

Non-Academic Employer Survey Results

The following presents results from a Spring 2019 survey of APPAM’s non-academic institutional members to learn about the skills they consider when assessing candidates for new Masters- and Doctorate-level research positions. As a reminder, the 13 non-academic institutional members are:

- **Abt Associates**
- **AcademyHealth**
- **Acumen, LLC**
- **American Institutes for Research**
- **Annie E. Casey Foundation**
- **Brookings Institution**
- **Mathematica Policy Research**
- **MDRC**
- **RAND Corporation**
- **Urban Institute**
- **The Volcker Alliance**
- **W.E. Upjohn Institute**
- **Westat**

Over 90 percent of the non-academic institutional members responded to the survey.

Importance of Research Skills

For New Masters-level Research Positions

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not applicable
Basic quantitative data analysis	75%	17%	8%	0%
Advanced quantitative data analysis	25%	42%	25%	8%
Data analytics	8%	42%	33%	17%
Qualitative data analysis	17%	75%	8%	0%
Mixed-methods analysis	17%	83%	0%	0%
Cost-Benefit Analysis	9%	73%	9%	9%
Program evaluation study design: Evaluability assessment	25%	42%	25%	8%
Program evaluation study design: Formative assessment	25%	42%	17%	17%
Program evaluation study design: Summative assessment	25%	42%	17%	17%
Program evaluation study design: Impact Evaluation	25%	67%	0%	8%
Program evaluation study design: Quasi-experimental designs	25%	50%	8%	17%
Program evaluation study design: Implementation studies	33%	58%	0%	8%
Program evaluation study design: Other descriptive studies	25%	67%	8%	0%
Systematic reviews	33%	67%	0%	0%
Survey design	0%	83%	0%	17%
Performance measurement	17%	67%	0%	17%
Policy analysis	58%	42%	0%	0%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Importance of Research Skills

For New Doctorate-level Research Positions

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not applicable
Basic quantitative data analysis	83%	8%	0%	8%
Advanced quantitative data analysis	75%	8%	0%	17%
Data analytics	8%	58%	25%	8%
Qualitative data analysis	50%	42%	0%	8%
Mixed-methods analysis	58%	33%	0%	8%
Cost-Benefit Analysis	25%	50%	8%	17%
Program evaluation study design: Evaluability assessment	50%	33%	0%	17%
Program evaluation study design: Formative assessment	42%	33%	8%	17%
Program evaluation study design: Summative assessment	67%	17%	8%	8%
Program evaluation study design: Impact Evaluation	75%	17%	0%	8%
Program evaluation study design: Quasi-experimental designs	82%	9%	0%	9%
Program evaluation study design: Implementation studies	50%	33%	8%	8%
Program evaluation study design: Other descriptive studies	50%	42%	0%	8%
Systematic reviews	33%	58%	0%	8%
Survey design	42%	42%	0%	17%
Performance measurement	17%	58%	8%	17%
Policy analysis	67%	25%	0%	8%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Importance of Writing and Communication Skills

For New Masters-Level Research Positions

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not applicable
Literature reviews	58%	42%	0%	0%
Report writing	92%	8%	0%	0%
Non-technical writing	42%	33%	25%	0%
Writing for professional journals	0%	67%	25%	8%
Proposal writing	33%	50%	8%	8%
Ability to translate technical material into non-technical material for a lay audience	75%	25%	0%	0%
Data visualization skills	42%	50%	8%	0%
Oral communication/presentation skills for: Conference Presentation	42%	58%	0%	0%
Oral communication/presentation skills for: Client Interactions	75%	17%	0%	8%
Oral communication/presentation skills for: Business Development Networking Opportunities	33%	25%	17%	25%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Importance of Writing and Communication Skills

For New Doctorate-Level Research Positions

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not applicable
Literature reviews	64%	27%	0%	9%
Report writing	92%	0%	0%	8%
Non-technical writing	67%	17%	8%	8%
Writing for professional journals	42%	42%	8%	8%
Proposal writing	75%	8%	0%	17%
Ability to translate technical material into non-technical material for a lay audience	92%	0%	0%	8%
Data visualization skills	36%	55%	0%	9%
Oral communication/presentation skills for: Conference presentation	83%	8%	0%	8%
Oral communication/presentation skills for: Client interaction	83%	8%	0%	8%
Oral communication/presentation skills for: Business development networking opportunities	67%	8%	8%	17%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Importance of Other Experience or Skills

For New Masters-Level Research Positions

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not applicable
Contract or grant budgeting	0%	67%	25%	8%
Project management	50%	42%	0%	8%
Teaching experience	0%	17%	58%	25%
Professional experience in nonacademic organizations	33%	58%	8%	0%
Expertise in a particular policy area	33%	58%	8%	0%
A record of publications	0%	18%	73%	9%
Interpersonal Skills	83%	17%	0%	0%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Importance of Other Experience or Skills

For New Doctorate-Level Research Positions

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not applicable
Contract or grant budgeting	17%	50%	25%	8%
Project management	42%	42%	8%	8%
Teaching experience	0%	33%	33%	33%
Professional experience in nonacademic organizations	33%	50%	8%	8%
Expertise in a particular policy area	83%	8%	0%	8%
A record of publications	17%	67%	8%	8%
Interpersonal Skills	67%	25%	0%	8%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Use of Specific Software

Expected Use of Software among Masters-Level Researchers

	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely/Never
Study design software	0%	17%	83%
SAS	50%	17%	33%
STATA	50%	25%	25%
SPSS	8%	42%	50%
R	50%	25%	25%
Python	8%	58%	33%
Machine Learning	0%	55%	45%
MPlus	0%	36%	64%
ARCGIS	0%	55%	45%
Tableau	18%	55%	27%
D3	9%	9%	82%
Git/GitHub	27%	27%	45%
NVivo	17%	42%	42%
Excel	100%	0%	0%
Other quantitative software, specify below	0%	0%	100%
Other data analytics software, specify below	0%	0%	100%
Other geographic information systems software, specify below	0%	0%	100%
Other qualitative software, specify below	17%	0%	83%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Other responses: MS PowerPoint, MS Project

Use of Specific Software

Expected Use of Software among Doctorate-Level Researchers

	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely/Never
Study design software	9%	18%	73%
SAS	42%	25%	33%
STATA	42%	33%	25%
SPSS	8%	25%	67%
R	58%	25%	17%
Python	17%	50%	33%
Machine Learning	9%	45%	45%
MPlus	0%	27%	73%
ARCGIS	0%	45%	55%
Tableau	0%	55%	45%
D3	0%	50%	50%
Git/GitHub	18%	36%	45%
NVivo	25%	33%	42%
Excel	83%	8%	8%
Other quantitative software, specify below	0%	0%	100%
Other data analytics software, specify below	0%	0%	100%
Other geographic information systems software, specify below	0%	14%	86%
Other qualitative software, specify below	0%	0%	100%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Other responses: Mathlab

Where do Employers Recruit Candidates for New Masters- or Doctorate-level Research Positions?

Percent recruiting from the following source

Online, through popular job search sites	67%
Online, through niche job search sites	50%
At job fairs	33%
Directly through graduate programs	83%
Other	42%

Other responses: Association conference and publications e.g. APPAM, AEA; ASSA; Own website and staff networks