# Smart Data Policy Advisor

## Making Effective Decisions: King’s Speech

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| * understand your own level of responsibility and empower others to make decisions where appropriate * analyse and use a range of relevant, credible information from internal and external sources to support decisions * invite challenge and where appropriate involve others in decision making * display confidence when making difficult decisions, even if they prove to be unpopular * consult with others to ensure the potential impacts on end users have been considered * present strong recommendations in a timely manner outlining the consideration of other options, costs, benefits and risks | Example: setting up King’s speech document to include everyone and distribute responsibility.  Situation: New King’s Speech was being presented as Labour had just won the election. I suggested to my team that we should document the speech with the new upcoming bills which pertained to our current policy research areas, given that we wanted to generate visibility around the work we did. We should explain what future implications are, as we are the Horizon Scanning Team  Task: Because I was researching Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics, I tasked myself with writing an explainer for the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill and what was is now the Data Use and Access Bill.  Action:  Created the central document for the team to contribute ideas to prior to handing out and then brought up the issue at one of our group meetings.  Although I had already been researching what was likely in the two bills for my main research project, this gave me a chance to flesh out my ideas and put them in a more user-friendly format. In particular, I noted how important the new Smart Data regulation would be for future Fraud, Error and Debt. One big new application of Smart Data is accessing consumer records to ban them from gambling sites – this would hopefully help people from worsening their situation. The better FCA coordination with Smart Data regulators also helps to keep people on benefits from entering scammy payment relations.  Result: The result was that, once everyone had finalised and finished their contributions to the main King’s Speech explainer, I presented it to the DWP department at a weekly meeting and circulated the document around. The team received strong praise from our directing senior civil servant, communicated to us from our Grade 6, as well as the rest of the directorate. |

## Seeing the Big Picture: PESTLE and Research

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| * understand the strategic drivers for your area of work * align activities to contribute to wider organisational priorities * remain alert to emerging issues and trends which might impact your work area * seek out and share experiences to develop knowledge of the team’s business area * understand how the strategies and activities of the team create value and meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders | Example: using the PESTLE framework to break down my research task into chunks so that I could synthesise everything.  Situation: I had just joined the team. I was going to have to research Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics and how it related to Fraud, Error and Debt at DWP.    Task: I had to adapt to the flow and style of an existing team product, the Trend Deck, which collected our core predictions about various different policy areas. This involved doing my own research, but also getting involved in other colleague’s research, for example, getting involved in my colleague who was researching Housing futures, or Geopolitics futures and giving them my own expertise, gained from my interest in Comparative Politics and Housing Economics.  Action: The best tool that I used was the PESTLE framework, which broke my research down into the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Ethical components. By breaking down my research like this, it allowed me to capture the entire scope of my policy area. It also sped up my progress and also made the end result easier to convey to the team and eventually it made it easier to add to the trend deck.  At the same time, I was also helping team members by contributing to their research with my expertise: in my spare time I’d written notes on Housing Policy, specifically on brownfield regeneration.  Result: My policy research document took into account recent trends and was not over focused on one specific area, taking broad account of each moving part of new policy implementation. It fit in with the team’s Trend Deck and I didn’t have to do much updating when submitting it. |

## Delivering at Pace: Explainers and Research

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| * show a positive approach to keeping the whole team’s efforts focused on the top priorities * promote a culture of following the appropriate procedures to ensure results are achieved on time whilst still enabling innovation * ensure the most appropriate resources are available for colleagues to use to do their job effectively * regularly monitor your own and team’s work against milestones ensuring individual needs are considered when setting tasks * act promptly to reassess workloads and priorities when there are conflicting demands to maintain performance * allow individuals the space and authority to meet objectives, providing additional support where necessary, whilst keeping overall responsibility | Example: Working with my research project while at the same time completing explainers for new policy for the whole department which needed to be delivered quickly.  Situation: When I first joined my internship the election was going to take place in three days.  Task: Up to and following the election, I was tasked with writing explainers for important new policy announcements – most important were the King’s Speech and the Chancellor’s maiden speech, although there were also many think tank papers being published that week.  Action: I talked with my manager about the new workload and we worked out a new timeline to tackle it. Regardless, I’m quite fast at writing and evaluating papers so the new task could be managed quite easily.  Result: Department was very happy with my explainers – me and my manager circulated them and I received good comments from the people who had specifically requested those think-tank articles, e.g., to be evaluated. |

## Communicating and Influencing: Workshops and Simplification

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| * communicate in a straightforward, honest and engaging manner - choosing appropriate styles to maximise understanding and impact * encourage the use of different communication methods, including digital resources and highlight the benefits, including ensuring cost effectiveness * ensure communication has a clear purpose and takes into account people’s individual needs * share information as appropriate and check understanding * show positivity and enthusiasm towards work, encouraging others to do the same * ensure that important messages are communicated with colleagues and stakeholders respectfully, taking into consideration the diversity of interests | Example: Workshops held to introduce the team to my research.  Situation: As part of my research project, I was going to have to present my final research to my team in a series of workshops.  Task: I was going to conduct two workshops to explain my ideas to everyone. I knew that I was going to have to deliver my technical research, on legal precedent and on the development of Smart Data, to a non-technical audience.  Action: I prepared how I was going to break down complex topics into more manageable chunks which could be understood better by everyone. One strong example is talking about how Open Banking, for example, forces large banks to host an API for licensed FinTech companies to utilise. Once you know what all the parts mean, it’s not too hard to understand. But I broke down what an API was, what the data that the FinTech companies wanted to access was, and how it all worked with government licensing.  Result: I was very proud of my explanatory skills. Thinking back to my explanations of technical knowledge, a lot of the older generation that I wanted to include in my presentation who I worried wouldn’t understand anything all told me that they felt they could follow along very well. Their valuable feedback from their time at DWP allowed me to update some research notes and synthesise a broader perspective. One of the most important things they talked about was connecting public-private pensions using Smart Data.  On my feedback, my manager also complemented me on my ability to break down complex topics – she was one of the people who I was trying hard to take along on the more technical side. |

## Extra Questions

Difficult decision

* Deciding whether my research was important enough to raise directly with people working on the new DWP bill to be presented to parliament. My manager assured me that she’d talked to the departmental legal team but I thought that some of the research I’d done indicated a possible oversight by the DWP with regards to what is known colloquially as the “Snooping Bill” so raised it when I had the chance. They thanked me for my proactivity and told me that no one had mentioned this before.

Why are you interested

* Last year invigorated my interest in leading evidence-based discussions and doing research into new topics. I think I’m good at it and the focus on Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics was particularly interesting which is why I think Smart Data is a good route.
* DBT works across businesses to help grow and flourish – I think it’s important to provide strong foundations, particularly in Smart Data since so much of the value added in the UK is from technological improvements – FinTech has been an industry the UK has a comparative advantage in for a long time, it’s often at the forefront, and I want to help continue that.

Consider the end user

* King’s speech documentation for the entire department,
* Trend deck for the entire department.
  + Situation: trend deck
  + Task: contribute to the deck in a coherent way as it will be distributed to the whole department
  + Action: tested my ideas and presentation in various workshops
  + Result: workshops were successful and my colleagues told me I had a way of breaking down complex ideas. [**LOOK AT COMMUNICATING AND INFLUENCING]**

# MoD Supply Chain Directorate Markets and Sectors Analyst

## Communicating and Influencing

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| * communicate in a straightforward, honest and engaging manner - choosing appropriate styles to maximise understanding and impact **(Workshops and tailoring presentations to different stakeholders, using analogies related to colleague’s areas of expertise)** * encourage the use of different communication methods, including digital resources and highlight the benefits, including ensuring cost effectiveness * ensure communication has a clear purpose and takes into account people’s individual needs **(Workshops and tailoring presentations to different stakeholders, using analogies related to colleague’s areas of expertise)** * share information as appropriate and check understanding **(King’s Speech Meetings)** * show positivity and enthusiasm towards work, encouraging others to do the same **(King’s Speech Meetings)** * ensure that important messages are communicated with colleagues and stakeholders respectfully, taking into consideration the diversity of interests **(Workshops and tailoring presentations to different stakeholders, using analogies related to colleague’s areas of expertise)** | **Situation:** During my internship in the Horizon Scanning team at DWP, I led a research project on how developments in data regulation, privacy and ethics could impact fraud and error strategy over the next 5 to 10 years. The work involved legal, technological and policy trends and had to be communicated clearly to different kinds of stakeholders with different levels of technical knowledge.  **Task:** My objective was to produce a product that would not only inform strategy discussions but also be reused and understood by both technical and non-technical staff. This meant using varied communication methods to maximise accessibility, reduce resource duplication, and ensure engagement across teams with different priorities.  **Action (Criterion 1 – straightforward, honest and engaging communication):** I designed and delivered two tailored workshops. The first was built for legal and technical audiences, using clear references to regulation and legal precedent. The second was tailored for policy colleagues and senior managers. For them, I replaced jargon with concrete examples taken from their areas of responsibility. This was important for keeping communication engaging while also being straightforward. I used case studies involving real-world analogies to anchor abstract ideas. This helped increase clarity and allowed colleagues to engage without needing technical background.  **Action (Criterion 2 – varied communication methods, cost effectiveness):** To structure the research and ensure the output could be tracked, updated and reused, I built an Excel tool that mapped each trend across a PESTLE framework. This allowed the team to visualise emerging risks by category and time horizon. I also produced slide decks for live discussion and written documents for the shared drive. The combination of these formats helped maximise accessibility without incurring additional resource costs, because by adapting each communication method to a specific area, I avoided having to re-explain or remind different stakeholders so often.  **Action (Criterion 3 – clear purpose, individual needs):** Each communication method was tailored with a specific purpose. The Excel tracker was built for internal use to coordinate team planning. The slides were designed to support open discussion during workshops. The written document served as a long-term reference point. In the second workshop, I paused when a manager asked about the relevance of a FinTech regulation and explained it using an analogy drawn from their fraud policy work. This allowed them to immediately understand and contribute without needing technical detail.  **Action (Criterion 4 – share appropriately, check understanding):** After the workshops, I followed up with participants individually to check understanding, clarify uncertainties, and take feedback on which messages were most and least useful. This allowed me to adjust language and framing for future meetings. For example, I updated one slide to include a simplified diagram after a team member said they found the legal explanation too abstract.  **Action (Criterion 5 – enthusiasm and encouraging others):** In addition to the research, I volunteered to deliver oral briefings during King’s Speech meetings, helping the team interpret new legislative announcements. I framed these updates around their relevance to our planning work and asked open questions to encourage discussion. My proactive involvement helped signal that horizon scanning had direct, practical value, which improved team engagement.  **Action (Criterion 6 – respectful communication, diversity of interests):** Throughout, I was conscious of the different priorities among teams — from legal risk to fraud prevention policy. I ensured that each output addressed those priorities respectfully. I used analogies rooted in their specific roles so the same information could resonate differently without losing integrity. This ensured my message was both understood and relevant, without overlooking specific team interests.  **Result:** The Excel tool was adopted as the base structure for future scanning projects. The workshops were cited in my feedback as clear and engaging, and my manager specifically noted that colleagues who had struggled with technical content in the past felt more able to participate. The written summaries continued to be used after my placement ended.  **Reflection:** Choosing the right method for the right audience was essential. Excel provided structured clarity. Slide decks supported real-time discussion. Written documents ensured knowledge retention. Tailoring content to individual needs — while keeping the core message intact — made the research useful beyond its original scope and helped engage colleagues who might otherwise have been left out. |

## Delivering at Pace: King’s Speech

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| * show a positive approach to keeping the whole team’s efforts focused on the top priorities * promote a culture of following the appropriate procedures to ensure results are achieved on time whilst still enabling innovation * ensure the most appropriate resources are available for colleagues to use to do their job effectively * regularly monitor your own and team’s work against milestones ensuring individual needs are considered when setting tasks * act promptly to reassess workloads and priorities when there are conflicting demands to maintain performance * allow individuals the space and authority to meet objectives, providing additional support where necessary, whilst keeping overall responsibility | **Situation:** During my internship at DWP, my team had to deliver detailed research and briefings on the King’s Speech under tight deadlines and shifting priorities.  **Task:** I was responsible for organising the team’s workload to ensure we met all deadlines, balanced competing demands, and maintained high quality.  **Action (Criterion 1 – positive approach to focusing team on priorities):** I created an Excel tool that assigned tasks to each team member and tracked progress centrally. This gave us a clear overview of who was doing what, deadlines, and completion status, helping keep everyone focused on the top priorities.  **Action (Criterion 2 – promote procedures while enabling innovation):** I held regular meetings with colleagues falling behind schedule to understand their challenges. Together, we adjusted their workload or deadlines to keep on track without compromising quality. This combined procedural oversight with flexible support.  **Action (Criterion 3 – ensure appropriate resources):** To improve efficiency and motivation, I assigned each team member to sections of the King’s Speech that closely matched their current research topics. This alignment allowed them to work faster and produce more informed analysis.  **Action (Criterion 4 – monitor work against milestones and consider individual needs):** Using the Excel tracker, I monitored progress daily and adapted task assignments based on individual availability and workload. I often shifted workloads around after having calls with colleagues and understanding why certain elements were falling behind.  **Action (Criterion 5 – act promptly to reassess conflicting priorities):** When urgent new requests arrived, for example new high-profile political commentary on the King’s Speech, I reassessed task priorities using the Excel tool and communicated changes to the team quickly, explaining the reasons behind reprioritization. This ensured we stayed aligned and met deadlines despite shifting demands.  **Action (Criterion 6 – allow space and authority while providing support):** I empowered team members to take ownership of their assigned topics within the framework I set up while being available to help resolve blockers and redistribute tasks if necessary.  **Result:** The Excel tool and tailored task assignments allowed the team to consistently meet all King’s Speech research deadlines. The proactive meetings with struggling colleagues prevented bottlenecks and maintained team morale.  We presented our research to the rest of the department on a weekly meeting call and feedback from managers highlighted our clear organisation and adaptability under pressure.  **Reflection:** Implementing a structured prioritization framework using Excel and aligning tasks with individual strengths was crucial. The ongoing monitoring and one-to-one support helped balance workloads and keep momentum. This approach made delivering at pace manageable and improved team collaboration and confidence. |

## Changing and Improving:

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| * work with others to identify areas for improvement and simplify processes to use fewer resources * use technology where possible to increase efficiency * encourage ideas for change from a wide range of sources * clearly explain the reasons for change to colleagues and how to implement them, supporting individuals with different needs to adapt to change * encourage an environment where colleagues know that they can challenge decisions and issues safely * take managed risks by fully considering the varied impacts changes could have on the diverse range of end users | During my summer internship at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), I worked on the Horizon Scanning and Insights team, where I was tasked with researching the future of Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics (DRPE) and presenting findings through workshops for both technical and non-technical stakeholders.  I was encouraged to follow best practice guidance issued by the HMRC’s Horizon Scanning team, which recommended using ‘axes of uncertainty’ in breakout-style workshops to guide discussion and build confidence bands for future scenarios. However, after reviewing the materials, I identified that the layout and wording of the axis labels were ambiguous, particularly for non-technical participants. I believed this risked undermining both engagement and the validity of the output.  I consulted with colleagues to gather feedback, and based on our discussion, I made several improvements to the materials. These included changing what the axes represented to better reflect key variables, introducing more accessible labels for wider audiences, and adding brief context boxes to clarify each scenario. I let the team know I would be implementing these changes in my first workshop, and after I was finished, I followed up with them to see what worked and what didn’t.  As a result, my workshop sessions were far more interactive, with attendees reporting greater clarity and confidence in expressing their views. My manager was particularly impressed and suggested adopting my revised format for future team sessions. This experience demonstrated my ability to challenge current practices and deliver meaningful improvements. |

## Extra Questions:

### Why have you applied?

I want to use my skills for public good. I’m motivated by work that has real-world impact, and I think that’s best achieved in the public sector. The MOD’s supply chain work is directly tied to national security and operational resilience. That gives the role a clear and meaningful purpose.

This position matches my strengths in data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and structured problem-solving. I’ve worked on forward-looking research in government before, including cross-department collaboration, and I’m confident I can apply the same approach to market and sector analysis here. I’m also interested in developing deeper commercial awareness within a critical policy area.

More broadly, I’m looking for a role where the scale and seriousness of the work reflects its importance. That’s what drew me to this team specifically.

I also have a strong interest in economics and policy. I’ve studied macroeconomic and industrial policy, and I’m particularly interested in how market dynamics and supply chain pressures interact with government decision-making. This role sits at the intersection of those issues and offers the opportunity to apply economic thinking in a practical, operational context.

### What are you passionate about in life?

I’m passionate about applying economic thinking to real-world problems, particularly where it can support better policymaking and public outcomes. I’m drawn to work that requires understanding how systems interact—whether in markets, regulation, or government intervention—and using that insight to improve decisions. I find it especially rewarding when analysis feeds directly into something practical or strategic.

More broadly, I’m motivated by public service. I want to use my skills in a way that’s useful, and I think that’s best done in the public sector, where the aim is not profit but long-term value and accountability. That’s what led me to work at the DWP, where I researched the future impacts of data regulation on operational delivery, and why I’m now applying to the MOD.