

Scottish Human Rights Commission Internship Opportunity

Internship Title	Enhancing Evidence Systems for Human Rights Monitoring in Scotland
Line Manager	Dr. Alison Hosie, Research Officer
Payment	The internship will be paid at UKRI doctoral stipend levels for the duration of the internship
Hours	Full-time or part-time
Based	Hybrid
Duration	3 months full time or 6 months part time. Start date TBC
To apply	Please apply via SGSSS Apply by 3 March 2025 at 12 p.m.

About the Scottish Human Rights Commission

The Scottish Human Rights Commission was established by the Scottish Commission for Human Rights Act 2006, and formed in 2008. The Scottish Human Rights Commission is an "A Status"ⁱ [National Human Rights Institution](#) (NHRI) for Scotland and is independentⁱⁱ of the Scottish Government and Parliament in the exercise of its functions.

The Commission has a general duty to promote awareness, understanding and respect for all human rights - Economic, Social & Cultural and Civil & Political - to everyone, everywhere in Scotland, and to encourage best practice in relation to human rights.

The Commission has powers to recommend changes to law, policy and practice; promote human rights through education, training and publishing research; and to conduct inquiriesⁱⁱⁱ into the policies and practices of Scottish public authorities.

This Commission's Research Strategy sets out the direction of travel for research at the Commission during Strategic Plan 5^{iv} which runs from 2024-2028, by defining key areas with strategic goals. The overall aim of the Commission's research is to contribute to better promotion and protection of human rights in Scotland and beyond. With a Mission to provide robust and timely evidence that enables the Commission to be a strong independent authority that works collaboratively to uphold everyone's human rights in Scotland.

Placement Information

Background – During its 5th Strategic Plan (2024-28) the Commission is prioritising work to improve its evidence-base informing how human rights are being experienced in Scotland, through a combination of its own contribution and advocacy for improved duty bearer data collection.

Critical to our success, is access to a comprehensive and up to date evidence base that pertains to human rights work nationally and beyond.

Part of this work will include developing a more systematic methodology to continually update the Commission Evidence Database which was created in 2009 to inform the development of Strategic Plan 1 and Scotland's first National Action Plan for human Rights ([SNAP](#)). At that time, research was carried out to populate the evidence base using a wide range of existing sources, including:

- A literature review of social research.
- Three legal literature reviews on references to specific international human rights treaties in relation to Scots law.
- A review of the UK’s outstanding recommendations from international human rights bodies.

An analysis of this evidence informed the publication of [Getting it Right?: An Overview of human Rights in Scotland](#)

Opportunities to update the Commission’s evidence base and review new data sources is undertaken during preparatory phases for International Treaty Reviews. However, it is really hard with the capacity the Commission has, and limited access to published academic work, to do this routinely and well, and as such everything is out of date. The Commission wants to develop a system for updating the repository on a regular basis, within set criteria building on the collection framework for Getting it Right?

The intern will help us develop such a methodology and we are particularly interested in strategies that harness AI/machine learning capabilities to scan academic, regulatory (local and national governments) and civil repositories.

The outputs of this internship will fuel future outcomes. For example, any synthesis of recently published work will directly inform the Commission’s research agenda. In turn, a methodology that harnesses digital curation will directly impact on our practices.

Project goal

We would like this internship to bring the evidence base up to date whilst developing methodological options for the Commission to consider, which would support the regular updating of the evidence base (which could be within existing commission resources/ making use of a rolling annual internship).

Person Specification

Essential	Desirable
<p>1. Research Methodology: Strong understanding of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, ideally with experience handling both types of data.</p> <p>2. Data Management: Proficiency in organising, categorising, and managing large datasets, with experience in tools like Excel, SPSS, NVivo, or other relevant software.</p> <p>3. Database and Information Systems: Basic familiarity with database management or information systems to support evidence base development and updates.</p> <p>4. Analytical Skills: Ability to critically analyse and synthesise information from diverse sources, including third-sector reports, government publications, and academic research.</p>	<p>1. Human Rights Knowledge: Familiarity with human rights issues or related fields, particularly in a Scottish context.</p> <p>2. Technical Skills in Database Software: Experience with more advanced database tools (e.g., SQL, Access) or software specifically for managing evidence bases.</p> <p>3. Knowledge of, and/or practical skills in AI/machine learning.</p> <p>4. Knowledge of Information Governance: Understanding of data protection, confidentiality, and ethical considerations in handling sensitive information.</p>

<p>5. Attention to Detail: Precision in verifying, categorising, and organising data to ensure high-quality, accurate records.</p> <p>6. Written Communication: Skilled in producing clear, concise documentation, including methodologies and protocols that will guide future maintenance.</p>	<p>5. Project Management Experience: Ability to manage timelines and communicate progress, ensuring that the project remains on track and aligned with Commission goals.</p> <p>6. Experience with Stakeholder Engagement: Skills in liaising with third-sector organisations or government bodies to gather up-to-date information and establish future data sharing.</p>
--	--

Eligibility

Before making an application, please ensure that you meet **all** of the eligibility criteria below:

- PhD social science researchers registered at a university in Scotland, regardless of funding source;
- PhD students in the second and third year of their studies only. Please note that if you are in your final year, you need to have more than 6 months left for your PhD when the internship starts;
- PhD researchers that are eligible to work in the UK.

For further information on eligibility, please consult the SGSSS [Internship FAQs](#). If this does not answer your questions, please contact team@sgsss.ac.uk.

Deadlines

The deadline to apply is **3 March 12 p.m.** Shortlisting and interviews will take place in the following weeks.

ⁱ "A Status" accreditation by the UN Human Rights System means the Commission can report directly to the UN on human rights issues. We are the only Scottish organisation that can make direct contributions to the UN Human Rights Council. In 2021, the Commission was awarded "A Status" accreditation within the United Nations (UN) system - the highest grade of international accreditation - for a third time. This means we can report directly to the UN on human rights issues. We are the only Scottish organisation that can make direct contributions to the UN Human Rights Council.

ⁱⁱ In keeping with the Paris Principles, the independence of the Commission is essential to it being able to fulfil its functions as the promotion of human rights may require the Commission to be critical of existing practices or provide critical advice in relation to policies and legislation enacted by the Parliament or Government. See [Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions \(The Paris Principles\) | OHCHR](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ This power can only be used under some strict conditions as set out in [The Scottish Commission for Human Rights Act 2006 \(Commencement No. 1\) Order 2007](#)

^{iv} See <https://www.scottishhumanrights.com/media/2625/scottish-human-rights-commission-strategic-plan-2024-28.pdf>