

Building and supporting a community of GSR members

Improving the use of social science

Your responsibilities as Head of Profession. You will:

- Be responsible for defining membership of GSR in your organisation, with reference to the GSR Code, and for agreeing with other analytical Heads of Profession where dual membership is appropriate.
- Ensure that GSR members are in no doubt who their Head of Profession is and what their functions are in relation to GSR members. You should develop appropriate communication channels with your members.
- In Full Member organisations be responsible for ensuring GSR staff are recruited and promoted in accordance with GSR standards. Ensure GSR staff have access to relevant Fast Stream opportunities; oversee arrangements for the professional development of GSR staff. This includes facilitating career moves, where appropriate, and ensuring adequate resources and opportunities are available for continuing professional development.
- Play a wider role in GSR and contribute to activities to set its direction through participation in its various committees and by contributing to GSR-wide initiatives such as intelligence gathering exercises; commenting on papers and guidance produced on behalf of GSR and flagging emerging problems and issues that require GSR action.

My commitment to support you. I will:

- Provide leadership to GSR, working to develop a strong sense of professional identity and pride amongst members.
- Provide the tools and guidance to facilitate fair and consistent recruitment and promotion to GSR and support in tackling problems and anomalies.
- Support organisations which are developing or reviewing their GSR presence.
- Lead the GSR Heads of Profession Group and provide support and direction to GSR Task Groups, committees and the like. For Full Member organisations provide one-to-one advice and mentoring should you wish it, with special emphasis on Heads of Profession who are new to the role or are experiencing particular challenges in their organisation. Provide career development advice on request.

Your responsibilities as Head of Profession. You will:

- Give a lead in ensuring research makes an effective contribution to decision making in your organisation, by promoting a customer-responsive service which produces accessible, relevant and timely outputs.
- Maintain oversight of research capacity and intervene where resources are inadequate or are being used inappropriately in your organisation.
- Work to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the evidence base in your organisation and that systems are in place to identify gaps and future information needs.

My commitment to support you. I will:

- Set a clear strategic direction for GSR and provide central resources and support to you in delivering it in your organisation.
- Work at the strategic level to support the building of an effective evidence base which is joined-up across government and linked with the wider research community.

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Being Head of Profession: Responsibilities and Support

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Promoting the standing of social science research

Upholding professional and ethical standards

The Head of Profession role is crucial to the Government Social Research service (GSR). We exist to provide research and analysis for policy and delivery and to ensure that government decision making and policy debate are informed by the best research evidence and thinking from the social sciences.

Your role as Head of Profession in your Department or Devolved Administration is critical in maintaining a professional and responsive GSR presence. You also have an important role in contributing to the strategic direction of GSR and delivering it in your organisation.

I recognise the GSR Head of Profession role is a demanding one. Your key responsibilities in that role are set out here, along with my commitment to you as Head of the Government Social Research Service. This reflects the importance I place on the Head of Profession role and my responsibility to support you in delivering it.

Paul Wiles

Chief Government Social Scientist and Head of GSR

Your responsibilities as Head of Profession. You will:

- Be the voice of GSR in your organisation; speak for and represent the interests of social researchers; act as a role model for GSR members and have responsibility for promoting it and encouraging member involvement in GSR activities.
- Develop productive working relations with your opposite numbers in related scientific and analytical professions and with all analytical units within the organisation; foster effective joint working across professions in your organisation.
- Forge links with social researchers and social research organisations outside government to promote GSR and foster an understanding of its work, and to maximise the benefit that government can derive from the wider research community.

My commitment to support you. I will:

- Represent GSR and its interests and concerns at the most senior levels in government and ensure that central initiatives take account of the skills and needs of GSR.
- Encourage the research and analysis professions in government to focus on the policy and delivery agendas, supporting the coordination of research and analysis to maximise its fit with current and future priorities.
- Work with other central scientific and analytical heads to foster better dialogue between policy experts and the full range of analytical disciplines across government.
- Promote GSR and the use of research in policy and delivery and work to develop understanding of how and when to use our skills. I will promote GSR and its activities in the wider research and academic community.

Your responsibilities as Head of Profession. You will:

- Commit your organisation to the GSR Code, in full or in part depending on membership status. Be responsible for safeguarding the quality, integrity and objectivity of social research in your organisation. You should ensure that systems are in place to monitor the quality of social research; ensure appropriate methods of data collection, analysis and presentation are used and that research is fit for purpose.
- Ensure research findings are used and disseminated appropriately.
- Ensure GSR staff are familiar with the guidance on professional and ethical standards accepted within social research as described in the GSR Code.
- Be prepared to uphold good practice and intervene when professional standards are threatened.

My commitment to support you. I will:

- Consult you and then issue guidance and support to you, with particular focus on key areas of professional and ethical practice, and research and evaluation methods. Working through GSRU I will give advice and support on complex or challenging cases, issue ad hoc guidance on new or problematic technical issues and give you advice and support if you have concerns about quality standards in your organisation.
- Support and encourage the sharing of good practice across government organisations and professional groups.
- Set standards for GSR, identifying what we expect of GSR staff at each grade and signpost appropriate training and development opportunities for staff.
- Support you in ensuring GSR staff are recruited, promoted, assessed and developed in line with GSR standards.