of the Insight tool.

An inward seconded to the Scottish Government will remain an employee of the donor organisation and will stay on their individual terms and conditions of employment. All reasonable Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred in discharging this role will be reimbursed at standard Scottish Government rates.

## Application Process

Please ensure that you have discussed your application with your line manager and secured their agreement that, if successful, you will be released to take up the secondment within 4 weeks from the offer of appointment being made.

If you wish to apply, please submit a note of no more than two sides of A4 which sets out your skills and experience, in particular detailing how you meet the essential and desirable criteria set out in this advert.

You should **send this expression of interest no later than 8 September** to Chris Roberts, Insight Project Officer, at [insight@gov.scot](mailto:insight@gov.scot)

Interviews are likely to be held in late September with start dates agreed thereafter.

## More Information

If you would like to discuss the role further, please contact Jill Pringle, Insight Professional Advisor ([jill.pringle@gov.scot](mailto:jill.pringle@gov.scot) 07772 604167) or John Hand, Insight Professional Adviser ([john.hand@gov.scot](mailto:john.hand@gov.scot) 07766 016435) who would be happy to speak with you. You can also email the team for further information – [insight@gov.scot](mailto:insight@gov.scot)