

Job Description

Head of People Services

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Salary: | Grade 10 |
| Contract: | Full time, ongoing |
| Location: | Canterbury Campus |
| Responsible to: | Director of HR & OD |
| Responsible for: | People Services Manager, Payroll & Pensions Manager, HR MIS Manager; Activities: HR shared services, Payroll, HR MI & Systems, Staff Immigration, Staff Establishment Control, Staff Resourcing, HR Lifecycle Advice and HR website. |
| Job family: | Administrative, professional and managerial |

Job purpose

Reporting to the Director of HR&OD, the Head of People Services will be responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of HR services across the University, including staff resourcing and lifecycle advice, staff recruitment, contract management, payroll and HR management information. They will lead a change in the culture of HR service delivery, focussing on local delivery, adding value and continuous improvement, whilst maintaining high standards of accuracy, consistency and compliance.

As owner of the Staff Establishment Register and associated control and recruitment processes, they will play a key role in overall strategic workforce management.

They will also play a leading role in major and strategic projects and transformation activities across the University, working in conjunction with other HR&OD senior leaders and also supporting the Head of People Partnering with restructures.

Key accountabilities

- In support of the Director of HR&OD, contribute to the development and delivery of the University's People and Culture strategy and strategic action plan, lead on the delivery of the actions related to People Services in line with the strategic plan and ensure that accurate management information required to measure progress across the full plan is provided in a timely manner.
- Lead and direct the People Services function, providing an outstanding shared service to the whole University covering resourcing, payroll, contract management, advice and MI, and based on the principles of local delivery with central governance, with success measured by KPIs agreed with key stakeholders and with an embedded culture of continuous improvement.

- Provide expert advice to the Director of HR&OD and other members of the senior HR&OD team across all areas covered by People Services and related issues facing the University, taking into consideration best practice solutions, market trends and legislative compliance
- Contribute to University strategic projects as agreed by the Director of HR&OD.
- Lead the development and review of policies, systems and processes directly related to People Services activities to promote practices that are legally compliant, adaptable and reflective of Kent's vision and values.
- Lead the development and management of the framework for contract management and conditions of employment, ensuring legal compliance whilst also meeting the changing needs of the workforce.
- Facilitate the management of staff cost control through leading the embedding of the Staff Establishment Register, vacancy control and associated processes in conjunction with senior Finance colleagues and People Partners.
- Lead the development and implementation of an effective resourcing strategy and employer brand in conjunction with the AD Talent & OD, which is based on our vision and values, and ensures we are able to attract the best talent from within the UK and overseas.
- Oversee the management of all staff-related immigration matters, ensuring that the University is fully compliant with all aspects of UK immigration legislation and is operating within all aspects of the legal framework provided by the UKVI. Seek opportunities to develop our mobility agenda in support our resourcing strategy so that we continue to be able to attract, recruit, and retain the best staff whilst also managing any risks related to global mobility.
- Oversee the development and maintenance of the HR pages on the staff intranet and University internet sites, ensuring that the University is presented in a professional and appealing way and that information and services can be easily accessed by internal and external users as appropriate.
- Oversee the management of staff records and related systems, both electronically and physical, and the provision of management information related to staff, ensuring that record keeping and data handling are compliant with relevant legislation and University policies.
- Lead, motivate and develop members of the People Services team, providing clear objectives and managing performance against these, ensuring that staff are able and appropriately motivated to carry out their responsibilities to the required standards and to perform to the best of their ability.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- The role holder will be expected to work with high level of independence, drawing on professional knowledge and expertise to advise executive and senior leaders across the University.

- To succeed, the role holder will need a flexible skill set, including the ability to think strategically, execute tactically, and collaborate across many teams, levels, and situations. They must understand business priorities, the HR implications and translate them into an HR agenda that supports the University.
- The role holder will have to balance often conflicting challenges and priorities in order to provide efficient, effective and robust services at the same time ensuring that University policies, procedures and guidance are adhered to, enabling consistency and ultimately people related risks to be mitigated.
- HR&OD is a central professional services function that is responsible for the design and production of all University level people related strategies and operating frameworks, and it will be for the role holder to interpret those standards and guidance and to then determine how to embed best practice in local leaders, managers and staff members.
- Projects will have strategic impact, working to deliver the People & Culture Strategy which supports the Kent 2030 Institutional Plan. Projects are likely to impact across the whole organisation, contain a number of work streams and involve matrix management. Planning horizon is typically one to two years, but all projects will need to contribute to the Kent 2030 Plan.
- The role requires an HR professional with considerable experience and specialist knowledge. The University is a complex working environment and the role is required to navigate a wide range of legal frameworks, processes and procedures, with projects also requiring a degree of innovative thinking and evaluation to decide the right approach in order to deliver the accountabilities. The role will require knowledge of the wider HE environment and a key requirement to continually scan the external environment.
- The role is required to communicate with and influence a wide range of stakeholders and to achieve end results where there is no direct management relationship. Likely scenarios are presentations to committees at the highest level of the University, steering managers through complex change management projects and influencing and negotiating with staff and trade union representatives. The role will also have line management responsibilities with a small number of permanent direct reports.

Facts & figures

The Head of People Services leads the service delivery team within the HR&OD Directorate which is a centralised professional function and is comprised of People Service Delivery, Employment Relations, People Partnering and Centres of Expertise. The overall directorate supports the University to deliver its goals of excellence in education and student experience, research and innovation, and engagement, impact and civic mission via the recruitment, retention, reward, recognition, and development activities of our c3,000 staff.

The Head of People Services plays a key role in the effective management and control of the £160m staff budget.

As a member of the HR&OD Senior Leadership Team, the role holder will work closely and effectively with HR&OD senior managers and their teams to provide joined up, bespoke and excellent customer service to the University, which includes leading and supporting on corporate HR projects and responsibilities as needed.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: University leaders, managers and staff at all levels, relevant Divisional and professional services directorates, Heads of Profession, the JSNCC, Trade Union Officers, wider HR Department managers and staff.

External: External bodies, staff from other Universities, University legal partners, regional and national HR/HEI networks, specialist agencies, suppliers and contractors.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Conflict resolution
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends.
- Ability to travel in a timely and efficient manner regularly between campuses when required

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (MCIPD) Level 7/advanced qualification or equivalent and demonstrable senior HR experience (A)
- Degree, or equivalent (A)
- Extensive and recent generalist HR experience gained in a service focused role or function (A,I)
- Depth of generalist HR experience gained in a large, complex, unionised and professionally biased organisation (A,I)
- Depth of experience of designing and implementing centralised operating frameworks across a broad range of specialist HR subjects and supporting HR teams and managers to work within those frameworks. (A,I)
- Experience in successfully leading and managing the HR aspects of organisational wide strategic/major projects (I)

- Track record around developing HR policy that is context specific – matching leading HR practice to business needs (A,I)
- Demonstrable experience of successfully supporting major change programmes in complex organisations (A,I)
- A solid knowledge and understanding of UK employment legislation (I,T)
- A good level of knowledge and understanding of UK immigration legislation (I)
- Experience of working in an HR capacity within the HE or FE sectors (A)
- Experience in successfully managing a team of HR professionals (A)
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills (A)
- Excellent influencing and negotiating skills (I)
- Ability to deliver presentations to large groups of managers and staff/a capable public speaker (I)
- Ability to use software packages and associated reporting tools (i.e HR System, Word, Excel, Email etc) (I,T)
- Ability to successfully juggle competing priorities to meet business deadlines and commitments (I)
- To have a broad range of interpersonal skills to enable situations to be dealt with reasonably and professionally (I)
- Data savvy, with experience of using complex data to inform decisions and present persuasive arguments to key stakeholders (I,T)
- To be self-motivated, enthusiastic and willing to undertake further training and development (I)
- Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research (I)
- Commitment to deliver and promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- A general and/or professional management qualification (A)
- Professional Project Management qualification (eg PRINCE2 or Six Sigma) or relevant project management experience (A)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage