

## Job Description

### Senior REF Officer

<b>Salary:</b>	Grade xx
<b>Contract:</b>	Full time, ongoing
<b>Location:</b>	Canterbury Campus
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Head of Research and Innovation Operations
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Research Coordinator
<b>Job family:</b>	Administrative, professional and managerial

### Job purpose

The post holder will play a lead role in managing the University of Kent's preparations for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF). The role involves planning and coordinating all activities related to REF in order to deliver a high quality and compliant submission.

Working closely with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and International (PVC RII), colleagues in the Business Development, Research and Innovation Directorate (BDRI) and Unit of Assessment (UoA) leads, the post holder will lead on the drafting of the institutional Strategy, People and Research Culture narrative statement. They will provide expert advice and analysis to enhance the quality of submissions and provide regular updates on REF preparations to senior leaders.

Following the REF outcomes, the post holder will be responsible for analysing the results, providing high-level summaries and advice to UoAs, developing internal and external messaging and contributing to national consultations on the direction of future assessment exercises. They will then lead on preparations for subsequent REF submissions.

### Key accountabilities

The following are the main duties for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Work with colleagues across the university to draft the institutional Strategy, People and Research Culture narrative statement. Undertake regular reviews and revise in response to feedback and new developments
- Prioritise the selection of Strategy, People and Research Culture indicators to be included from the Research England basket of options to reflect institutional strengths. Develop and implement processes to collect quantitative data to support the selected indicators
- Using expert knowledge and sector insights, recommend initiatives to UoA leads and institutional leadership in order to enhance the Strategy, People and Research Culture submissions
- Support and undertake scenario modelling of output selection to optimise outcomes
- Monitor REF preparations, gathering and collating data to provide regular updates and recommendations to senior leaders
- Provide expertise, advice and guidance to UoAs based upon a full understanding of the technical requirements, particularly in relation to the University's Code of Practice and the Contribution to Knowledge and Understanding submission. Ensure compliance with external requirements and internal governance and facilitate the sharing of best practice in relation to selection processes
- Design a variety of support materials and guidance to support UoAs. Maintain an online space for institutional guidance

- Organise and deliver training and peer learning sessions to UoA submissions and to ensure compliance with Code of Practice requirements
- Liaise with external organisations to share best practice and respond to REF-related consultations to influence outcomes

## 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 post holder is expected to acquire the knowledge necessary to become the leading REF expert at the University, keeping up to date with emerging REF policy and providing expert advice and analysis into the implications for Kent
- Gathering and analysing data and information to support recommendations to senior leaders
- Managing a complex workload with competing demands and deadlines. The post holder will be expected to manage unexpected/unplanned work within overall timeframes
- This post requires a high level of personal initiative and responsibility and the post holder will be required to demonstrate independence in the arrangement of their work

## Facts & figures

Supporting 21 Units of Assessment across the University, working with UoA leads, Directors of Research and Innovation and Heads of School.

The University of Kent currently receives ~£17.5m per annum as a result of the previous REF submission.

## Internal & external relationships

**Internal:** PVC RII, Director of BDRI, UoA leads, Directors of Research and Innovation, Heads of School, R&I Reporting and Analytics, HR

**External:** Research England, HESA, external REF advisors, sector bodies such as Association of Research Managers and Administrators, Eastern Arc partners

## 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
- Ability to occasionally travel in a timely and efficient manner between campuses

## 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:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience (A)
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of all aspects of Research England REF guidance and requirements (A, I)

- Previous experience of drafting, reviewing and critiquing REF material such as environment narratives (A, I)
- Experience researching, collating and editing material for inclusion in reports for non-specialist audiences and senior decision makers (A, I)
- Ability to think and act strategically with previous experience in analysing multiple sources of data and developing recommendations (A, I)
- Demonstrable experience of translating strategy into action plans and finding innovative solutions to problems (A, I)
- Comfortable working on a high-profile project with multiple deadlines and stakeholders (I)
- Excellent and effective negotiating, influencing and advocacy skills, particularly the ability to persuade others to work collaboratively to ensure strategic priorities are met (I)
- Ability to deal with sensitive material and staffing issues with strict confidentiality, demonstrating tact and diplomacy (I)
- Knowledge and understanding of research-related metrics and sector policies regarding the responsible use of metrics (I)
- A firm commitment to fostering a working and learning environment that is respectful, inclusive and values diversity, including diversity of thought, and which enables staff and students from a wide range of backgrounds to thrive (I)

**Desirable Criteria:**

- Proven experience of developing research-related strategies at School/Faculty/University level (I)
- Experience of successfully managing staff, with well-developed team management skills and a clear passion for developing motivated staff (I)

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