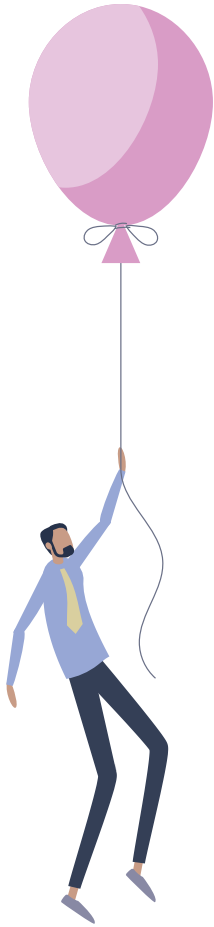


Hosting Policy Fellows

A GUIDE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS



Capabilities in Academic
Policy Engagement



Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement

December 2022, Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE)

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Introduction

Policy Fellowships, where academics and policy professionals spend time in each other's organisations to exchange knowledge, are becoming a far more visible and common method of supporting academic-policy engagement. There are currently numerous programmes that deliver Policy Fellowships. The model was initially pioneered by the Cambridge Centre for Science and Policy (CSaP), which launched in 2010. This approach has subsequently been adapted by the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng) Policy Fellowship programme, and Institute for Policy Research (IPR, University of Bath) Policy Fellowship. Alongside this, the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (POST) runs a number of schemes, and funding bodies such as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) also deliver fellowships.¹ It is a growing area of interest and activity wherein individuals are moving between academic and policy spaces in more formalised ways.

Fellowship programmes such as those cited above have been shown to facilitate knowledge transfer between academics and policy professionals, build empathy, close knowledge gaps, and support evidence-based policy making. They can also create continuing, long-term relationships and networking opportunities, beyond initial interactions.²

What we also know is that good governance of fellowship programmes can contribute to the success of these schemes.³ However, while reports of Policy Fellowship journeys, experiences and impacts exist, there is currently less detailed information on resourcing, governance and

operationalising such programmes openly available.⁴ How long does it take to set up a Policy Fellowship? How do you recruit Policy Fellows? What staffing does it require? How do you evaluate a Policy Fellowship?

From 2022-23, Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) adapted the CSaP model to run an 'incoming' Policy Fellowship programme for policy professionals to meet and discuss their policy questions with academics from our partner universities. This was done at scale and collaboratively across five Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Based upon our experience, this guide shares knowledge, processes and procedures of setting up and delivering the programme alongside indications of resourcing and timelines. It also provides templates that universities can use to set up a Policy Fellowship programme.

Our aim therefore is to support HEIs who wish to run or get involved in existing Policy Fellowship programmes as part of their wider academic-policy engagement strategies. We hope that documenting the practical and procedural points of hosting Policy Fellowship visits will enable universities to undertake such engagement activity more easily, without having to 'reinvent the wheel'. At the same time, we also want to contribute to the wider academic-policy ecosystem during a time in which funders, universities and policy organisations seek to develop more sustainable systems and infrastructure to support policy engagement.

1 <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/esrc-policy-fellowships-2021/>; <https://post.parliament.uk/fellowships/>

2 <https://www.cape.ac.uk/2021/12/13/knowledge-exchange/>

3 <https://www.cape.ac.uk/2021/12/13/knowledge-exchange/>

4 <https://energy-shifts.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Insights-from-the-Energy-Policy-Fellowships.pdf>

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for universities who are interested in hosting Policy Fellows for the first time or who want to develop existing Policy Fellowships into a more formalised programme. We hope that the information here will allow universities to take an informed decision on whether they have the capability, resources and motivation to deliver a similar initiative alone or with other universities, and assess in their own contexts if there is applicability and even replicability beyond the CAPE pilot Policy Fellow project.

In this guide you will find the step-by-step process involved in administering a Policy Fellowship programme, setting up visits and associated templates needed to underpin these and support good governance. These templates are indicative and will need to be adapted to meet individual HEI's needs. Throughout, we draw upon our experiences at CAPE of running our Policy Fellowship programme alongside top tips of what we consider currently is best practice.

Our guide is not tailored to the individual systems of all 160 HEIs present in the UK, rather it provides universities with a general overview of the resourcing, capacity and constraints involved in hosting Policy Fellows. Ultimately, we hope that sharing learning will provide inspiration to policy professionals, researchers, HEIs and funders around the tangible impacts of policy visits and the need for good processes to avoid common pitfalls.

Why use this guide?

This guide will help you to:

- Assess your capabilities and resources for running a Policy Fellowship programme
- Create good governance and processes from the outset
- Plan visits effectively and efficiently and around your HEI's expertise
- Monitor and evaluate your Policy Fellowships
- Evidence the tangible benefits of hosting Policy Fellows



What is a Policy Fellowship?

A Policy Fellowship is a staff exchange activity aimed at supporting professional development. A Fellowship enables an individual to spend time outside of their 'usual' workplace immersed in a new organisation in order to gain new perspectives and insight relevant to their work. Policy Fellowships also provide innovative career development pathways, and support the necessary conditions to foster collaborations, build relationships, and generate mutual understanding and trust.

Policy Fellowships operate bi-directionally between academia and policy spaces which CAPE refers to as incoming and outgoing.

- **Incoming:** policy professionals spend time in universities in a series of bespoke meetings, usually over the course of a few days, discussing their policy questions and challenges with relevant researchers and research services staff.
- **Outgoing:** researchers and research services staff spend time in policy spaces, from anywhere between 3 months to one year, working directly with policy professionals in local, regional, and national government, Parliament and third sector organisations.

This guide focuses on 'incoming fellowships' only and for simplicity we use 'Policy Fellowship' to refer to the incoming model only.



The CAPE Policy Fellowship programme

The CAPE Policy Fellowship programme ran from 2021-2023 and awarded Fellowships to over 40 policy professionals, giving them the opportunity to bring their policy questions directly to academics from five UK universities. CAPE Policy Fellows came from central and local government in the UK, as well as civil society organisations, and participated in online and face-to-face conversations and exchanges with between four to eight carefully matched researchers and research service staff at each institution.

Unlike other Fellowship programmes, a cohort approach was adopted in CAPE. This meant that:

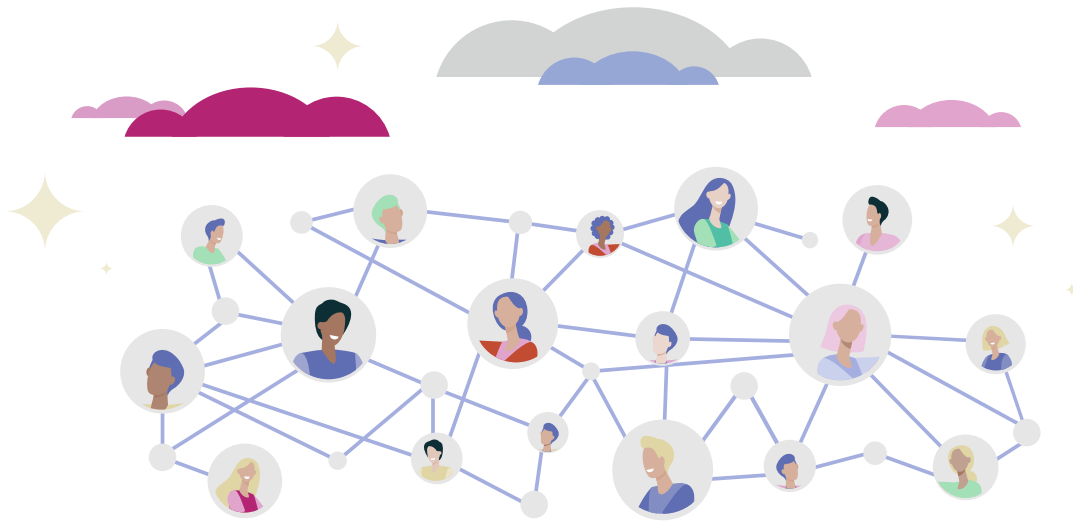
- policy professionals met with relevant researchers and research services staff from a wide range of disciplines either as a policy team or through one-to-one meetings
- the programme was collaborative and ran between five CAPE universities

- policy professionals were expected to visit at least two of the five CAPE universities
- beyond CAPE, policy professionals had the opportunity to spend time at the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Southampton and Durham (who are all members of the Affiliate network of CSaP)

Administering the Fellows as a cohort required close working between knowledge mobilisers at each of the five CAPE universities to plan distinct, but mutually relevant visits and ensure the smooth transition of Fellows between different university systems, campuses, cultures, and research specialisms.

CAPE Policy Fellows continue to benefit from support and involvement from CAPE, following up on opportunities that arose from initial meetings with research and research services staff over the two-year programme.





Why run a Policy Fellowship programme?

Policy Fellowship programmes can bridge the gap between academia and policy by connecting researchers and policy professionals directly. They are a tool for knowledge exchange and contribute towards sustained academic-policy engagement.

Through research carried out in preparing this guide, we found diverse motivations for running a Policy Fellowship programme and getting involved. These included:

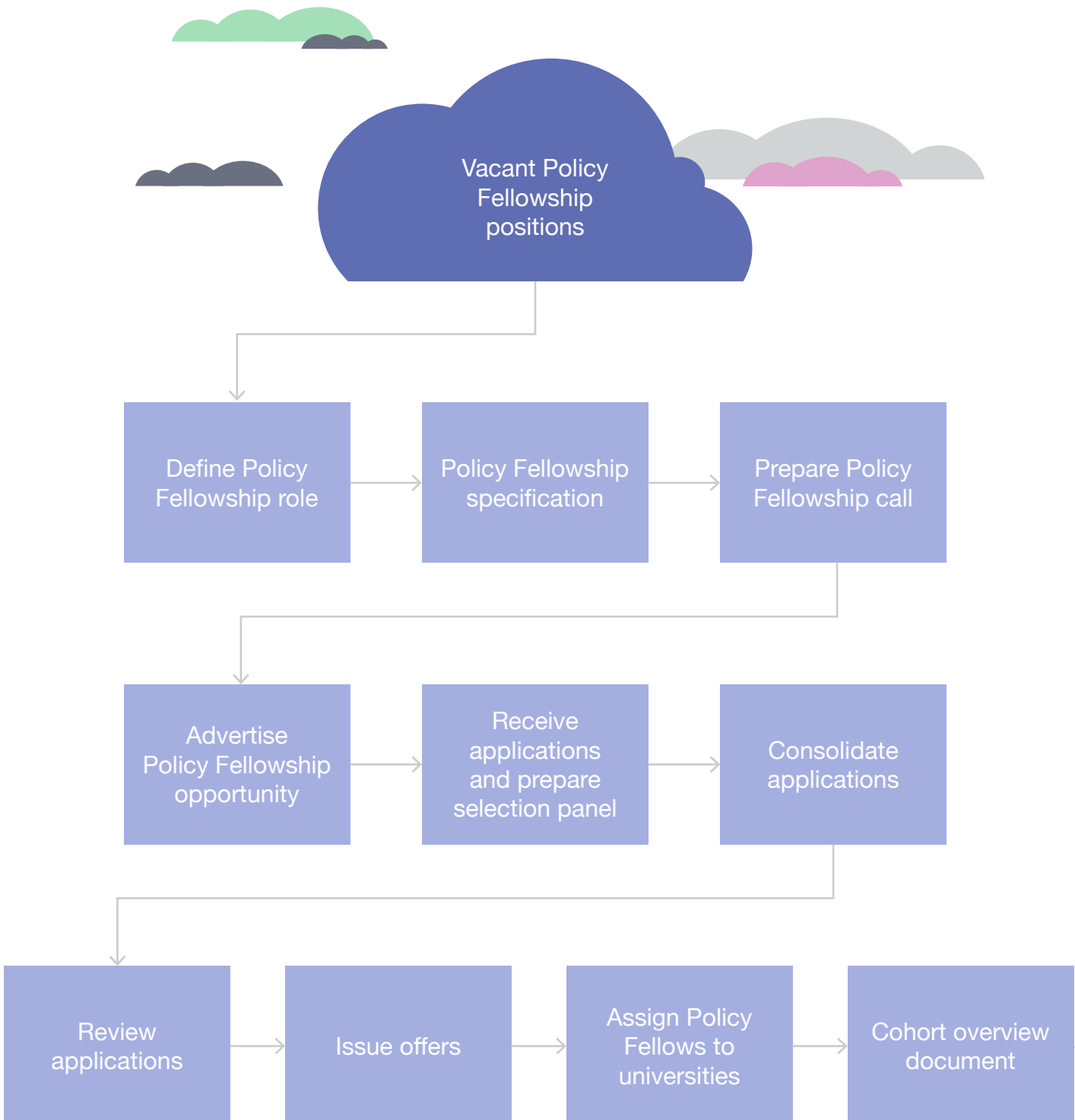
- deepening knowledge for all involved of the policy and research environment.
- building an understanding of the latest policy priorities and ways to make research and insights accessible to policy professionals.
- promoting the usefulness of multidisciplinary approaches to research and policy collaboration.
- forging collaborative relationships and establishing meaningful connections both within and between researchers, research services staff and policy professionals.
- providing space to challenge assumptions and gain a deeper understanding of policy challenges.

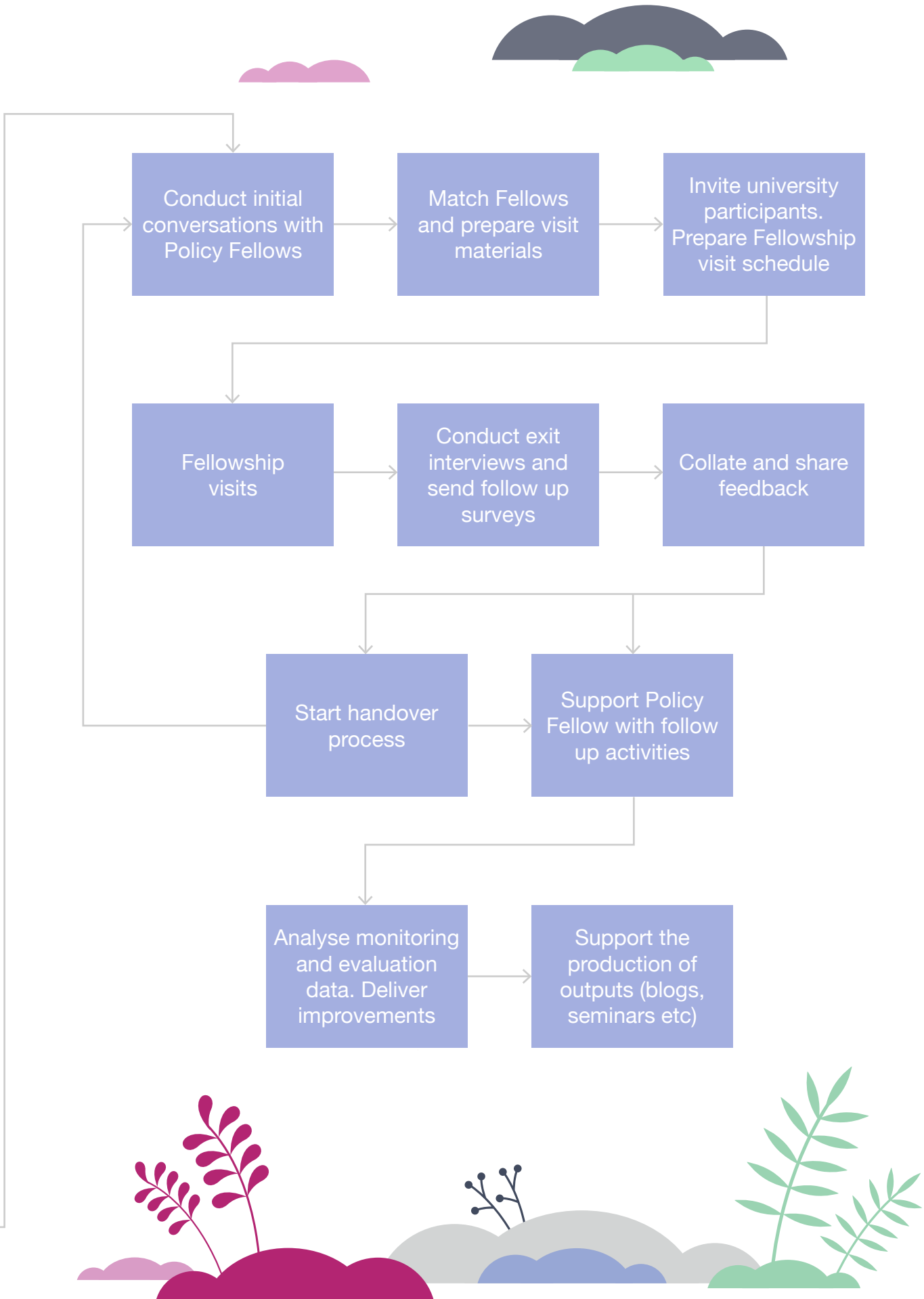
Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into Policy Fellowships

Equality, diversity and inclusion should be front and centre at every stage, from planning your Policy Fellowship, to matching Policy Fellows with researchers and research services staff, from arranging visits to exit interviews. This means taking some very practical steps, but also fostering a culture within the programme where every participant feels respected and able to participate on equal terms and is supported to share different ideas. We include EDI points and actions throughout this guide.

The Policy Fellowship process

The process diagram below outlines the steps followed in CAPE when administering the Fellowships. All stages and their associated processes are outlined in more detail in the following sections of this guide. Some steps might not be necessary within all contexts or under all conditions, for example the handover between universities might only be relevant if more than one HEI is involved.



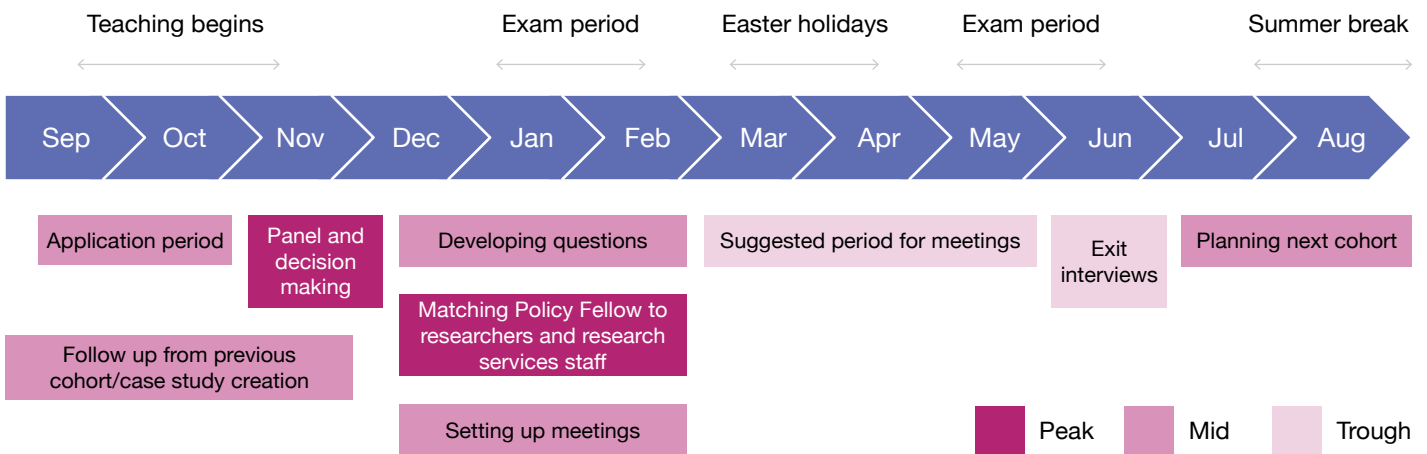


Time and resourcing for Policy Fellowships

Below we provide some rough estimates of time and resourcing needed to support Policy Fellowships. These times are indicative for a Fellowship programme where you are recruiting multiple Fellows at once; note that this may vary depending on how many Fellows you are recruiting, the infrastructure of your organisation, and if meetings are in person or online for example.

“Host” ie. the knowledge mobiliser who is administering the Policy Fellowship. This can be multiple roles.	Between 41 - 124 hours (per Fellow)
Defining the role	7 hours
Advertising	4 - 14 hours (over a 4–6-week period) Dependent upon if appropriate templates exist, how easy it is to locate lists, internal pages, and teams to support promotion.
Preparing for panel	5 - 14 hours Dependent upon application numbers.
Panel	2 - 3 hours
Post panel discussion	1 - 2 hours
Post panel confirmation & communication	2 - 11 hours
Initial meetings with successful Fellows	1 - 3 hours (per Fellow) Dependent upon on how much prep work is needed.
Matching researchers to Fellows and writing copy	1.5 - 4 hours (per Fellow)
Administration of Fellowship visits	1.5 - 8 hours (per Fellow) Dependent upon how much prep work is needed, level of infrastructure in place, how much chasing is required to secure visits etc.
Visits	2 - 10 hours (per Fellow) Dependent upon if host’s attend visits or the Fellow visits in person extra time may be needed.
Identifying policy question gaps	1 - 2 hours (per Fellow)
Exit interview	1 - 2 hours (per Fellow)
Researchers’ survey	30 mins
Tracking impact & support with follow on	3 - 15 hours (per Fellow) Dependent upon level of tracking and if this occurs during an interview or via a survey etc.
Support with telling Policy Fellow stories	5 hours - 25 hours (per case study)
Communication of outputs	3.5 hours (per case study)
Panel members	6 hours each (across the whole process)
Researchers and research services staff	1 hour per Policy Fellow (plus time for preparation)
Policy Fellows	36 hours

Estimated time period: 9 months minimum from planning to exit interviews and an additional 6 months for light touch follow up. The Gantt chart below illustrates this and gives an illustration of the peak and trough moments.



CAPE top tips

- Get to know your institutional strengths and research specialisms before defining the Policy Fellowship advert.
- Be proactive on EDI. At a minimum include a positive action statement within all your communications for the programme and ensure all involved know the EDI actions at every stage.
- Whilst it is vital to be aware of busy periods within university cycles, it's also good to consider policy rhythms which may be different and will need to be factored into the overall running of the visits.

Things to consider for resourcing your programme

The above suggestions for time and resourcing are based on CAPE estimates and reflect the structure of the project, the infrastructure available at each CAPE partner university and in-depth programme design knowledge from CSaP.

There is likely to be any number of permutations for how you approach allocations at your HEI and considerations could include:

- Can the end-to-end visits be delivered by one role, or can the stages be allocated to different roles?
- Where can you resource the skills necessary for effective programme delivery e.g. 'typical' brokerage plus skills in operationalising and designing effective processes for delivery and monitoring and evaluation.⁵

⁵ <https://www.cape.ac.uk/2022/10/03/collaborative-and-systemic-knowledge-mobilisation/>

- Given the visits cover strategy, engagement, administration, data collection and analysis, what is the optimum job grade for the “host” knowledge mobiliser?
- As well as staffing costs, do you also wish to consider making available pots for seed-funding to allow for follow-ups?
- Within your resourcing and funding envelope, what is the optimum number of fellow visits that allows you to reach maximum value e.g. economy of scale?
- Due to the time intensity and the lumpy nature of delivery, the highest likely cost will be staff time to oversee the programme. Can budgets and running costs be reduced by joining more established schemes rather than running an individual programme?

When circumstances change

Attrition has the potential to negatively impact Policy Fellowship visits and so a degree of flexibility is required. There can be many reasons for attrition, but common ones within CAPE were as follows.

Policy Fellow changes role

Role changes for Policy Fellows can happen frequently, especially for those in government. It is worth considering whether you are awarding the Fellowship to the person or to the set of policy questions they bring with them. This has implications for how to manage attrition, for example, if the person moves roles or policy teams do their questions still fit your HEI expertise and research strengths?

Political or job uncertainty

Policy roles are also subject to political and societal changes as well as organisational restructures. At times of national emergency, such as in COVID-19 for example, policy professionals might need to delay starting their visits. A high degree of flexibility built into planning

processes is vital to accommodate shocks and shifts. Bear in mind policy questions might also change as a result. We recommend regularly checking that individuals still have interest and capacity to take part. If they are no longer able to, ask for suggestions for alternative colleagues, but in doing so make clear your EDI commitments.

Policy Fellow / research or research services staff drop out

On occasion, Policy Fellows need to drop out of visits. If you have awarded the visits based on the individual, then it is likely that you will need to readvertise to fill their space. If the award is based on the policy questions, then asking the Policy Fellow to recommend a team member or approaching the head of the team and offering the space to another team member from that policy organisation should be possible.

Likewise, the researcher may also need to withdraw from the visit. In these circumstances see if you can match expertise from another department or discipline and ask for their suggestions for an alternative colleague.

Running a Policy Fellowship programme

Stage 1: Recruitment, advertising and selection

Recruiting Policy Fellows should start with defining the Policy Fellowship role, considering target groups and eligibility criteria.

To recruit Policy Fellows, we suggest the following steps:

1. Create an online application form asking applicants to provide:

- their professional experience
- their motivations for applying to the programme
- the set of policy questions/areas they would like to explore during the Policy Fellowship
- a short biography

Find a Policy Fellowship application form template in Annex I

2. Open the call

We recommend advertising Policy Fellowships for 4 – 6 weeks to reach the widest pool possible and allow prospective applicants time to ask questions about the programme.

To reach a diverse set of people you can direct opportunities to networks in both central and local UK government, parliament and the civil society sector (e.g. in the civil society sector). Channels include LinkedIn, policy newsletters, direct tweets and requests to central policy units where they exist, such as the Policy Profession in national government. If you have Policy Fellows from previous visits, you can also ask them to share with their networks.

3. Create a scoring system and shortlisting process

It is a good idea to create a shortlisting system and scoring process that:

- ensures EDI values and principles are embedded and well-articulated
- the scoring system is clearly mapped out
- minimises the time burden and possibilities for scoring fatigue by distributing the total number of applications across the panel

Find a shortlisting process template and scoring system in Annexes II and III

4. Review applications by panel

A review panel should assess prospective Policy Fellows based upon their current job role and whether academic expertise can be identified within the host university to answer the policy questions. The panel should allocate scores independently before meeting to discuss and finalise decisions.

CAPE top tips

- Capture information in your application form which allows you to more readily match Policy Fellows' questions against priority areas or disciplines within your HEI.
- Avoid weekend closing dates and national holidays for the application deadline.
- Build a panel that covers diversity in terms of policy engagement experience, discipline, race and gender, and academic career level.

Stage 2: Before the visit

Initial conversations with the Policy Fellow

“It is helpful to have an introductory meeting with the Policy Fellow prior to making arrangements. This can help plan the length of sessions, accommodate preferences, and allow us to manage expectations.”

University of Manchester CAPE Coordinator

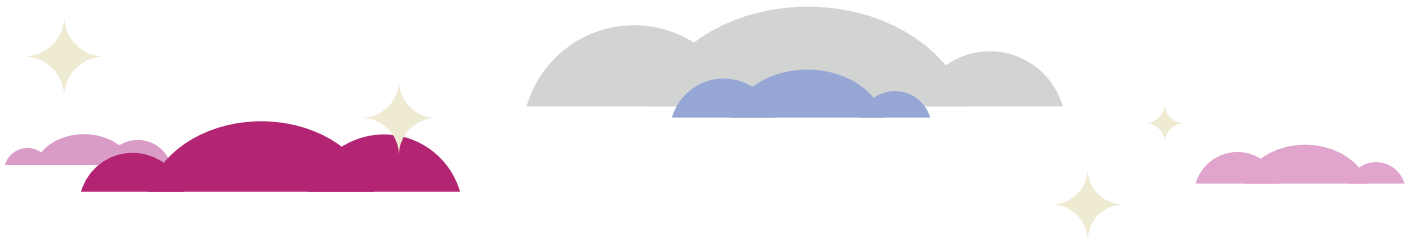
After recruiting your Policy Fellow(s) we’ve found that it’s useful to have an initial meeting with them one-on-one. This meeting can be used to:

- Agree whether the Policy Fellow would like in person or virtual meetings or a combination.
- Refine the questions that were proposed in the Policy Fellows’ initial applications and identify any sub-questions where necessary.
- Establish any accessibility needs, technology access, or other additional requirements.

CAPE top tips

- Set expectations and discuss with Policy Fellows that conversations with researchers and research services staff might take different directions than expected with the aim of broadening and diversifying thinking. This may be particularly evident when talking to research staff at different career stages.
- Create a welcome email template to send to your Policy Fellows upon successful recruitment. Include information that covers key dates, key processes and any immediate next steps.
- Offer both online and offline visit options where possible. Virtual visits allow a more diverse range of Policy Fellows, including from different geographies, to engage. Physical visits provide ‘naturally’ occurring reflection time as Fellows move to different locations for meetings.





Identifying academics and research services staff

Now you have recruited your Policy Fellow and developed their policy questions, it's time to find researchers and research services staff at your university they can meet with.

Searching for relevant researchers takes many forms. This can include:

- searching records of active current or past staff held locally within a university policy unit or research support office.
- utilising universities, searchable databases of all academic papers published by their researchers and doing a key word search.
- searching university websites, and within target departments, where there may also be impact officers or knowledge exchange staff or other knowledge mobilisers who can provide suggestions.

- searching external databases, such as Konfer or Researchfish, which allow you to see publications and areas of expertise by theme.
- speaking with colleagues and appropriate teams who will be able to provide you their suggestions and snowball out from there.

“We have an internal research categorising system called ResearchLink at the University of Nottingham where you can search keywords and be given all the academics whose research relates to it”

University of Nottingham CAPE Coordinator

Note:

The opportunity to meet a Policy Fellow is usually by invitation so it is not usually suitable for circulation on social media. An exception would be if the Policy Fellow offers to give a talk to researchers, staff or students at the HEI.

CAPE top tips

- Using a combination of university staff / research databases and academic colleague nominations will be the most fruitful in identifying experts.
- Communications staff across universities can promote the opportunity in relevant channels and allow colleagues to self-select their relevance.
- The news section of university websites can help locate the latest work in the relevant research fields.
- Templates for emails can help save time but it's effective to add some targeted and bespoke content to academics / research services staff, showing you've done your research.
- Policy Fellowships can be a great way into academic-policy engagement for those who haven't done it before so don't just target the “usual suspects”.

Inviting researchers and research services staff to meet Policy Fellows

You should organise a schedule of meetings for the Policy Fellow based upon academic availability during the period you are hosting the Policy Fellow and share this ahead of the visit.

Whilst we encourage meetings to be set up directly between the Policy Fellow and the researcher / research services staff, you may wish to join a handful of meetings for monitoring and evaluation purposes. It is good practice to make the Policy Fellow and researcher / research services staff aware of this ahead of their meeting.

We recommend recording visit plans in a Policy Fellowship log document as you may want to look back at which researchers and research services staff have been involved in your programme over time both to re-engage, but also to avoid over engagement.

Find a visit schedule template in Annex IV

“Challenges can include adjusting to the changing demands and schedules of both Policy Fellows and academics.”

University of Manchester CAPE staff



What to send to researchers and research services staff before a meeting

We recommend sending an FAQ document to researchers and research services staff, detailing what they can expect when they are meeting a Policy Fellow for the first time.

You can also have a quick catch up with the academic before they meet with the Policy Fellow to help them prepare for the visit if needed.

Find a template for an FAQ document in Annex V

CAPE top tips

- Block out a full day for the Policy Fellow's visit to help them avoid the risk of being pulled into their 'day job'. Build in breaks to prevent fatigue and provide time for reflection between conversations for making notes and marking down next-step actions. We recommend one hour meetings with at least a 30-minute break in between.
- Timing is important. Try to avoid organising visits during busy periods (e.g. exam periods, external holidays, university closures and religious days.)
- Take time to make Policy Fellows aware of university rhythms and how they can affect availability. For example, researchers may have limited availability during exam periods and at the end of the academic year/during the summer research period. Online meetings may be easier during these times.

Stage 3: The visit

Once stages one and two are complete, the Policy Fellowship can take place. The host should be contactable during each visit to ensure things run smoothly. The host might wish to sit in on meetings to support with technology issues, gauge reactions and note any potential follow ups. It can also be helpful for spotting knowledge gaps due to visit design which can be addressed by adding on one or two further meetings.

Online Policy Fellow meetings

Online meetings should be set up on a secure platform that both the Policy Fellow and academic can access. Hosts should be available to ensure technology problems are minimised and solutions can be found promptly.

In person Policy Fellow meetings

If the Policy Fellow is visiting in person, it's nice to organise a welcome meeting and you could include a finalised printed schedule and university map. As host, you can also escort Policy Fellows to meeting rooms on site, keep tabs on time to enable taxi pickups and drop-offs, set up Policy Fellows on the University Wi-Fi, and provide breakout spaces to enable Policy Fellows to take / make work calls should the need arise. Where there is a mixture of in person and online meetings, you should have a quiet room on site where Policy Fellows can take video calls.

What are meetings like in practice?

Meetings are usually scheduled for one hour but may not need to be this long. They are also usually one-to-one, but some Policy Fellows find it better to bring along a colleague from their organisation. Equally, researchers and

research services staff may find it helpful to bring along a colleague with whom they collaborate. If this happens, it's a good idea to ensure that all attendees know who will be coming and brief each side so they can better prepare discussion points and questions.

It's highly unlikely that all of a Policy Fellow's questions will be addressed by one researcher or one academic discipline. It is therefore important to let the Policy Fellow know this to help set expectations. It is also important to bear this in mind at the planning stage and try to arrange the series so that each meeting and its discussion content builds on the previous. This means you need to have a good understanding of your researchers and research service staff's interest and expertise. If you are unsure, reaching out for a quick chat beforehand or asking them to specify this in advance can help.

Meetings are typically informal and conversational although presentations or sharing research papers can take place. It's important they are not delivered as though it is a seminar, rather its more as a conversational prompt and its best to know this in advance so the Policy Fellow can be briefed.

Researchers and research services staff should be encouraged to think of questions they would like to ask the Policy Fellow, to ensure the meeting supports knowledge exchange (two-way) as opposed to dissemination (one-way). This is welcomed by the Policy Fellow, but to avoid an imbalance in the conversation it is a good idea to brief university colleagues and make them aware of this and the aims of the visits.

Find further details on this in the template for an FAQ document in Annex V

Stage 4: After the visit

Hosts should hold an exit interview with the Policy Fellow after the visit. We also recommend that researchers and research services staff complete an evaluation form after the main visits are over. This helps to establish:

- the experiences of meetings (positive or negative)
- the impact of each meeting on future thinking, work planning and engagement more broadly
- any visit or programme improvements.

Find an exit interview template in Annex VI

Find a template evaluation form for researchers and research services staff in Annex VII

“The evaluation picks up both the what’s working/not working (in feedback forms) and EDI data – so we can compare across activities what seems to allow for greater diversity of people involved.”

UCL CAPE Coordinator

CAPE top tips

- Build in time for Policy Fellows and researchers/research services staff to complete exit interviews.
- Gather anonymous EDI information where possible to develop baseline information and drive visit improvements.



Stage 5: Continuing the conversation

A Policy Fellowship can go far beyond the visit itself and you can take steps to support continued engagement. We recommend checking in periodically with Policy Fellows to understand if they've been able to progress ideas that emerged from initial meetings with researchers and if not, why not. You can also do the same with researchers and research services staff both as a way to prompt investing in continual engagement, but also see if any further support is needed. These conversations are a good opportunity to signpost further engagement activities and events that maybe relevant to the policy questions under consideration.

In CAPE, we've observed that follow on interactions can take many forms. These can be initiated by either researchers or research services staff or policy professionals and can include:

- Further informal interactions requested by either party e.g. email contact, sharing papers, arranging to meet, having coffee.
- Either party hosting or being hosted for further visits, online seminars, or presentations within organisations.
- Policy professionals inviting researchers to give advice or play advisory roles in steering groups and vice versa.
- Policy professionals co-producing or commissioning advice, events, research, or reports from researchers.

CAPE top tips

- Use exit interviews to give you a sense of what follow on from the Fellowship there may be.
- Directly afterwards and on a periodic basis establish any plans for follow-up activity, determine if further support or funding is needed.



Tracking the effectiveness of policy visits and their impacts over time

Building in time to reflect on the process and track the impact of Policy Fellow visits over time is important. Drawing on all potential sources of data from the programme provides helpful data driven insights. Data can be generated from the application forms, EDI forms, the exit interview and feedback questionnaires.

Analysing across these data sources allows you to build up a picture of who is taking part in visits as well as common insights, from how well the visits met their original aims and objectives, to any key take aways from meetings.

This information can be used to generate service improvements and indicate fruitful areas of focus for additional academic-policy engagement activities, such as debates and multi-lateral policy dialogues.

Find a template impact tracking form in Annex VIII

CAPE top tips

- Build in time and resource for data analysis across the main sources to support aiding the effectiveness of policy visits over the longer term.
- Capture developments by checking in three times post Fellowship: at the end of the university visit (exit interview), after 3 months (email), and after 6 months (check-in meeting).

Sharing your Policy Fellowship story

There is no doubt that considerable effort goes into this type of academic-policy engagement. As well as tracking the efficacy of policy visits, planning how to promote what has taken place and sharing learning is important.

To promote the value of Policy Fellows and evidence why an HEI might invest time and resource into hosting visits, offer Policy Fellows the opportunity to write or co-write a piece for publication to feature on your HEI website, their organisational website and/or elsewhere. Bear in mind this won't always be possible as some material may be confidential.

Sharing writing guidance and offering editorial support is essential, but also having a bank of case studies that cover different aspects and experiences that you can point to can be helpful.

CAPE top tips

- Offer editorial assistance to Policy Fellows and university staff involved to aid the co-production of blogs, case studies and comms outputs that can be used to evidence the impact of delivering visits



All annexes provided below have been developed from real life documents used in the delivery of the CAPE Policy Fellowship programme.

Annexes

- I** Fellowship application form template
- II** Shortlisting process template
- III** Scoring system template
- IV** Policy Fellowship visit schedule template
- V** Example FAQs for researchers and research services staff meeting visiting Policy Fellows
- VI** Policy Fellowship exit interview template
- VII** Policy Fellowship evaluation form - researchers/research services staff template
- VIII** Policy Fellowship impact tracking form template



I. Fellowship application form template

Applicant Name	
Job Title and Grade	
Organisation	
What are your aims or reasons for applying for the Fellowship	Describe the influence of your role on public policy (e.g. I lead on...)
	Your aims or objectives for your Fellowship meetings
<p>What questions would you explore through the Fellowship?</p> <p>We use these questions as the basis for arranging meetings with researchers / research services staff</p>	<p>Please list 3-6 short questions to address during the Fellowship, posed in everyday language. If your application is successful, you will have the opportunity to revise these questions</p> <p>(If your application is successful, your aims and objectives and questions will be shared with the researchers and research services staff in our network we invite to meet you)</p>
Short public biography for HEI website	

II. Shortlisting process template

To ensure the review process was low burden and reduce possibilities for scoring fatigue panel members review a sub-set of applications, resulting in a total review time of approximately two hours. Each application is then discussed, and further reviewed, if necessary, at the panel meeting.

Applicant Name	Job Title	Organisation	Application Notes	Your Score	Notes on this applicant that you wish to share e.g. "good questions"

III. Scoring system template

Please note that relevance to priority themes/strategic relationships is encouraged but not required

1: unacceptably poor/ inappropriate candidate

- Questions applicant is asking are weak
- Applicant's reasons for applying are weak
- No academic expertise at my institution
- Weak intellectual calibre
- Does not speak to priority themes/strategic relationships (encouraged but not required)
- Applicant's role does not make them suitable to be effective in the Fellowship

2: poor/ inappropriate candidate

- Questions applicant is asking are weaker
- Applicant's reasons for applying are weaker
- Unlikely academic expertise at my institution
- Weaker intellectual calibre
- Weak links priority themes/strategic relationships (encouraged but not required)
- Applicant's role is not suited to Fellowship

3: acceptable candidate

- Questions applicant is asking are average
- Applicant's reasons for applying are acceptable
- Possible academic expertise at my institution
- Acceptable intellectual calibre
- Acceptable fit with priority themes/strategic relationships (encouraged but not required)
- Applicant's role is somewhat suited to Fellowship

4: strong candidate

- Questions applicant is asking are strong
- Applicant's reasons for applying are strong
- Likely academic expertise at my institution
- Strong intellectual calibre
- Relevance to priority themes/strategic relationships (encouraged but not required)
- Applicant's role highly suited to Fellowship

5: unmissable

- Questions applicant is asking are outstanding
- Applicant's reasons for applying are valid and worthwhile
- Very good fit with academic expertise at my institution
- Outstanding intellectual calibre
- Speaks to my university's priority themes/strategic relationships (encouraged but not required)
- Applicant's role highly suited to Fellowship

IV. Policy Fellowship visit schedule template

Question 1: Sub-questions:												
Title	Name (Academic)	Contact Details	Webpage(s)	Job Title	Faculty	School	Bio	Question addressing?	Status	Availability	Notes	
Dr									Contacted			
Professor									Confirmed			
PhD									Declined			
Research Services Staff												

V. Example FAQs for researchers and research services staff meeting visiting Policy Fellows

1. Do Policy Fellows expect me to make a formal presentation of my research?

No. Meetings are typically informal and conversational, though of course if you wish to illustrate the relevant results of your research by reference to papers or presentations you should feel free to do so. If you do wish to make a formal presentation, please let us know in advance so that we can let the Policy Fellow know to expect this.

2. Is there anything that Policy Fellows particularly dislike or react against?

Policy Fellows don't like to be lobbied and are usually very good at identifying when this is the case. They expect challenges to their thinking, and pointers to new ways of approaching the questions which they identify for discussion, rather than advocacy (particularly in cases where the researcher is not a disinterested party). Also, please avoid spending too much time bemoaning the lack of funding for your own research area - it's seldom the case that the Policy Fellow can do much about this!

3. Can I say "no" when I am asked if I am willing and available to meet a Policy Fellow?

Absolutely! Our process for setting up meetings relies on you opting in where relevant, and conversely declining when an invitation does not hit the mark.

It's because we can rely on you to say "no" when that's the right answer that we can try the occasional long-shot or left-field invitation; and because we can do this, we will come up with surprising and serendipitous connections which would otherwise not be made.

4. If I'm not sure what a Fellow means by a question, and therefore I'm not sure whether to say "yes" to a meeting, can I ask for clarification?

Yes, please. We are in contact with the Policy Fellows during the period between sending out invitations and the initial visit itself, so if you have any queries or requests for clarification, please don't hesitate to contact us.

5. Do all meetings with Policy Fellows have to be an hour long?

No. When arranging the meeting, if you think you need longer - or indeed if you think the relevant discussion can be fitted into 30 minutes - please let us know, and we will schedule accordingly.

6. Do all meetings with Policy Fellows have to be one-to-one?

No. If you would like to suggest involving a particularly relevant colleague or colleagues in the meeting, please let us know. We also actively encourage you to bring along colleagues who might benefit from the experience of talking to policy professionals, as part of our aim is to increase diversity of voices in engagement.

7. How are Policy Fellows' expectations of the meetings managed?

Each Policy Fellow is told that all the researchers / research services staff they will meet have volunteered or opted in to meeting them because the researcher can offer relevant expertise or perspectives to the discussion of at least one of the Policy Fellow's list of questions. There is no expectation that every meeting will cover the whole list of questions; indeed, the design of a set of meetings is usually based around

achieving depth on questions in each meeting and achieving breadth of coverage through the range of meetings. We also tell Fellows - because this is what previous Fellows have told us - that the most valuable discussions are often the ones that go off in unexpected directions.

8. Is it OK to stray off the subject?

Provided that some of the questions they put forward are addressed, most Fellows welcome input in the form “another question you might want to think about is...”. Similarly, most Policy Fellows are very happy to discuss their work more broadly, to explore the reasons why they have posed the questions they have, and also to discuss meta-questions about the ways in which expertise and evidence affect policy and the policy making process. It is certainly legitimate to use the discussion to explore ways in which future development of your research could be made relevant and accessible to the policy making process. It’s best, however, not to hijack a meeting to talk about something completely unrelated to the Fellow’s questions, just because they happen to be accessible.

9. Are Fellows interested only in the practical application of research to their day jobs?

It’s certainly the case that Policy Fellows often prefer talking about practical, tangible applications of research rather than more abstract or theoretical discussions. However, it’s worth bearing in mind that many Policy Fellows see their Fellowships as part of their career development, and they may well be interested in exploring issues well beyond their current direct responsibilities. Fellows also tell us that they value the opportunity for intellectual stimulation offered by these meetings – Fellows are often drawn to the programme by curiosity and because they are already convinced of the value of research for developing policy and strategy.

10. Can I expect the Policy Fellow to do any advance reading?

Absolutely. We will pass on to the Policy Fellow any suggestions you would like to make for papers they could read in advance, and our experience is that Policy Fellows welcome this. However, we find that Policy Fellows are not easily able to identify for themselves what part of a researcher’s published output is relevant for them to have read in advance, and without prompting it’s unlikely that they will have read up on your research ahead of meeting you.

11. Can I pitch consultancy to the Fellow in the meeting?

It is perfectly acceptable to put forward to Policy Fellow’s proposals for any of the ways in which areas of common interest could be carried forward, including (for example) joint research proposals or consulting work. Be aware, however, that being a budget holder is not a criterion for selection as a Policy Fellow, and even where they may have control or influence over budgets, formal procurement rules will usually apply. Project funds at your university for collaboration between Policy Fellows and researchers and research services staff might be available, so do contact us if you have ideas for work that could usefully progress jointly after a meeting.

12. Do I need to route follow-ups through you?

No, but it’s helpful for to be kept informed. We don’t want to form a bottleneck on further development of links between researchers / research services staff and policy professionals, but at the same time we’re keen to facilitate and support those developments. Please feel free to contact any Policy Fellow you have met directly (if you don’t have the contact details, please ask us), and cc us where possible. Or if you would like us to transmit the request, then please ask us to do so.

13. What should I do if I'm not sure if the Policy Fellow will welcome a further approach after the meeting?

It's our experience that Policy Fellows leave their initial meetings keen and enthusiastic to pursue lots of follow-up opportunities, though it is of course true that other commitments in their day-to-day jobs will constrain how many of these they can actually pursue. We know of no examples where a Policy Fellow has regarded follow-up contact from a researcher as onerous. If, however, you are concerned that this could be the case, please feel free to route communications through us.

14. Are Fellows asked for feedback on their meetings with researchers?

Yes, we will collect evaluation data from all Policy Fellows. This has several purposes:

- to identify the most valued discussions and those where we might have a role in facilitating further activities
- to understand where the Policy Fellow model could be improved
- to identify the value of Policy Fellowships to policy professionals and to researchers
- to further develop the existing programme
- to identify cross-cutting issues that could be explored in more depth, for example through policy workshops.

15. What should I do if a meeting turns out to have been a poor use of time?

Our experience is that this applies to a small minority of meetings and that most such instances are the result of a misunderstanding of a Policy Fellow's interests. Where this is the case, please let us know.

16. What outcome from the meeting should I consider a success?

We think Policy Fellows have had a successful set of initial meetings if after them they think they have new ways of thinking about their questions, and a better network of people to work with as they develop ways of answering them. If your meeting has contributed to such an outcome – even if it's just one insight that the Fellow takes away – then it has been part of that success.



VI. Policy Fellowship exit interview template

To be completed after each Policy Fellow visit

Date:

Name of Policy Fellow:

Name of organising staff:

To inform Policy Fellows prior to discussion:

- Remind them of any possible next steps with the Policy Fellow programme - Including periodic check-ins
- Remind them of follow-on funding if available and further engagement opportunities
- Inform them the comments below will be used for evaluation and may be used to create case studies – If there is anything they want to share off the record, we will record their comments separately (separate table below)

Time needed: 30-45 mins

Policy Fellow process – general overview of mechanism

- How did you find the experience of meeting with academics/research services staff at [Insert Name]?
- Were your expectations met in terms of what a Policy Fellowship opportunity means?
- What did you like about the structure of the Policy Fellowship? (e.g. loose structure of conversations, two-way dialogue, engaging with research)
- What could have been different in terms of the structure of the Policy Fellowship?

Policy Fellow – Impacts and learnings

- Which of your Fellowship questions were addressed? (e.g. all, some, none at all)
- What questions were not answered, and would you want to explore them further?

- How has the conversations shaped your thinking on your Fellowship questions (e.g. changed, confirmed, challenged etc)
- Was there anything unexpected that occurred due to the meeting (e.g. uniting themes, new idea)
- Did you discuss, or do you see scope for any planned activity with any of the colleagues you've met with?
- How do you see the information you've gathered contributing to your team/organisation?
- Did you feel like your conversations encompassed diverse views and perspectives?
- Do you feel more confident in engaging with researchers and research services staff at university? (Yes, no, not sure, the same)

Specific meetings

- Which meetings stood out to you, and why?
- Were there any meetings that didn't go so well? If so, what didn't work?

Concluding remarks

- What have you valued most about the Policy Fellowship?
- If you (or colleagues) wanted to do another Policy Fellowship, do you know how you would go about initiating one?

Any other comments?

Off the record comments

VII. Policy Fellowship evaluation form – researchers/research services staff template

Policy Fellowship researcher and research services staff feedback questionnaire

1. Name
2. University
3. Reflecting on your experience meeting the Policy Fellow what, if anything, did you value about the interaction?
4. What learning have you taken away from meeting the Fellow?
5. Since meeting the Policy Fellow, have you been involved additional activities with the Fellow?
 - Yes from planned follow-ups with individuals
 - Yes, in other university activities (roundtables, fellowships, seed funding, training)
 - Yes, other additional new activities or follows ups
 - Not yet, I am planning additional activities
 - No
6. Please outline any additional activities you have been involved in or are planning
7. What, if any, impacts were generated as a result of you meeting the Policy Fellow?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
There has been a direct impact on my research / work					
I got a chance to step back and see the bigger picture					
There have been benefits for my organisation					
I gained contacts or improved my network of contacts					
I have gained a better understanding of what policy has to offer and how to access it					
I have gained insight into the latest policy priorities					

8. If you wish, please expand upon specific impacts that resulted from meeting Policy Fellows (during the visit or after)
9. How has your engagement with policy changed as a result of your meeting with the Fellow?

	More likely to engage	As likely to engage	Less likely to engage
Organisation where Policy Fellow was based			
Other policy organisation			

10. Are there any improvements you would like to suggest?

VIII. Policy Fellowship impact tracking form template

Policy Fellowship outcomes survey (Required)

1. Name (optional)
2. Your organisation (optional)
3. Since your Fellowship have you been involved in follow on activities?
 - Yes from planned follow-ups with individuals
 - Yes, in other university activities (roundtables, fellowships, seed funding, training)
 - Yes, other additional new activities or follows ups
 - Not yet, I am planning additional activities
 - No
4. Please outline any additional activities you have been involved in?
5. What key lessons and learning have you taken away from your Fellowship?
6. What, if anything, would you do differently next time?
7. What impacts were generated as a result of participating in the Policy Fellowship?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
There has been a direct impact on the policy development process					
There has been a direct impact on decision-making					
I have gained fresh perspectives on my current work					
I got a chance to step back and see the bigger picture					
The Policy Fellowship has improved the way I work					
There have been benefits for my organisation					
There has been a material impact on the development of my career					
I gained contacts or improved my network of contacts					
I have gained a better understanding of what academia has to offer and how to access it					
I have gained insight into the latest research					

8. If you wish, please expand upon specific impacts that resulted from meeting researchers / research services staff (during the visit or after)

9. How has your engagement with academia changed as a result of your Fellowship?

	More likely to engage	As likely to engage	Less likely to engage
[Name] University			
[Name] University			
[Name] University			
[Name] University			
Other universities			

10. Of the researchers / research services staff you met during your visits to [HEI] partners, what number are you still engaging with?

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-10
- 11+

11. For those researchers / research services staff you still engage with, for what reason(s) do these relationships continue?

12. Reflecting on your Fellowship experience, what have you valued about the [insert name] Fellowships programme?

13. Are there any improvements you would like to suggest?

14. May we contact you to follow up on these responses? If so, please provide your email address:



Capabilities in Academic
Policy Engagement

About CAPE

Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) is a knowledge exchange and research project that explores how to support effective and sustained engagement between academics and policy professionals across the higher education sector from 2020–2024, funded by Research England.

We are a partnership between UCL and the Universities of Cambridge, Manchester, Northumbria and Nottingham in collaboration with the Government Office for Science, the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, Nesta and the Transforming Evidence Hub.

We believe that policy which is informed by evidence is stronger, more effective, and provides better value for public spending. By using research expertise, we can make a positive difference to the UK economy, our wellbeing and the world around us.

