



Office for Product
Safety & Standards

2024-2025 **Year in industry programme**

Team and role descriptions



Purpose

We are the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), a departmental office of the Department for Business and Trade (DBT). Our primary purpose is to protect people and places from product-related harm, ensuring consumers and businesses can buy and sell products with confidence.

We are the UK's product regulator and a leader of good regulatory practice. We have an important role to play in protecting consumers from unsafe products and ensuring they can purchase with confidence which increases demand and trust in UK product markets. Reducing the environmental impact of products contributes to the government's ambitious net zero target, protects our natural environment and supports sustainable growth. The way in which we regulate emerging technology, changing routes to market and modes of supply in product markets can enable innovation, give us a foothold in emerging industries, support international trade, support investment in the UK and help support the growth and jobs that make a real difference to communities throughout the country.

Regulation is a powerful tool of government – a means to address market failures, influence behaviour and promote positive action. The government seeks to use regulation only where necessary, and to implement it in a way that provides the right foundations for markets to operate effectively, in a way that enables our economy to thrive. Designed and delivered well, regulation can be an enabler of growth, innovation and investment, protecting life, health and the environment and supporting long-term social and economic goals.

That's where we need you! We need your talent to help us achieve our mission and deliver on our purpose. We have a number of exciting opportunities available across our teams for year in-industry students. This pack provides you with details on the teams and opportunities we have available. You can navigate through these by selecting the tabs at the top of the pack.

Strategy and legal roles

Strategy

Our Strategy team ensure activities across the OPSS are aligned with our organisational strategy, ambitions and wider Department for Business and Trade objectives. The team -

- Lead on the organisational strategy
- Lead on governance that relates to our organisational status
- Support the Chief Executive on priority projects and issues, helping to resolve these
- Lead on spending reviews, business planning, Corporate Plan and our Delivery Report
- Secretariats for OPSS Strategy and Evidence boards and OPSS' Advisory group
- Lead on people capability and development
- Lead on finance, commercial and procurement
- Lead on external communications to ensure OPSS key messages are amplified

Examples of year in-industry work within Strategy team –

- Supporting the business planning process and the development of the Corporate Plan and Delivery Report
- Helping secretariats to prepare for board meetings
- Contributing to priority projects, issues, and helping to resolve these
- Drafting briefs and reports for the Strategy team.

Legal

Our Legal team provide advice and support across OPSS. The team support incidents across OPSS to ensure they are legally compliant. The team builds cases with colleagues which leads to regulatory actions and prosecutions. The team ensure civil enforcement action is conducted in a legally compliant manner and support the development of policy and procedures. The team work closely with internal and external stakeholders, including counsel, when required.

Examples of year in-industry work within Legal team –

- Drafting briefs and reports for the Legal team
- Providing support to the legal team in response to incidents to ensure OPSS is legally compliant
- Work with internal colleagues to understand non-compliance and where legal action needs to be taken
- Responding to queries from across OPSS on non-compliance and the processes

Policy roles

Policy

Our policy teams are responsible for leading the development of key policies and legislation related to the regulation of product safety. The team work closely with our OPSS Legal team, Ministers, senior officials, the wider Department for Business and Trade, Government departments, and external stakeholders. The policy area –

- Lead Government policy on metrology, hallmarking and market surveillance, we are responsible for product safety at our borders and policy on product safety, from toys, cosmetics, aerosols, pyrotechnics, to nightwear and so much more
- Lead standards and accreditation policy across Government, working with British Standards Institution and the United Kingdom Accreditation Service
- Manage ministerial correspondence, parliamentary questions, freedom of information requests, and briefings for Ministers and senior officials
- Work with Governments internationally to influence, lead and collaborate to ensure regulation works
- Lead on OPSS' engagement with consumer bodies, including arranging a quarterly Consumer Reference Panel

Examples of year in-industry work within Policy team –

- Researching current policies and legislations
- Contributing to policy developments
- Drafting ministerial briefs and submissions
- Working with internal and external stakeholders to promote OPSS' policies and legislations.



Analysis and digital roles

Analysis

Our Analysis team is made up of statisticians, data scientists, economists, and social researchers.

Our Economics team provide expert economics support and advice across OPSS, supporting evidence-based policy and delivery decisions, through appraisal, value for money cases, market analysis and devising approaches to measure the impact of OPSS' work.

Our Statistics and Data Science team deliver projects using expertise to improve existing data, develop innovative approaches to analysing large sets of structured and unstructured data, identifying trends, managing data to deliver insights and produce official statistics.

Our Social Research team provide expert social research and evaluation support. This includes research to gather consumer and business behavioural insights and the application of the OPSS monitoring and evaluating toolkit to ensure the impact of OPSS programmes and organisational objectives is evidenced.

Examples of year in-industry work within Analysis team –

- Understand organisational data
- Analysing large quantitative and qualitative data sets
- Producing evidence-based reports to support decision making
- Benchmarking data.

Digital

Our Digital team build, develop and support key digital, data and technology services to enable OPSS teams, businesses and consumers to achieve their goals and objectives, examples include our internal Enforcement Case Management System and our external [Product Safety Database](#). The team also build digital capability and confidence across all teams and mainstream digital into how OPSS operates.

Examples of year in-industry work within the Digital Team –

- Supporting the development and continuous improvement of internal and external databases
- Drafting data reports and providing insights
- Support on the development of new digital offerings, sharing ideas, and working collaboratively with OPSS colleagues
- Supporting colleagues across OPSS to develop and build their digital capabilities through learning and development.

Science and engineering roles

Science and engineering

Our Science team provide robust and relevant scientific evidence and advice which feeds into the development of product regulation policy, delivery and enforcement, giving business the confidence to innovate and protecting consumers from unsafe products.

Our Engineering team generate high quality engineering and technology-based evidence to underpin policy, enforcement, and the future direction of OPSS to ensure the application of regulation, or the intervention of OPSS as a regulator remains proportionate in the face of technological advancement and any decisions made are supported by a sound and robust understanding of the technical evidence available.

Our Technologies team are responsible for understanding product safety risks associated with smart and connected devices, including Artificial Intelligence, and other emerging technologies in consumer goods markets. The team look at how OPSS can utilise new technologies to improve safety and to support enforcement in online marketplaces.

We have a purpose-built Centre for Product Testing and Research at our Teddington site and lead on delivering testing, in-house research projects. We have expert analysts to ensure tests are clearly specified, conducted correctly, and the results are interpreted appropriately.

Examples of year in-industry work within our Science and Engineering teams –

- Undertaking literature reviews and research on scientific or technology-based evidence
- Testing the safety of products at our purpose-built Teddington site
- Interpreting data and results and providing evidence-based insights
- Drafting briefs and reports for the team.



Stakeholder engagement roles

External Connections

The External Connections Team act as expert enablers, using specialist skills to create, embed and amplify external OPSS key messages.

International Delivery

Our International Delivery Team work with governments to deliver technical assistance programmes to make regulation work internationally. Working in partnership with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), our programmes help to deliver the Government's trade and development agenda, by supporting the development of regulatory environments which support economic growth, reduce poverty and increase opportunities for global trade and investment.

Local Authority Unit

The Local Authority Unit on OPSS engagement and coordination of activity with local authority regulators in relation to product safety, legal metrology and construction products and operate Primary Authority. Our role is to ensure our national regulator offer to Local Authorities (LA's) is effective and valued, and to help build capability and competence of UK local regulators. We manage the contract for LA training on our priority areas and administer grant funding to support capacity building in Northern Ireland. We also manage the sampling protocol which supports LA testing of products.

Examples of year in-industry work within our External Connections, International Delivery and Local Authority Unit teams include

Engagement with consumers and businesses to deliver key OPSS messaging

Development of communication plans for priority OPSS work

Planning and delivery of international programmes relating to regulatory delivery

Engagement with Local Authorities in delivery of the pillar areas of construction products, Primary Authority, Legal Metrology and Product Safety