

# Wage & Employment Dynamics

## Public Engagements Strategy Group (WED PESG)

### Terms of Reference (June 2021)

#### Background

The [Wage & Employment Dynamics \(WED\)](#) project is a collaboration led by the University of the West of England (UWE) with University College London (UCL), City, University of London, University of Reading, and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), and funded by [ADR UK \(Administrative Data Research UK\)](#), which is linking several official surveys and administrative datasets in a secure setting with the objective of providing new insights into the dynamics of earnings and employment in Great Britain.

The project aim is creating a sustainable, well-documented ‘wage and employment spine’ of de-identified research-ready datasets to be made available to accredited researchers. This has the potential to fundamentally transform UK research and policy analysis across a vast range of topics. Alongside the creation of data infrastructure, the project is generating research findings of direct interest to policymakers. The benefits will be maximised through the provision of high-quality metadata and training for users. [Further details can be found on the WED website.](#)

By working in partnership with organisations representing or having direct contact with the workforce to facilitate research, the project looks to create a body of knowledge on UK employees and employers. This is expected to provide insight into government policies regarding employment, wages and earnings.

#### The importance of public acceptability

ADR UK is a partnership funded by the [Economic & Social Research Council \(ESRC\)](#) that is transforming the way researchers access the UK’s administrative data to enable better informed policy decisions that improve people’s lives. Principally it complements labour market data on employees from the Office for National Statistics’ (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) with administrative sources, such as Census 2011 and HMRC’s PAYE and Self-Assessment data.

ADR UK is dedicated to working in partnership with the public, and aims to ensure that its work is carried out in an ethical and responsible way that reflects public views. It is important that research is built upon a clear understanding of the experiences, interests and concerns of those it hopes to benefit. **Public engagement provides a key way of maintaining transparency.** It is crucial to ADR UK that engagement with the public takes place through meaningful and mutually beneficial dialogue. A clear understanding of the public’s interests and concerns in relation to how administrative data is used for research is important to maintaining public trust in the WED project. Strategic engagement with employers, employees as well as organisations who have substantial experience of working with, and on behalf of them, will allow us to develop our understanding of the general public’s perceptions and experiences. This will provide insight

on user attitudes towards using administrative data for research, as well as providing stakeholders with an opportunity to raise concerns they may have and how the project can address them. Moreover, it can develop our understanding of what further evidence is needed to improve understanding and outcomes and maximise the impact of the research that WED facilitates.

### **Public Engagement Strategy Group (PESG)**

To facilitate the view of employers, employees and the general public we are convening a WED PESG. The panel will sit alongside our established Academic Stakeholder Group and Government Stakeholder Group. The Academic and Government Stakeholder Groups were previously established to ensure the highest professional standards of our work and ensure that the outcomes meet the needs of the policy community. By introducing the WED PESG as an additional pillar of support to the programme, we aim to broaden our coverage, so we are engaging with a wide range of sub-sectors of society that our project hopes to benefit.

**The WED PESG will reflect the breadth of knowledge and range of networks within the public space, while being manageable in size so its members are all able to engage constructively.** We are therefore proposing a Panel of between six and eight members. The panel is advisory and not required to take a direct role in research being undertaken by the WED team.

**The group will initially be comprised of representatives from organisations working the following sectors:**

- Charitable foundations
- Low Pay
- Recruitment
- Trade Union
- Business
- Unemployment
- Equality and diversity

If there is a perceived gap in the membership additional experts representing specific demographics can be recruited as and when deemed necessary.

### **Aims of the WED PESG**

1. **To develop our understanding of the perceptions and experiences of employers and employees,** and ensure their needs and interests are reflected in the project.
2. **To assist in ensuring the WED project is ethically sound** and has the potential to improve the experience and outcomes of the working public by informing policy while representing their interests.
3. **To advise on how to appropriately engage with UK employees and employers** for public engagement activities.
4. **To raise awareness of the WED project** across their networks and with the wider public.
5. **To strengthen the social licence for the use of administrative data in policy-relevant research.**

## **Expectations & ways of working**

The WED team will:

- **Provide a clear specification of roles and responsibilities** for the panel members.
- **Arrange meetings/events** for the panel to learn from their input and expertise.
- **Circulate meeting/event minutes** and agreed actions as a record of decisions.
- **Maintain ongoing communication** with the panel, keeping members informed of progress and key decisions that have been made, and allowing room for feedback.

We expect the WED PESG members to:

- **Attend arranged meetings when possible** and maintain ongoing communication with the team. Accessibility for events and meetings will be prioritised with an option to meet virtually if physical attendance is not possible.
- **Represent interests of their constituent groups** by drawing from their professional experience and through facilitating direct engagement with UK employees and employers.
- **Work alongside the WED team to raise awareness** of the project, and the project's public outreach work primarily.

## **Membership requirements and meeting**

The panel will be expected to meet in accordance with the requirements of the project and the meeting's relevance to group members.

**Membership will be 12 months, from June 2021 to June 2022.** The Wage & Employment Public Engagement Panel is intended to participate in an introductory meeting and two full meetings. These are intended to be scheduled along with Academic and Government stakeholder group meetings which will be run at the same time of year.

## **Remuneration**

This project is funded by the ESRC. Remuneration for WED PESG members for any travel and subsistence will come from the WED budget.

## **Conflicts of interest**

Panel members will be asked to declare any financial and/or other interests that could be seen to create a conflict of interest as a member of the panel as soon as they arise.