

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Policy Officer (Learning & Teaching), full-time

RESPONSIBLE TO: Manager/Policy Adviser (Learning and Teaching)

JOB SUMMARY: This is an important role in Universities Scotland, which is the representative body for Scotland's universities. Universities Scotland works to influence the policy and financial environment to promote universities' success. The post is part of the Learning & Teaching team in Universities Scotland. The team consists of the Manager/Policy Adviser and two policy officers. The post holder will support Universities Scotland's policy development. This will include:

- servicing meetings,
- drafting policy papers and other material,
- undertaking research, surveys and consultative work,
- liaising with senior university managers to develop policy proposals,
- representing Universities Scotland on committees/working groups and
- liaising with external organisations.

The post holder will report to the Manager/Policy Adviser (Learning & Teaching).

Main responsibilities

Policy

To support the Manager/Policy Adviser (Learning & Teaching) in the development and execution of policy, particularly relating to learning & teaching and the promotion of opportunity for learners from diverse backgrounds.

As part of this, to support the Manager/Policy Adviser (Learning & Teaching) with advice, information and executive action (drawing on qualitative and quantitative information as appropriate) on areas of work that may include:

- Quality enhancement;
- Widening access;
- Retention;
- Employability;
- Skills;
- European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process);
- Curriculum for Excellence;
- Student admissions;
- Equality and diversity;
- Student support;
- Student experience; and
- Credit and qualifications.

To be US's lead on key aspects of these policy areas as assigned, ensuring that the sector is aware of and can contribute to relevant policy and legislative developments.

Secretariat

To provide (subject to the direction of the Manager/Policy Adviser (Learning & Teaching)) a secretariat service to support the work of either the Learning & Teaching Committee or the Teaching Quality Forum, and any short-life sub-groups as directed. This will include meetings arrangement, agenda planning, commissioning and writing papers, ensuring an adequate record of meetings is kept, and ensuring that committee decisions are executed.

Team role

To work flexibly and co-operatively with other team members in the Learning & Teaching team and the wider Universities Scotland team, especially on issues which have implications for other policy areas.

To offer informed support to the Public Affairs team in its work with the media and political opinion-formers.

General

To assist in the arrangement of Universities Scotland events and externally focused activities as appropriate.

To help to respond to enquiries from universities or other stakeholders.

To represent Universities Scotland at external events, meetings and conferences where appropriate.

To deputise for the Manager/Policy Adviser (Learning & Teaching) on learning & teaching issues in their absence.

To undertake any other such duties or general tasks and hours of work as may reasonably be required and to work in other locations within the organisation.

This job description will be reviewed and amended in the light of changing professional demands.

A job description is not a rigid or inflexible document but acts to provide guidelines to the duties expected while in post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST: Policy Officer

GRADE: Operational 1

DIRECTORATE: Universities Scotland

Criterion number	QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING	ASSESSED
<i>Essential (E)</i>	Qualifications at SCQF level 9 or 10 (e.g. Ordinary or Honours Degree).	Application
A. WORK BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE		
<i>Desirable (D)</i>	Sensitivity to the political context and working in a membership organisation.	Interview
<i>D</i>	At least one year experience in a policy environment	Application
B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED		
<i>E</i>	Good analytical and research skills with the ability to analyse and assess data and construct reports.	Assessment
<i>E</i>	Numerate with excellent written and oral communications skills with the ability to interpret and explain policies, provide advice and assistance and draft committee papers.	Application/interview
<i>E</i>	Good interpersonal skills, including the ability to develop and maintain productive working relationships with a wide range of people and organisations within HE and beyond.	Application/interview
<i>E</i>	Ability to work cooperatively in teams, and with different kinds of people, contributing to team decisions and maintaining team relationships by supporting others.	Application/interview
<i>E</i>	Good IT skills, including use of Word and Excel.	Assessment
<i>E</i>	Ability to plan and manage one's own time and several projects at once, and to deliver these on schedule.	Application/interview
C. SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED		
<i>D</i>	Good knowledge of the UK higher education sector, particularly those issues related to learning and teaching.	Application/interview
D . PERSONAL QUALITIES		
<i>E</i>	Willing to be flexible and positive about change.	Application/interview
<i>E</i>	Committed to high standards.	Application/interview
E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS		
<i>E</i>	Willingness to travel within Scotland and occasionally to other parts of the UK.	Application