



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

APPOINTMENT OF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HR AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MAY 2022



dixon walter

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INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HR AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Dear Candidate,

I want to welcome you to the University of Salford and thank you for your interest in the role of Executive Director of HR and Organisational Development.

We are proud at Salford to be a University which derives strength from our industrial past and uses that to shape our current and future contribution to academic achievement, skills development, discovery, and our economic, social and cultural impact. Working with industry is in our DNA, and we continue to build strong relationships with our partners, providing real-world experience for our students. With over 20,000 students and 2,500 colleagues we are a significant business in our own right. We have a main campus in Salford, on the border with Manchester City Centre, and a significant presence in the heart of Media City UK. We are proud to be part of Salford, and we are truly a University of our community.



As part of the University's leadership team, and reporting directly to me, you will be joining an ambitious University that is changing and evolving quickly. Our people are key to our success as a University and in this role you will have the opportunity to lead and deliver our People Plan and significant strategic and operational change, which will help us shape our future. If you are excited by the opportunity to take on a varied and interesting portfolio and have a proven track record in delivering significant change, I would like to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Huw Williams', with a long, sweeping underline.

Huw Williams
Chief Operating Officer



ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

The University of Salford formed from a merger of technical colleges and institutes, created to educate and train a growing workforce. With a past entrenched in industry, we have continued to build on our principles of getting students work-ready.

Since receiving the Royal Charter in 1967 we have become a truly global institution that serves the needs of industry, commerce and education.

Our university community encompasses over 23,000 students, 2,500 staff and 170,000 alumni who come to study, teach and research here from all around the world.

Our thriving industry-focused research is cutting edge, rising to the challenges and opportunities of the fourth industrial revolution.

As 'thinking machines' continue to replace human tasks and jobs, and smart cities become a reality, our focus for the next few years is to strengthen our position specifically in robotics, digital and smart living. We already have a solid base on which to build from, as these three areas cut across everything that we already do.

Whether it be: research into 'gentle' robots that can handle delicate items on a production line, working with industry to deliver our leading prosthetics work that helps patients recover their movement more quickly, or students learning about systems that will safely carry people from A to B in autonomous vehicles; everything we do works alongside industry in innovative ways to meet the needs of our environment and workforce of the future.

With these strong foundations, we look forward to even greater achievements in the future.



THE VISION

By pioneering exceptional industry partnerships, we will lead the way in real-world experiences preparing students for life.

Our Vision explains what we want the University to be, how, and why. Collaboration with external partners is in our DNA. Since our beginnings in 1896 as Salford Royal Technical Institute, we have served industry and advanced the skills of working people.

We have a clear mission as a civic institution to:

- Educate the next generation of modern industrialists, innovators, creators, entrepreneurs and leaders.
- Develop the skills and knowledge needed to

capitalise on the next industrial revolution.

- Work in collaboration with public and private sector partners to address local and global economic and societal challenges.
- We are a proud anchor institution in our city and our ambitious plans for the future reflect our desire to drive change and progress at a local, national and international level.



OUR INDUSTRY COLLABORATION STRATEGY

DELIVERING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH COLLABORATION

We believe in making a tangible contribution to industry, improving opportunities for all, and living by strongly held social justice values. This has forged our identity and our mission. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds and we actively encourage those from underrepresented socioeconomic groups to study with us. Our mission is to prepare our students for the careers of the future. Collaboration and co-creation between industry partners; students and staff come to life across campus, to give our students a range of experiences outside of the lecture theatre. Work placements, live briefs, community and practice-based projects provide real-life experience that puts academic theory into practice.

Industry collaboration is our single strategic priority and offers innovative solutions for all stakeholders and an exceptional student experience, transforming the traditional academic offering to better meet industry and student needs.

OUR PRIORITIES

As technology continues to have an ever-increasing influence on the world of work, our focus will be on strengthening our expertise initially in robotics, digital and smart living as the catalyst to grow interdisciplinary opportunities across our four schools. We will use our research in these three lead areas to inform the development and delivery of our curriculum, and work with our industry partners to equip our students with the skills required to succeed, now and in the future.

Reflecting our industry-led, research-informed approach to education, in the coming years we aim to become nationally and internationally renowned in these areas which have a huge potential for growth and will be able to generate new income for the University. They also support the Government's and Greater Manchester's Industrial Strategy, which outlines four key areas where Britain can lead the global technological revolution: artificial intelligence and big data, clean growth, the future of mobility and meeting the needs of an ageing society.



EDI AT SALFORD

We are committed to and strive for equality of opportunity for all of our students and colleagues as we recognise and celebrate their diversity. For this statement and strategy to be made a reality, effective leadership and management will be provided and a corresponding commitment sought from every member of staff and all the student body.

As part of our policy, we promise:

- To provide an environment where all people are respected and treated fairly, regardless of irrelevant characteristics or distinctions.
- To develop a culture in which diversity is celebrated.
- Not to discriminate unfairly or illegally against anyone.
- To take positive action to promote equality, diversity and fair access.
- To embed equality and diversity at the heart of our mission and values. This includes taking action against individuals who behave in a discriminatory manner.

At Salford we embrace diversity and actively seek to attract individuals with unique backgrounds and perspectives. To build a more sustainable future, we recognise we need the best team – a team with a diverse mix of people and skills, where everyone feels welcome and able to succeed. We are dedicated in helping to close the diversity gap across the HE sector and would love to see more widespread representation from females, LGBTQ+, Black, Asian and Minoritized Ethnic employees, as well as those from a variety of cultures and ethnicity to veterans and the differently abled. Supporting diversity and inclusion is a big part of who we are, we are not looking for people to fit into our culture but to add to it!

We are proud of the diversity of our student population as a truly representative widening participation community which is leading in the sector. Much work has been done to identify the Salford student demographic using Mosaic profiling and to identify their associated needs. For further details, please see the **EDI Annual Report**.



THE ROLE

The Executive Director of HR and OD will report directly to the Chief Operating Officer and has an integral role to work with colleagues in the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team to drive the strategic objectives of the University. Our people are essential to the success of the University so you will be leading an exciting, innovative yet challenging agenda.

As we look to respond to the ever-changing context and regulatory framework in which we operate we continue to seek best practice. This is a fantastic opportunity to come and work with us to shape the future of our human resources and the HR team and to lead and refresh our current People Plan.

You will also be responsible for leading our HR team and be highly effective at engaging with our colleagues. We have a range of strategic priorities that you will be instrumental in delivering whilst also ensuring that we improve operational effectiveness. In doing so you will quickly get to know our organisation, your team and key stakeholders including our trade union partners, and you will quickly establish yourself as a respected colleague and leader.

This is a role with a wide remit, and you will need to be able to flex between strategic leadership and the drive for operational change.



THE ROLE

We want you to support the successes already achieved and of which we are proud, such as being an accredited living wage foundation employer; playing a lead role in the Salford living wage action group; in supporting our colleagues wellbeing including those who have been impacted by Covid; providing an environment where they can thrive in their chosen career pathways, and by ensuring all our colleagues have their voices heard through their trade unions, colleague networks or our colleague voice channels.

The near-term priorities for the University are:

- To ensure the University can meet the threshold metrics that we envisage the Office for Students will establish as an outcome of their current consultation.
- To develop in light of the growing recognition of policy makers of the importance of technical skills at higher levels including the value of industry accredited or recognised micro- credentials and the benefit to students in the world of work.
- Through the Innovation Strategy, invest in areas of expertise in which we have demonstrable excellence sought by industry. We are working in partnership with Salford City Council and English Cities Fund to develop Crescent Innovation (a physical area adjacent to the north of the Peel Campus) as a core of innovation in Greater Manchester and recognised nationally and internationally.

- To continue the development and recruitment of excellence in our staffing base and to recognise and reward outstanding performance.
- To coordinate and develop the significant work we already do in relation to environmental sustainability including the target of net zero carbon by 2038.

In support of the University's near-term priorities those for the Executive Director are:

- To develop the remuneration and recognition offer to be market competitive recognising significant changes in expectation and to clearly reward excellent performance.
- To continue to strengthen the PDR process to be outcome based and support excellent performance.
- To position the University to maintain a stable employment environment in light of potential changes to pay negotiation mechanisms and pension provision.
- To provide insight and appropriate interventions on Equality Diversity and Inclusivity matters.

This will be your opportunity to take this team and the ambition of the University forward. It is a great opportunity to join and lead a fantastic team, with passion and attitude (in a good way!), who have a clear commitment to our people and students.



THE ROLE

RESPONSIBILITIES/DUTIES

- **Strategic Change:** The strategic change that you will be responsible for aligns to the goals contained within our People Plan and the key values of our University. The areas are wide ranging and include reward and recognition, driving high performance, colleague engagement, delivering change and strategic organisational development – all underpinned by high quality management information and data analysis.
- **Industrial Relations:** We are a unionised environment and have worked closely with our recognised Trade Unions (UNISON and UCU) to build constructive relationships. You will be required to maintain and build on these existing relationships to enable us to work effectively in partnership as we deliver in an ever-changing environment and within a national agenda, managing potential disputes.
- **Core Operational Excellence:** We have significantly improved our core operational activity, including our business partnering teams, but we are ambitious and want to provide the best service we can to our stakeholders. You will lead the team in continuing the development of our operational, and business as usual delivery to our Schools and Professional Services teams.
- **Talent Acquisition & Retention:** In a competitive landscape we are looking to modernise and innovate the way in which we attract and retain talent to ensure we are continuously improving the student experience and placing ourselves in a strong position to support research and enterprise activities. Clear alignment to the University strategic aims through impactful performance conversations, coherent learning and development interventions and leadership at every level will be critical.
- **Technology and Systems:** We have a critical need to update our HR systems, as these underpin some of our strategic projects but will also allow for transactional efficiencies and robust reporting functionality to enable us to prioritise colleague and student experience.
- **Reward and Recognition:** We have significant opportunity to support our culture through reward and recognition, enabling the University to be responsive to a changing marketplace whilst operating in a national regulatory framework. The Executive Director of HR and OD will challenge our thinking and help us to creatively recognise high performance whilst committing to our broader societal responsibilities.
- **Health, Safety and Wellbeing:** You will also be responsible for leading Health, Safety and Wellbeing across the University. As we move into the post-COVID way of working, you have a real opportunity to help us shape the future of the working environment, including how we support work/life balance and mental wellbeing.
- **Leadership and Management Development:** We have seen a positive impact of recent initiatives in this area but recognise we still have some way to go when it comes to leadership capability and accountability. You will support, encourage and where necessary hold to account senior leaders to establish and own the “people agenda” appropriate to their area of responsibility.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate should have:

- MCIPD or significant relevant experience of working in senior positions within HR functions.

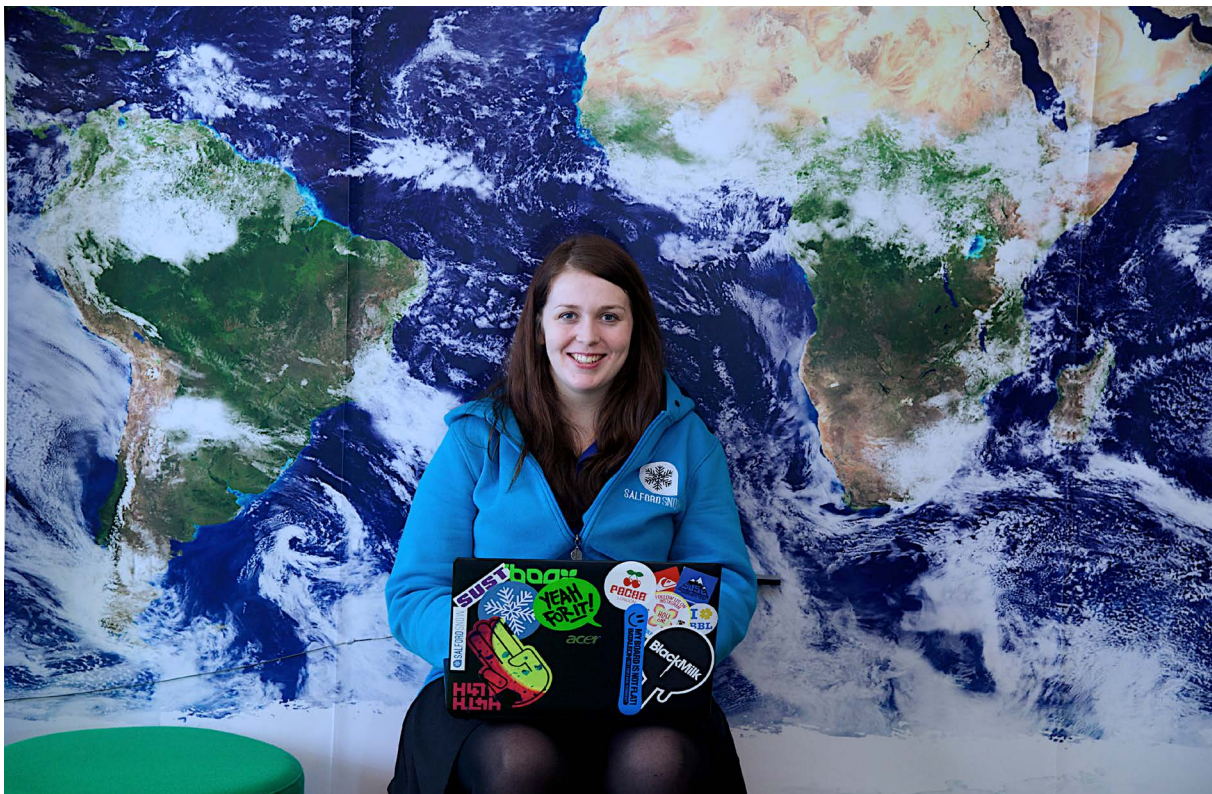
The successful candidate should have:

- Significant experience of leading a large HR team within a complex and diverse organisation.
- Experience of operating at a strategic level to identify, develop and implement HR projects, linked to the objectives outlined in a long term People Plan.
- Experience of building strong and constructive industrial relations with trade union partners. Experience of working with formally recognised trade unions would be useful but is not essential.
- Proven experience of leading, shaping and delivering change, preferably in a unionised and complex organisation, while being able to maintain a commercial mindset.
- Experience of driving a wide and varied HR strategic agenda, including reward, high performance, colleague engagement, colleague communications and leadership capability.
- Experience of embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plans effectively.
- Experience of leading organisational health, safety and wellbeing requirements, with a focus on the future world of work.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate should demonstrate:

- Innovative HR practice, with the ability to bring new ideas and leading edge thinking that could be beneficially deployed in the sector.
- The current dynamics and trends of the UK higher education environment, policy frameworks and understanding of the key factors and issues.
- Outstanding communication, engagement and interpersonal skills including the ability to communicate a clear vision for a wide range of audiences in a variety of media.
- The ability to build credible relationships with senior colleagues, to influence thinking, and to use knowledge to inform and drive decision making.
- Ability to work at pace, working in partnership with senior colleagues across the University to deliver our ambitious people plan.
- A commitment to supporting the development of others, combined with a strongly collegiate and team oriented working style.
- The capacity to inspire confidence, motivate and lead with vision towards tangible benefit realisation.
- Ability to work collaboratively with multiple stakeholders, ensuring cross school collaboration and the sharing of best practice.



HOW TO APPLY

The University of Salford will be supported in this appointment process by the executive search firm Dixon Walter who will support the appointing panel in the discharge of its duties, both to assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements of the role and to identify the widest possible field of qualified candidates.

If you would welcome an informal discussion about the Executive Director of HR & OD role and requirements then please contact Emma Wilkins on emma@dixonwalter.co.uk.

The closing date for applications is **Monday 06th June 2022**.

The final interviews will take place on **Thursday 14th July 2022**.

Your application should include:

- a letter of application setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the essential requirements in the Person Specification.
- a comprehensive curriculum vitae.
- details of three referees (Referees will not be contacted without your permission).
- a completed Personal details form (available via the website link below).

Please send your application to Emma Wilkins (email as above).

Further details about the process and how to apply are available at: <https://www.dixonwalter.co.uk/opportunities/executive-director-of-hr-and-od-salford/>.



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