

It is important to note that this job description is a guide to the work you will initially be required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. It does not form part of your contract of employment.

Job Description for the post of:

Strategic Support Officer - Directorate Office EHA2049-0621

Reporting to: Head of Directorate Office

Accountable to: Head of Directorate Office

The Post

This post supports the University's Directorate Team in their key responsibilities, it is advertised at both Grade 6 and 7 as we are open to applications from a wide field of candidates, including those who may not have direct experience but have the right attitude and potential to develop in the role. If the successful candidate is appointed at Grade 6 the role and expectations will be tailored accordingly.

Through support for the Directorate, to play a critical role in the delivery of the University's strategic priorities.

In order to support Directorate members in delivering upon the aims and objectives in their portfolio, a broad range of activities will be required. In summary, the role-holder will: proactively support Directorate by scanning the external environment to identify emerging policy developments; undertake detailed analysis of data and reports to effectively brief Directorate on matters of strategic importance; translate policy into practice to support the continued success of the University.

About Directorate Office

Directorate Office comprises the

- Vice-Chancellor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) & University Secretary
- Pro Vice-Chancellor (External Relations)
- Three members of Executive support staff: Head of Directorate Office, Strategic Support Officer and Executive Assistant

The Directorate Support team assist Directorate in delivering upon their strategic objectives by providing a range of services including high level strategic, organisational and administrative support.

The Directorate Office deals with matters of strategic importance on a regular basis.

About you

You will pride yourself on your work ethic, personal integrity and positive attitude in the workplace.

You will be pro-active and enthusiastic with a commitment to higher education and delivering an exceptional and well-rounded strategic support offer. You will enjoy working in a fast-moving, policy influenced environment and have, or are committed to developing, a track record of delivering successful outcomes on an organisation-wide scale.

You will be confident using data/policy analysis and insights to make a significant contribution to evidence-based decision making.

You will enjoy working as part of a team, as well as using your own initiative, to provide outstanding strategic support to members of Directorate.

You will have excellent interpersonal and communication skills and use these to work collaboratively with colleagues across the institution to deliver measurable and impactful outcomes.

You will be confident in liaising with senior internal and external stakeholders and appreciate how to deal with sensitive and confidential information appropriately.

You will be a good networker and credible in representing the University on internal and external groups. You will be prepared to travel on University business as required.

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Support

1. To provide a high-quality strategic support service to Directorate members. You will play a leading role in contributing to successful outcomes of the University. Strategic support will consist of a range of services including:
 - Consistent monitoring of the external policy landscape
 - Policy analysis and insights
 - Data analysis and insights
 - Research and content creation
 - Production of key institutional documents (including strategies, policies and reports)
 - Providing expert advice and guidance to institutional groups

- Significant contribution to evidence-based decision making
- Project leadership and implementation of key strategic requirements

Consistent monitoring of external policy landscape

2. Proactively monitor the external policy and regulatory landscape to identify trends, patterns and developments which could impact the University. This aspect of the role will require consistent horizon scanning of multiple intelligence sources and you will use the insights gained to brief colleagues and inform evidence-based decision making within the institution.
3. Distil key findings so information can be easily accessed by Directorate members and actively use your research to devise recommendations for improvement especially in relation to student satisfaction, retention and outcomes activity.

Policy analysis and insights

4. To analyse external policy developments and anticipate potential consequences for the institution.
5. Use a range of sources to gather policy insights which can form the evidence base to devise internal responses, ensuring we are appropriately responsive and aligned to external requirements.

Data analysis and insights

6. To be the data lead for Directorate Office and utilise key business intelligence software to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data.
7. You will analyse both internal and externally generated data sets with a view to using the insights gained to aid strategic decision making; this will include the Regulator's lead indicators, NSS, Student Retention and Graduate Outcomes.

Research and content creation

8. To proactively undertake research in relation to Directorate's portfolios. This research will be used to inform forward planning, high level reports, speeches and presentations. You will be responsible for ensuring this content is accurate, relevant and engaging for the intended audience.

Production of key institutional documents

9. To produce highly accurate, complex reports and lead on the development and writing of key institutional strategies and policies.
10. To ensure these documents have the desired impact you will also lead on formulating the necessary action plans and responses which flow from them. This activity will require consultation and negotiation with relevant colleagues across the Institution.

11. You will lead on developing communication strategies associated with key institutional documents and will present your findings and recommendations to senior staff and relevant institutional committees and working groups.

Providing expert advice and guidance to institutional groups

12. To provide expert advice and guidance to key strategic groups. Use your professional expertise to present useful content and solutions to sector challenges.
13. Work in partnership with departments across the University to ensure there is effective support in place for Directorate members to achieve their strategic objectives.

Project leadership and implementation of key strategic requirements

14. Lead on a number of high profile, institution-wide strategic projects. As projects will be on an organisation-wide scale involving many Departments, you will directly project manage and oversee activity to ensure that projects and initiatives are on course for a successful outcome.
15. Ensure Directorate members and the Head of Directorate Office are kept up to date with progress and highlight any issues which require resolution or deliberation.
16. Deploy project leadership capability to ensure that key strategic requirements are delivered upon and essential operational activity is embedded. You will ensure there is a focus on delivery of measurable outputs.
17. As project lead, you will act as a role model and will pay particular attention to cultivating a sense of collective responsibility amongst project team members, demonstrating that you are able to take ownership of matters, including those which appear difficult at first sight.
18. Other appropriate duties as determined by the Head of Directorate Office.

In addition to the above all Edge Hill University staff are required to:

- a) Adhere to all Edge Hill's policies and procedures, including Equality and Diversity and Health and Safety
- b) Respect confidentiality: all confidential information should be kept in confidence and not released to unauthorised persons
- c) Undertake appropriate learning and development activities as required
- d) Participate in Edge Hill's Performance Review and Development Scheme

- e) Adhere to Edge Hill University's environmental policy and guidelines and undertake tasks in a sustainable manner
- f) Demonstrate excellent Customer Care in dealing with all customers

Salary: Grade 6 or 7. The role is advertised at both Grade 6 and 7 as we are open to applications from a wide field of candidates, including those who may not have direct experience but have the right attitude and potential to develop in the role. If the successful candidate is appointed at Grade 6 the role and expectations will be tailored accordingly.

Grade 6 - £27,511-£30,046

Grade 7 - £30,942 - £33,797

Hours: 36.25 hours per week

Candidates should note that shortlisting will be based on information provided on the application form with regard to the applicant's ability to meet the criteria outlined in the Person Specification attached.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Strategic Support Officer – Directorate Office EHA2049-0621

CRITERIA:

Applicants should provide evidence of their ability to meet the following criteria:

		Essential	Desirable	*Method of assessment (I/A/S/T/P)
Qualifications				
1	An undergraduate degree or equivalent experience	*		A
2	Evidence of continuing professional development	*		A
Experience and Knowledge				
3	Experience of working in, or desire to work in, a busy, policy influenced environment	*		A/I
4	Previous experience of working in Higher Education		*	A
5	Knowledge of, or interest in, the Higher Education sector	*		A/I
6	Experience of providing, or capacity to provide, a strategic support service to senior leaders in a complex organisation	*		A/I
7	Experience of monitoring, or capacity to monitor, a policy landscape to identify trends, patterns and developments which could impact an organisation	*		A/I
8	Experience of utilising, or capacity to utilise, policy/data analysis and insights to devise appropriate responses	*		A/I/T
9	Evidence of significant contribution to, or capacity to contribute to, evidence-based decision making in a complex organisation	*		A/I/T
10	Experience of leading, or capacity to lead, high profile and institution wide projects	*		A/I/T
11	Experience of supporting, or willingness to support, key strategic groups		*	A/I
12	Experience of developing, or capacity to develop, key institutional documentation		*	A/I
Abilities/Skills				
13	Project leadership skills	*		A/I
14	Ability to analyse policy and data, offering valuable insights	*		A/I/T
15	Ability to analyse data and offer valuable insights	*		A/I/T
16	Excellent distillation and communication (written and oral) skills	*		A/I/T

17	Commitment to teamwork and collaboration	*		A/I
18	High level research skills		*	A/I/T
19	Ability to provide expert advice and guidance		*	A/I/T
20	High levels of accuracy and attention to detail	*		A/I/T
21	Proactive, forward looking and willing to take ownership	*		A/I
22	Willing to contribute positively to continuous improvement and enhancement in the workplace	*		A/I
23	A high level of personal integrity and an appreciation of how to deal with sensitive and confidential information.	*		A/I

***Method of Assessment**

(I-Interview, A-Application, S-Supporting Statement, T-Test, P-Presentation)

Please note that applications will be assessed against the Person Specification using this criteria.