

Job Description

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| Job Title: | Head of Strategic Planning and Performance |
| Faculty/Professional Directorate: | Strategic Planning, Performance, and Insight |
| Subject Group/Team | Strategic Planning & Performance |
| Reporting to: | Executive Director: Planning, Projects & Operations |
| Duration: | Continuing |
| Job Family: | Administration |
| Pay Band: | 9 |
| Benchmark Profile: | Manager (Administration) Band 9 |
| DBS Disclosure requirement: | |
| Vacancy Reference: | |

Details Specific to the Post

Background and Context

The Strategic Planning and Performance team forms part of the overall Strategic Planning, Performance and Insight function.

This function coordinates strategic planning across the institution and links this to performance tracking and monitoring, to enable the delivery of strategic priorities at multiple levels of the organisation.

- Coordinates strategic planning processes and administration.
- Supports workforce and capital investment planning.
- Leads student number planning and scenario modelling.
- Provides a business partnering role to Faculties and supports the process for faculty performance reviews.
- Manages the fee-setting process.
- Oversees KPI development and reporting.
- Coordinates statutory returns.
- Manages the Planning Officer role on behalf of the overall Service.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities of the post

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance provides strategic leadership for the university's planning and performance functions, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and priorities. This role is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of planning frameworks, student number forecasting, and performance monitoring systems. The postholder plays a key role in supporting the university's executive team by providing high-quality analysis and advice to inform strategic decision-making.

They lead the coordination of the annual planning cycle, integrating academic, financial, and workforce planning processes. This includes managing the fee-setting process, overseeing capital investment planning, and ensuring that planning outputs are consistent, evidence-based, and aligned with institutional KPIs. The role also involves close collaboration with faculties and professional services through a business partnering model, supporting local planning and performance reviews.

In addition, the Head oversees the statutory reporting function, ensuring compliance with external regulatory requirements and the timely submission of data returns. They work closely with the Strategic Insight & Analytics and Business Intelligence teams to ensure that planning is underpinned by robust data and insight. The role requires strong leadership, excellent communication skills, and the ability to influence at all levels of the organisation. They will write reports to advise and influence senior levels and will be able to explain complex and technical ideas in user-friendly ways.

The Head sets the strategic direction and priorities for the Strategic Planning & Performance function, defining priorities in alignment with overall strategic and Directorate goals and ensuring that an effective level of service delivery and stakeholder experience is maintained across the area. They take effective decisions that consider the wider impact on University strategic objectives and applies strong judgement when the position is ambiguous. They consult on decisions as appropriate and take accountability for the action taken on behalf of the function.

They facilitate and maintain strong relationships between professional services and academic colleagues across the Institution to ensure integrated and collaborative working.

The Head manages the professional development of the Strategic Planning & Performance staff to ensure they efficiently deliver the current and future service requirements and continuously meet Institutional expectations. They maintain professional networking relationships within the HE Sector, enabling best practice and CPD opportunities for the function. They apply advanced people management principles to influence and guide colleagues and stakeholders, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment. This includes leading by example, inspiring and motivating others, and proactively addressing any observed behaviours that deviate from standards, even without direct line management authority.

GENERIC JOB DESCRIPTION

The job duties and responsibilities listed below are intended to describe the general nature of the role. The duties and responsibilities and the balance between the elements in the role may change or vary over time depending on the specific needs at a specific point in time or due to changing needs in the department. Candidates should note that there may not be an immediate requirement to carry out all the activities listed below.

Overall Purpose of the Role

- The role holder:
 - Will be a professional specialist with high-level expertise and will have a considerable degree of independent professional responsibility and discretion, working to broad parameters and policy guidance.
 - Will have responsibility for adapting or changing the service to ensure the appropriateness of, and the quality of the work and contribute to setting overall standards for the service across a function or area of the institution.
 - Will influence decisions and developments within the University and contribute to setting overall standards across the University, Faculty or Department.
 - Has responsibility for the operational planning and organisation of projects, an area of work, and/or teams. Sets performance standards and establishes monitoring procedures to keep track of progress and provide input to longer term planning.
 - Applies creativity to devise varied solutions to problems where there is a mass of information or diverse, partial and conflicting data.

Main Work Activities

Communication

- Advise SMT and other Senior University managers on the activity of a range of student/department/faculty issues in order to inform the development and implementation of future strategy.
- Advise Academic and Administrative senior management on specialist issues
- Monitor and report, as appropriate, on the delivery of core business against agreed targets to:
 - Identify where remedial action is required where performance does not meet agreed targets.
 - Review plans to take account of the need to adapt to changing circumstances.

Teamwork

- Management responsibility for a service/function/department: is required to manage the relationship between teams and ensure they interact effectively to achieve the common purpose of the institution.

Liaison and Networking

- Ensure the development of effective ongoing relationships with University staff to align existing activity with the strategic direction of the department/faculty.
- Develop, manage and maintain productive strategic relationships and networks with senior representatives in a broad range of private and public sector partners to assist the continuing development, reputation and effectiveness of the University.
- Represent the University at a senior level at regional and national meetings, conferences and events relating to this area of activity.
- Be an active member of emerging networks.

Service Delivery

- Responsible for the overall service of the area which includes:
 - Setting standards to meet customer expectations.
 - Monitor standards and levels of service.
 - Obtain feedback and use research to inform developments and ensure quality.
 - Take appropriate action on the impact of external factors.

Planning and Organisation

- Lead the development, implementation and delivery of the University's strategy.
- Plan, co-ordinate and be responsible for the delivery of projects and to play a key role in future strategic development for the continued development of the area.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures.

Analysis/Reporting

- Ensure robust management, monitoring and financial systems are in place.
- Analyse data to provide timely and accurate information, forecast and advice to Senior Managers to inform business plans that are set in the context of University strategy and policies.

Additionally the post holder will be required to:

- Fulfil the employees' duties described in the University's health and safety policies and co-operate with the health and safety arrangements in place within the department. May be required to undertake specific health and safety roles on request e.g. Display screen equipment assessor, departmental safety officer, fire warden
- Fulfil the managers' responsibilities as described in the University's health and safety policies. These duties include responsibility for ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place for activities within your area of control and for ensuring appropriate health and safety training is in place.
- Support staff to demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory behaviour. This role includes making time available for staff to undertake mandatory equality and diversity training
- Raise awareness amongst staff and support staff to fulfil their responsibilities to comply with University regulations, policies and procedures
- Be an active and supportive citizen of the University community working collaboratively with fellow colleagues across the University to support the delivery of strategically important activity. Examples include supporting at open/applicant days, graduation or clearing activities.

COMPETENCY SPECIFICATION

To fulfil your role, you will need certain knowledge, skills and competencies. The following competency specification provides a framework within which your performance will be assessed. The interview assessment may include, for example, testing on IT skills.

The Competencies set out below are essential and are core requirements needed to perform the role and any candidate who fails the requirement will not be taken forward for further assessment or to interview.

| Competency | Identified by |
|--|------------------------------|
| Knowledge and Experience Is a professional with proven experience in leading strategic planning within a large, complex organisation. | Application/Interview |
| A relevant degree or equivalent qualification and/or experience. | Application/Interview |
| Has substantial management experience. | Application/Interview |
| Can demonstrate the ability to effectively manage health and safety issues across a range of functions within the job specification. Takes personal responsibility for leading by example and ensures that a robust framework of risk management policies and procedures are in place to protect both individual members of staff and University liabilities. | Application/Interview |
| Has an active approach to continuing professional development/undertaking training as appropriate for personal and professional development. | Application/Interview |
| Communication (Oral and Written) Can demonstrate the ability to summarise complex ideas or information which may be highly detailed, technical or specialist. | Application/Interview |
| Teamwork and Motivation Develops objectives in ways that enable team members to contribute and identify with collective objectives. Finds ways for individuals to achieve their objectives and development plans without compromising the team's priorities. | Application/Interview |
| Liaison and Networking Can demonstrate the ability to actively seek to build productive and enduring relationships between internal and/or external bodies to benefit the University. | Application/Interview |
| Service Delivery Can demonstrate the ability to set standards sufficiently high to meet customer expectations. Monitors standards and levels of service, obtains feedback and uses research to inform developments and ensure quality. Is aware of external factors that may impact on services and takes appropriate action to minimise potential damage. | Application/Interview |
| Decision Making | Application/Interview |

Can demonstrate the ability to consider the wider impact of decisions, assesses possible outcomes and their likelihood. Uses judgement to make decisions with limited or ambiguous data and takes into account multiple factors. Distinguishes between the need to make a decision, when to defer and when not to take a decision.

Planning and Organisation

Can demonstrate the ability to identify future demands and opportunities and develop longer term plans. Co-ordinates the work of others to improve performance and use of resources. Involves other areas appropriately and co-ordinates effort and resources so standards, performance and shared objectives are achieved.

Application/Interview

Initiative and Problem Solving

Can demonstrate the ability to initiate processes and procedures to resolve new problems. Anticipates possible implementation difficulties and identifies practical ways of overcoming or preventing them. Takes account of others and the broader context when generating options.

Application/Interview

Analysis/Reporting

Can demonstrate the ability to design and use data gathering and analytical methods appropriate for each investigation. Recognises and accurately interprets patterns and trends. Recognises when additional data is required and identifies appropriate sources. Produces reports and identifies key issues and findings.

Application/Interview