

# Director of Student Success

## Job description

### **Job Title:**

Director of Student Success

### **Reporting to:**

Vice Principal and PVC Learning, Teaching and Students

### **Location:**

Paisley Campus and other campuses as required to meet business needs

### **Job Purpose:**

Provide leadership across the University's range of student-facing functions and services, including student engagement and advising (SEAT), student administration (Registry) and the suite of discrete professional student services. To act as a voice for students and their issues at a senior level in the organisation.

### **Dimensions:**

- Team – 70+ FTE
- Manage the budget for the function and lead other University-wide strategic projects, seconded/fixed term staff and operational budgets, which are agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- The Team provides a service across and beyond the University

### **Accountabilities:**

- Lead the strategic development of a holistic, outstanding and distinctive student journey at UWS, and ensure that our students experience seamless and integrated high quality services that contributes to their success.
- Work in partnership with students, the Student Engagement and Advising Team, and the central marketing team to develop innovative student communications, personalised support and engagement. Develop and deliver sector-leading student engagement models.
- Forge key strategic alliances with other institutions nationally and internationally, and with (inter)national student-related and student advocacy organisations to ensure that UWS contributes to, and benefits from, good practice and impact studies around the student experience.
- Ensure that the student hubs create a vibrant student heart to the Scottish campuses delivering a customer focused triage service for staff and students, alongside providing a comprehensive online service that can be accessed anytime and anywhere.
- Provide strategic leadership by working with colleagues across the University to deliver high quality, celebratory events from graduation to Open Days and the Freshers' Fair. Constantly benchmark against the UK Higher Education sector to ensure these respond to expectations.
- Be a sector leader in developing innovative student services that address the increasing concerns around student wellbeing, welfare and mental health, disability support, academic success, careers advice, international student support, financial support, and others as needed.
- Create an integrated student administration team that supports students through all the important transition stages in the student lifecycle, taking institutional responsibility for improving the University's retention figures.
- Support academic colleagues by providing excellent strategic leadership to academic programme administration and registry services, utilizing local delivery opportunities wherever possible. Develop and deliver efficient and effective underpinning services ranging from the registry to timetabling, guaranteeing quality data to internal stakeholders and external agencies e.g. HESA.
- Ensure joined up working between the Student Life Directorate and other teams within professional services and the academic schools and define service level KPIs and methods of evaluating the quality of the service to ensure continuous improvement.
- Take strategic oversight of UWS-wide change projects, and ensure appropriate programme and project management support is in place to ensure delivery of key corporate objectives.

## **Planning & Organising:**

- Work autonomously in delivering the objectives of the role.
- Responsible for the delivery of student journey objectives, ensuring successful implementation and continuous improvement.
- The planning timeframes are normally long term and, in most cases, have a University- wide impact.
- Respond to new and complex emerging situations and, as relevant, identify and submit proposals for specific projects, managing or supporting progress towards implementation.
- Manage activities and work independently using initiative within the guidelines set by the University/ legislation/professional bodies.

## **Working Relationships:**

- Work closely with the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group and Leadership team, working in partnership with others to achieve the University's Strategy.
- Facilitate the implementation of University-wide change agendas through engaging, persuading, and influencing other colleagues with no direct managerial control, and working effectively with other academic and external partners.
- Play a significant role in chairing University-wide committees and a leading role in cross-University projects.
- External negotiation and partnership working, building strong external networks to keep abreast of sector-wide issues is essential. External relationships are diverse across a range of external bodies, and range in nature.
- Maintain a strong external network and to effectively represent the University in a range of formal and informal situations.

## **Qualifications, Experience, Skills & Knowledge required:**

### **Qualifications**

#### **Essential**

- Degree or significant demonstrable relevant experience

### **Experience**

#### **Essential**

- Extensive experience of operating with a high degree of credibility in a senior role within a student support environment.
- Significant leadership experience including managing large teams, budgetary management and leading complex projects, demonstrating breadth of understanding of context and complexity of the national and international HE environment.
- Proven experience at a senior level of leading and inspiring a successful team, preferably within a HE environment, developing high performing leaders, employees and teams.
- Proven ability to drive both structural and cultural change in a student support context.
- A track record of achievement in the drafting, implementation, analysis and evaluation of strategy and policy in a large and complex organisation.
- Experience of resource allocation and planning, dealing with complex scenarios and requirements.
- Evidence of the ability to successfully meet challenging targets and planned objectives.
- Evidence of devising, developing and delivering business plans.

## **Skills & Knowledge**

### **Essential**

- Strong strategic leadership skills, focusing three to five years or more ahead with the ability to effectively direct resources to achieve University strategic goals with respect to the student journey.
- A deep understanding of the factors effecting the student experience and determining student success, and the ability to translate that understanding into leveraging change.
- Strong communication, political and influencing skills, in relation to all levels of University staff, engagement with high level committees, external representatives, stakeholders and bodies.
- Demonstrable emotional intelligence and empathy, to strengthen the leadership of change.
- Creative problem-solving skills with the ability and initiative to develop solutions to overcome challenge, ensuring implementation and effecting change.
- Strong judgement and effective decision-making, including the ability to successfully conclude highly sensitive and confidential negotiations.
- Demonstrable ability to analyse and interpret complex datasets and to use data to inform change.
- Strong strategic understanding and knowledge of international HE and institutional issues relating to students in higher education, with the aptitude to develop effective internal and external collaborative relationships .
- Comprehensive understanding of the regulatory and governance context within HE and its impact on students.
- Ability to understand, interpret and influence University policies, procedures and working practices in the area of the student experience.
- Ability to work and respond within challenging timeframes, adopting a flexible and positive approach to ensure outcomes are effectively delivered.