

Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor

Job Specification

Date created: July 2024

JOB DESCRIPTION

Employment status:	Permanent / part time
Hours:	A minimum of 21 hours a week, with core hours ideally Tuesday to Thursday from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. (There may be flexibility for additional hours)
Location flexibility:	The place of work for this role is Horizons based, with your core working week (Tuesday to Thursday) spent at our Horizons Head Office in Reading.
Department:	Vice Chancellor's Office
Line manager:	Ashley Wheaton, Vice Chancellor

Role summary

The Executive Support Team (EST) at UCEM provides vital, efficient and professional support to the UCEM Executive Team. As an Executive Assistant, you will work to provide exceptional daily administrative support to the Vice Chancellor and will work diligently to optimise his busy schedule as well as assisting with written and email communications. Furthermore, you will help and assist the wider Executive Team and Executive Support Team wherever necessary.

As the Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor, you will be undertaking a pivotal role. A typical day will be fast-paced and diverse, with wide-ranging administration tasks covering routine jobs to tasks which require greater initiative. The work that you undertake may consist of high-level, confidential and sometimes sensitive information and you will be expected to manage this professionally and appropriately.

Our ambition is to become the *Centre of Excellence for Built Environment Education* and the years ahead will be exciting as we work to realise this vision. Working collaboratively, you will ensure high standards of support that increase overall productivity and efficiency across the leadership team and enable our goals to be achieved. Our aim will be to anticipate needs, understand priorities and offer exceptional executive support, thereby ensuring we deliver excellence in all we do.

Job Specification

Role accountabilities and responsibilities

Supporting the Vice Chancellor

- Welcome external visitors arriving for meetings at Horizons.
- Monitor and flag appropriately incoming emails to the Vice Chancellor's inbox and the Executive Support Team mailbox. Seek out further information as required to respond professionally and appropriately to all enquiries, liaising effectively with the Vice Chancellor at all times.
- Undertake proactive diary management to ensure an effective and balanced schedule at all times, resolving competing demands, anticipating needs and being responsive and adaptable to changing requirements.
- Organise the regular cycles of internal meetings and 1-1s and liaise with external contacts to diarise appointments as requested/required. Ensure all meetings have a clear purpose, anticipated outcome and the necessary supporting information/papers are available in a timely manner.
- Take a proactive approach to follow up after Vice Chancellor meetings and implement a 'bring forward system' – drafting emails, progressing actions, and scheduling further meeting time for example.
- Draft correspondence as required and liaise regularly with the marketing department on PR opportunities relative to the Vice Chancellor's activities.
- Book travel and accommodation as required to ensure a seamless schedule, including occasionally collecting train tickets from the station in advance of journeys and always working within the institution's Travel and Expense policy.
- Process expense claims for the Vice Chancellor.
- Raise purchase orders for the Vice Chancellor as required.
- Approve annual leave requests for the Vice Chancellor's team and process staff anniversary cards.
- Collate, assemble and print meeting papers and ensure the Vice Chancellor is fully prepared and briefed appropriately ahead of all meetings.
- Book and prepare meeting rooms ahead of meetings, including any hospitality, facilities and technology requests.
- Be a first port of call for enquiries into the department, take messages and pass on to the appropriate person in a timely manner.
- Provide excellent and responsive customer service when responding to both internal and external colleagues and stakeholders.
- Be available in the office on core days, to support with any request that may arise (within your capabilities), including collecting tea/coffee/water if requested and occasionally, picking up lunch on busy/challenging days.

Supporting the Executive Assistants in the Executive Support Team

- Deputise for other Executive Assistants in periods of absence to provide secretariat functions to their meetings and support to Executive Team members.
- Monitor the Executive Support Team inbox and assign and progress emails and actions as necessary.
- Support the Executive Support Team with organisation of internal and external events as requested.
- Process the monthly credit card log.
- Maintain the contacts database in line with GDPR guidelines.
- Maintain electronic files and ensure documentation (contracts, policies, minutes) is appropriately scanned and stored.
- Respond positively to and undertake any other duties which fall within the scope of the role, and which may be required from time to time.

Line management responsibility:	NO
Budget responsibility:	NO
<u>In this role you will liaise with:</u> Executive Team; Executive Support Team; Deputy Vice Chancellor's Governance team members; Key external contacts; Visitors of the VC	

Job Specification

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Assessment Criteria: A = Application I = Interview T = Test

X denotes both essential and desirable requirements plus how these will be assessed

Qualifications and training	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Further education level qualifications		X	X		
<i>Please be aware that as part of onboarding processes, we will seek original documentary evidence of the relevant academic and/or professional qualifications which you include within your job application</i>					
Previous experience	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Substantial experience in a similar administrative role for c-suite executive team, gained within an office environment	X		X	X	
Experience within the Higher Education sector, or a clear desire and interest to learn		X	X	X	
Skills, knowledge, and aptitudes	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Professional approach and manner, coupled with strong verbal and written communication skills	X		X	X	X
Planning and organisational skills with the ability to forward plan, join the dots, prioritise and be proactive	X		X	X	X
Demonstrative initiative with sound judgement	X		X	X	
Attention to detail; accurate, meticulous and passionate for precision, with a keen eye for identifying errors or discrepancies	X			X	X
Significant experience of MS Office which includes Teams, Outlook (calendar and email), Word (creating and formatting documents), Excel (data entry and spreadsheet formatting), and PowerPoint (preparing slide decks)	X			X	X
Collaborative approach and ability to work well and reliably in a team and build positive working relationships	X		X	X	
Willingness to assist with tasks and ensure high quality service	X			X	
Ability to deal with confidential and sensitive information with discretion	X		X	X	
Honest, trustworthy, respectful and empathetic to all colleagues	X		X	X	

Job Specification

Other requirements or special requirements	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Alignment to the UCEM core values of Passion, Integrity, Excellence and Support; all employees are expected to demonstrate our values at work: https://www.ucem.ac.uk/core-values/	X			X	
Commitment to sustainability and UCEM's sustainability ambitions	X			X	
Commitment to delivering positive outcomes for our students; we want our students to be successful	X			X	
You must be prepared to undertake compulsory online training should you be appointed; this includes Data Protection, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Prevent, EDI, and Anti-bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct	X			X	
Ability to travel very occasionally to meetings or events away from the office (which may also be outside of normal working hours)		X		X	

PAY & BENEFITS

- Salary range £22,200 to £24,600 per annum (£37,000 to £41,000 Full Time Equivalent).
- 26 days paid holiday (rising to 28 with service) plus paid bank/public holidays plus up to 5 paid closure days (typically between Christmas and New Year); all per holiday year Full Time Equivalent. Our holiday year runs from 1 August to 31 July. We also have a holiday buy and sell scheme in place. Sometimes UCEM does not need to close for 5 days per year and any balance, for example 1 day, can be used as a paid Wellbeing Day to take time out for your own physical or mental health.
- Pensions auto-enrolment to the People's Pension salary exchange scheme (the term we use for salary sacrifice). You may opt out of salary exchange but remain in the scheme, or you may choose to opt out altogether.
- Policies in place for all types of family-friendly statutory leave with enhanced pay available from day one of employment (in addition to statutory pay, where applicable).
- Wellbeing support and full access to the Employee Assistance Programme, Thrive Mental Wellbeing app, as well as the SilverCloud mental health platform. Several UCEM employees are trained Mental Health First Aiders and can support staff.
- Cycle to Work and Electric Vehicle salary sacrifice schemes and access to Tax-Free Childcare (Government scheme).
- For Horizons based roles, we may in the future be able to offer parking on site however you must not assume this will be possible. Every now and then we may have a spare parking space become available and you can ask to join the waiting list. UCEM is keen wherever possible, to encourage staff to commute as sustainably as possible.
- Life assurance cover.
- Employer-funded Health Cash Plan (Simplyhealth) and voluntary dental insurance (Unum).
- Charity giving options available including one voluntary paid day, per annum.
- As a UCEM employee you will have access to Microsoft Office 365 applications for personal use. You will also have access to range of lifestyle discounts (savings on everyday purchases) and access to two learning platforms.

On the Join the team page of our website, you will find the full list of employee benefits at UCEM

Job Specification

APPLICATION PROCESS

IMPORTANT! All job applications must be sent to recruitment@ucem.ac.uk and if you apply via a jobs board, please make sure you have sent all required documents otherwise we will be unable to consider your application. In addition, if you apply for this job on the recommendation of an existing UCEM employee, please make sure to mention their name within your application **and** that the recommendation was part of the Employee Referral Bonus Scheme.

To apply for this role, please send the following to recruitment@ucem.ac.uk (you will receive an auto-response):

1. Your up-to-date CV;
2. A covering letter or email message outlining your suitability* for the role; AND
3. A completed **Recruitment Check Form** which is available from the *Current vacancies* page of our website.

The above items constitute a complete job application. *We hope you take time to consider the UCEM values when you prepare your job application. You may also wish to consult our vision and strategy document: <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/our-vision/>

We are committed to driving forward our sustainability agenda to secure a sustainable future and our long-term ambition is to be the world's most sustainable university. We recommend you visit our website to find out more about our sustainability strategy: <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/sustainability/>

If you are an existing UCEM employee, we request you inform your current line manager of your intention to apply for this role.

NO AGENCIES: We are not using agencies for this vacancy, and we cannot accept any CV submissions. Please do not contact us as we can only repeat this message.

Informal discussion

If you are unsure whether to apply, perhaps because you do not meet all essential criteria, we encourage you to call the hiring manager to discuss this further (details below). If you are excited by this vacancy do not rule yourself out; it still might be worth applying.

For an informal discussion about the role please contact Lyndsay Hughes, current EA to the Vice Chancellor on 0118 921 4642 or email l.hughes@ucem.ac.uk

For any other enquiries please contact HR on 0118 467 2454 / 2433 or email recruitment@ucem.ac.uk

Closing date and next steps

Friday 16 August 2024 at noon.

HR will screen all applications in person and all applicants will receive a response confirming the status of their application. We value the time taken to make a job application and the interest shown in UCEM.

Interview details

Interviews are scheduled for Wednesday 28 August 2024 and Friday 30 August 2024, at our Horizons Head Office in Reading.

Please indicate on your Recruitment Check Form any dates that you cannot make, up to 4 weeks from the closing date. This helps us to plan interviews should you be shortlisted, prior to contacting you.

Applications may be reviewed prior to the closing date and occasionally, you may be invited to interview ahead of the closing date.

Interviews are sometimes carried out over Zoom or Microsoft Teams; however we are likely to invite you to visit our Reading office, especially when this is your place of work.

Job Specification

Please be prepared for a two-stage interview process, held on different dates.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

Here at UCEM we champion equality, diversity, and inclusion in our workforce. We celebrate diversity and the strengths it brings to our staff body, our student community and our Board of Trustees, recognising that people are key to our success. Our aim is to attract, develop and retain a diverse workforce, therefore we welcome and encourage applications from all backgrounds.

Pre-employment checks

UCEM undertakes thorough pre-employment screening as part of its recruitment process. Given we have contracts with Government offices, we make sure our checks comply with the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS). Checks will include identity, right to work, basic disclosure criminal record check, and three years of employment history.