## User Researcher

The government’s approach to digital and IT puts user needs at the heart of decision making. User Researchers are therefore key figures in [service teams](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/the-team), working to generate the feedback and insight service teams need to build a clear picture of their users and deliver solutions that they need. They will support [service managers](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/the-team/service-manager.html) by generating new and useful user insights and translating it into features and actions that will allow them to iteratively improve their service for users.

You will be experienced in using a variety of [user testing](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/users/introduction-to-user-research.html) methodologies to reveal actionable customer insights. You will have excellent analytical and problem solving skills, and the ability to quickly develop recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative evidence. You will need to be confident in explaining user needs to senior civil servants, and for acting as a persuasive advocate for those needs both within the team and the department at large. You will also be comfortable working with data, from gathering and analysis through to design and presentation.

The main responsibilities of the post are:

* planning, designing and conducting in-house usability testing sessions to support the design and development of digital government services
* leading the usability testing process from developing user recruitment briefs through to test moderation, analysis and report writing
* conducting in-house research to test new product and concept developments (including user requirements gathering and early stage concept and prototype testing, guerrilla research, and other approaches to ensuring the user need is fully understood in the service design)
* working with Service Managers to devise appropriate research strategies to generate focused insights and to convert concepts into high quality stimulus material
* working closely with designers and developers to turn user data into actionable product/service requirements that feed into prototype development, and influence product direction
* Designing, scripting and analysing ad-hoc quantitative surveys using in-house software licences
* Managing ad-hoc qualitative/quantitative research projects such as proposition development, visual identity and customer experience mapping
* applying knowledge in human factors, ethnography, and the user-centered design process to product and service design in an iterative development environment
* presenting findings and related design/business recommendations and customer insights to senior decision makers
* managing day-to-day operations with a range of usability and market research agencies with accountability for schedules, value for money and deliverables
* promoting user centred design principles and best practice within government, contributing to the Government Service Design Manual

## Personal Specification - Competencies / Skills

SEEING THE BIG PICTURE

Essential

* Building on the inter-dependencies and relationships between teams to create a common purpose
* Clarifying and communicating team objectives, bringing a broader perspective to a team so that it can focus on different delivery approaches
* Co-ordinating and monitoring team performance, utilising team diversity to maximise effectiveness

Desirable

* Familiarity with the public sector and government processes

BUILDING CAPABILITY FOR ALL

Essential

* Valuing contributions from everyone, rewarding productive behaviour and promptly addressing any poor performance
* Ability to work in a diverse team of highly talented staff, from different disciplines and backgrounds.
* Using regular performance assessment to focus on the delivery of objectives and provide or gain timely and constructive feedback to agree development plans
* Ensuring equal access to learning and development opportunities to enable all people to realise their full potential

LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Essential

* Strong communication skills; the ability to make extremely complex subjects clear and easy to comprehend.
* Excellent stakeholder management skills, and the ability to form strong collaborative relationships.
* Proposing ways in which communication and marketing can add creative and innovative impact

MAKING EFFECTIVE DECISIONS

Essential

* Identifying emerging performance issues or trends and proposing decisive strategic action
* Probing evidence to identify quick fixes and user needs for service improvements
* Analysing evidence from diverse sources to generate robust solutions and make timely decisions
* The ability to make sound judgements under pressure and competing demands.

DELIVERING AT PACE

Essential

* Ensuring efficient and effective use of resources to deliver programmes and projects on time, within budgets and to agreed quality standards
* Managing across boundaries to ensure delivery of benefits and sharing lessons learned

DELIVERING VALUE FOR MONEY

Essential

* Experience of complying with government guidance on finance and procurement policies and applying procedures correctly
* Advising on future resource requirements and assessing the implications of changing demands

MANAGING A QUALITY SERVICE

Essential

* Investing time to understand customer and stakeholder expectations and priorities, developing services to meet those needs, including when they change
* Anticipating and managing problems, bringing issues and conflict into the open and taking pre-emptive action
* Identifying and introducing improved services to deliver customer and stakeholder requirements.

SPECIALIST SKILLS

Essential

* Demonstrable knowledge, experience in and passion for web user centred design practices.
* Proven experience of gathering user requirements for web based services.
* Proven experience of managing, executing and analysing usability test sessions
* Proven experience of working in an agile development environment with User Experience teams, designers and developers to create new digital products and services
* Experience of audience modelling and developing design personas.

Desirable

* Degree in HCI/Usability/Cognitive Psychology/Market Research or related field.
* Experience across web content, tools and transactional services, especially those with complex user journeys.
* Experience within a research and digital environment.