

Job Description

Position / Job Title:	Senior Executive Officer to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Location/Building:	Poole House, Talbot Campus
Faculty/Professional Service:	Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Group/Section:	UET Professional Support
Normal Hours per Week:	Full Time (Some flexibility will be required in order to ensure that key time scales and deadlines are met).
Grade:	6
Accountable to:	Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs

Job Purpose

The Senior Executive Officer will provide high-level professional support to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer (V-C), optimising the management of competing priorities and aligning the V-C's capacity with university objectives. This role requires proactive engagement with senior stakeholders to drive efficiencies, prioritise initiatives, and ensure seamless coordination across key projects and portfolio demands. The postholder will also deliver executive support to the Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs, contributing to the overall strategic leadership and operational success of the university.

Main Responsibilities

- Proactively and seamlessly manage the schedule of virtual and in person appointments and diary commitments. This includes being accountable for the planning, management and scheduling of often complex and demanding priorities,
- Anticipate opportunities to ease demands on the V-C's time and co-ordinate arrangements for maximum efficiency. This includes consideration of the V-C's needs aligned to university priorities, and continually monitoring their commitments to ensure they are fully prepared for upcoming meetings and diary clashes and conflicts are prioritised and managed,
- Act as a channel for the flow of high-level and sensitive information received internally or externally and be the point of liaison for communications to the V-C, making executive judgements informed by university priorities, as to which matters to refer and to whom. This includes resolving issues where possible or triaging requests to the appropriate level to minimise impact on the V-C's time and capacity, screening calls, email enquiries and meeting requests, dealing with them when appropriate, prioritising those that require attention and scheduling prompts of key deadlines, and bringing urgent matters to the attention of the V-C and Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs,
- Arrange, co-ordinate and support meetings as required by the V-C and the Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs. Meetings may include complex negotiations and formal hearings,
- Ensure that the V-C is prepared for all meetings, to including a briefing, coordination of papers, collating additional information as required and action updates,
- Act as clerk to various UET meetings and university committees, including scheduling meetings, preparing and collating agendas, minute taking, coordinating and collating additional papers, monitoring the completion of actions,

- Monitor and manage the V-C's email inboxes ensuring that priority emails are flagged, responses are tracked and all invitation emails are responded to in a timely manner.
- Support the V-C's senior team meetings to include annual planning of meeting dates and away days, maintaining and updating the rolling agenda schedule and terms of reference, co-ordinating the approval and publication of sub-committee terms of reference, liaising with the Clerks to the Board and Senate, and sub-committees to ensure agendas are aligned and approval for items is sought at the appropriate time, liaising with the Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs to finalise and agree agendas, scheduling of guest attendees and liaison re any follow up required, preparation, collation and distribution of papers in a timely fashion, drafting and publication of minutes and action logs, and follow up on agreed action points,
- Liaise with VIPs and a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, including senior staff at regional, national and international higher education institutions, partner organisations, professional bodies, associate centres and other similar institutions with which the V-C has professional relationships. This will often mean representing and being the first point of contact for the V-C,
- Research and brief the V-C on a variety of portfolio matters, advising and providing relevant information as appropriate to support appropriate responses that may need to be provided,
- Effectively produce a range of correspondence, documents, briefing papers, reports and presentations, and administer all correspondence to and from the V-C and the Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs, ensuring clear and efficient communications, including promptly and respectfully managing communications directed to and from the V-C, with urgent matters addressed as such,
- Research, organise and book travel arrangements and prepare accompanying travel documents and visas, meeting papers and other relevant information for the V-C and Chief of Staff as required,
- Support the V-C or Chief of Staff on specific projects, priorities, management of agendas, forward planner and chasing actions,
- Proactively manage communication with the V-C's direct reports by preparing briefing notes, etc,
- Establish and maintain appropriate office systems to best support the V-C and Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs ensuring efficiency, optimisation of technology, security of information and managing highly confidential correspondence/engagement sensitively and with utmost discretion,
- Collaborate with Professional Services, including Finance, Legal Services and Procurement, to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place across the V-C's portfolio where required to ensure compliance with university rules, policies and regulations at all times. This includes administration of expenses,
- Organise corporate and external events including social events as directed,
- Oversee and maintain the Office of the Vice-Chancellor's section of the university intranet ensuring updates are completed in a timely manner,
- Manage the recruitment of new members of staff within the Executive Support Team as required,
- Proactively support other members of UET and working collaboratively with the other Executive Officers to support the University Executive Team (UET) as a whole and ensure that cover and other support is provided as required, to ensure that UET members are supported professionally and effectively at all times,
- Ensure that all aspects of work achieve high levels of service excellence and promote continuous improvement by identifying opportunities for process and procedural enhancements,
- Undertake other duties as required by the V-C and Chief of Staff and Head of External Strategic Affairs from time to time.

Contacts

Internal: UET, senior leaders, other members of OVC, staff from across BU

External: External stakeholders

Challenges

This is a critical role in the effective and efficient use of the V-C's capacity, ensuring that support for the V-C is prioritised to meet changing demands and circumstances at all times, balancing the various requirements and timelines as part of the wider OVC team, managing changing agendas and reconciling priorities.

The nature of this position will require the postholder to maintain the highest level of confidentiality and to be able to operate with absolute discretion and at all times.

Information Governance Responsibilities

Data User: Comply with the associated data protection, information security, information management and information technology regulations, policies, processes and procedures.

Safeguarding and Regulated Activity

If the role involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to vulnerable groups including children and disabled adults, it is an offence to apply for and perform the role, if a person is bared from engaging in regulated activity. Further information is available in BU's Safeguarding Policy and Suitability Statement on the Recruitment and Employment of Ex-offenders.

Additional Information

The purpose of the job description is to indicate the general level of responsibility and location of the position. The duties may vary from time to time without changing their general character or level of responsibility.

BU is an equal opportunities employer which values a diverse workforce. The post holder must at all times carry out their responsibilities with due regard to the University's Equality and Diversity Policy Statement.

Our highly skilled and creative workforce is comprised of individuals drawn from a broad cross section of the globe, and who reflect a variety of backgrounds, talents, perspectives and experiences to build our global learning community. The post holder must have an understanding of and commitment to promoting a global outlook.

All employees have an obligation to be aware of the University's Sustainability Policy, Climate and Ecological Crisis Action Plan, Travel Plan and associated documents, and to ensure that they carry out their day-to-day activities in an environmentally responsible manner and inspire students to do the same.

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Faculty / Service: Office of the Vice Chancellor	Date: August 2025
SELECTION CRITERIA	Essential / Desirable
Knowledge (including experience & qualifications)	
Educated to degree level or equivalent (work experience will be applicable and can substitute for qualifications)	E
Significant experience providing similar executive support at a senior level in large and complex organisation	E
Substantial track record of board/committee administration, including agenda management and minute-taking	E
Experience of working with on-line systems including SharePoint, other document management systems and online systems	E
Experience of delivering measurable and visible improvements through continuous improvement	E
Experience of managing to successful completion complex projects with range of stakeholders	D
Experience supervising a team or team workload	D
Experience of events management	D
Skills	
Exceptional minute taking (shorthand) skills	E
Advanced typing skills and speed	E
Excellent digital skills including MS Teams, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel	E
Proactive decision making and problem-solving skills and the ability to anticipate the needs of the V-C and demonstrate a solution-oriented mindset	E
Exceptional organisation skills with the ability to plan and prioritise workload, consistently meet objectives and respond positively to quickly pivot to meet changing demands	E
Excellent verbal and interpersonal skills with the ability to professionally represent the V-C	E
Exceptional standard of written English with the ability to condense relevant and important elements from large volumes of information, summarise complex debates and capture the key elements, including action/decision points	E
Good numerical and analytical skills	E
Attributes	
Ability to liaise effectively with senior management as a group and on an individual basis	E
Ability to maintain the highest level of professionalism, confidentiality and to be able to operate with great discretion	E
Ability to work at pace and apply judgement to appropriately prioritise tasks	E
Ability to work flexibly to accommodate changing priorities and deadlines	E
Ability to deal with difficult situations using diplomacy to manage and deal with internal and external stakeholder expectations	E
Ability to analyse and solve complex conflicting priorities and competing demands effectively in a fast-paced office environment	E
Confidence in managing complex stakeholder relationships	E
Ability to work independently, taking own initiative to make complex decisions	E
Ability to develop and maintain professional relationships of respect, trust and support with staff, students, and other stakeholders	E
Demonstrable ability to deliver innovative solutions	E
Demonstrable ability to adjust to unfamiliar situations, demands and changing roles, seeing change as an opportunity and being receptive to new ideas	E