

# Deputy Director, Policy

Recruitment pack

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## A message from our CEO, Vivienne Stern

Universities UK (UUK) is the collective voice of universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We bring them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

My journey at UUK started as a Parliamentary Officer and I have progressed through the organisation from there, with the opportunity to work across a range of different teams, up to becoming CEO. This is testament to the fact that at UUK we support our people to succeed, helping us achieve our ambitious goals as an organisation as a result.

At UUK we believe that supporting our people to succeed involves prioritising wellbeing at work and being an inclusive employer. We employ a total of just under 160 staff across the UUK Group. In our 2023 staff survey, I am proud that we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

I am continually inspired by the passion and talent of the team at UUK. If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and its impact on wider society, then, in my opinion, there is no better place to do it than here.

# Who are we?

At Universities UK, we harness the power of the UK's universities and create the conditions for them to thrive. We are the collective voice of 141 universities, bringing them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

This mission forms the core of our [strategic plan](#) which runs to 2030 and sets out our ambitions for the sector. Our influence, convening power, and insight will enable our universities to:

- transform the lives of more people from the UK and around the world through high-quality education.
- drive greater growth and prosperity through the knowledge and skills they generate, creating places that allow communities to flourish.
- be globally competitive centres of research, at the forefront of making ground-breaking discoveries with the power to change our world.

To help them achieve this we will:

- secure sustainable funding that enables our universities to serve society better.
- build trust and confidence that our universities are a national asset to be proud of and are acting in the best interests of society.



# Role description

**Post title:** Deputy Director, Policy

**Responsible to:** Director of Policy

**Salary:** £72,044 – £80,048 (dependant on experience)

**Location:** London

**The team:** The Deputy Director will be responsible for leading, motivating and developing a high performing team of policy professionals and support staff. This role is part of the senior management team in the Policy Group within UUK.

UUK would positively consider applications from civil or public servants who would wish to apply in the form of a secondment.

**Job summary:** The purpose of this role is to ensure UUK provides policy leadership and maximises its influence on the higher education policy agenda on behalf of the sector and in support of the organisation's Strategic Plan.

More specifically, responsibility for identifying strategic policy priorities and overseeing the development and delivery of UUK's policy work particularly as it relates to higher education funding and regulation policy.

This will require building and maintaining strong and influential senior level relationships and networks within the sector, government and other influential stakeholders.

## **Main responsibilities:**

- Identify strategic policy priorities for UUK and lead the development and delivery of UUK's policy work in support of UUK's Strategic Plan.
- Build and maintain strong, trusted and influential stakeholder relationships and networks at senior levels, both within the higher education sector and with policy makers and influencers.
- Negotiate and collaborate with stakeholders in order to shape the higher education policy landscape and ensure UUK's work has maximum influence and impact.
- Represent UUK through external speaking, senior stakeholder meetings and engagement and in the media.
- Ensure effective engagement, consultation and involvement of members in UUK's policy work and building consensus, including providing input and advice to the Board Advisory Committee, UK Board, Members' Meetings, Policy Networks and other meetings of members.
- Work collaboratively across UUK directorates to support organisational objectives and impact.
- To undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time by the Director of Policy.

## **Management**

- Lead a high performing policy team of c10 FTE, with a strong focus on supporting professional development.
- Be an active member of UUK's Management Teams, supporting decision making on overall direction of UUK.
- Working collaboratively with a fellow Policy Deputy Director and the Director of Policy as part of a senior management team in the Policy Group
- Have responsibility for resource management within the funding and regulation branch of the Policy Group. This includes ensuring active monitoring and management of team resources to ensure staff time is prioritised and focused in the right areas; and managing budgets including coordinating responsibility for programme budgets and external funding.

## **Compliance and governance**

- to take responsibility for own health and safety in line with UUK H&S policy and current legislation and undertake such responsibilities as they relate to any employees, volunteers or contractors for which the post is responsible.
- to ensure compliance with UUK's internal procedures and all external legal requirements.

## **Personal effectiveness**

- to take responsibility as far as is practical for own personal development to ensure that personal knowledge and skills are updated to ensure effectiveness in meeting work objectives.

## **General**

- to show respect to colleagues, external partners and stakeholders, and to understand and adhere to UUK's Equal Opportunity policy, UUK Staff Standards of Conduct, and UUK's organisational capabilities.
- to work collegially, and to support all the teams which the post has contact with, in achieving the organisation's objectives.
- any other duties commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the necessary experience and/or training.
- 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.

Last reviewed: December 2024

# Person specification

## Essential skills:

Essential skills	Assessment
Substantial experience in policy development, analysis and influence	Application form Interview
Experience at a senior level in leading teams across a wide range of policy domains and with a range of stakeholders, including at senior levels.	Application form Interview
Substantial experience of leading strategy development and implementation, and delivery of defined outputs and outcomes in a complex external environment.	Application form Interview
<i>Skills and Aptitudes</i>	Application form
Excellent written and oral communications skills to an advanced level including presenting complex issues in clear and accessible ways.	Interview
<i>Skills and Aptitudes</i>	Application form
Strong analytical skills and intellectual rigour.	Interview
<i>Skills and Aptitudes</i>	Application form
Ability to use judgement and make decisions on complex issues and provide clear direction, often within uncertain circumstances.	Interview
<i>Leadership and Management</i>	Application form
Substantial experience of leading teams and managing staff, demonstrating the ability to develop and motivate high performing teams to achieve shared organisational goals.	Interview



<p><i>Leadership and Management</i></p> <p>Experience at a senior level of enabling cross-organisational working, particularly involving the communication of policy outcomes for external audiences.</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>
<p><i>Leadership and Management</i></p> <p>Finance and budgetary skills with demonstrable experience of planning resources to meet operational priorities and requirements, and seeking cost effective methods of working</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>
<p><i>Personal Qualities</i></p> <p>Ability to initiate, implement and optimise change programmes both within teams and across an organisation, including bringing people along and motivating them, and identifying and implementing entrepreneurial, creative and innovative approaches.</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>
<p><i>Personal Qualities</i></p> <p>The ability to work under pressure.</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>
<p><i>Personal Qualities</i></p> <p>Ability to engage with UUK members and represent the organisation in a professional manner, using judgement, tact and diplomacy as necessary</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>
<p>Understanding of, and commitment to, equality, diversity and inclusion as set out in UUK's Equal Opportunity policy.</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>

## Desirable skills:

Desirable skills	Assessed by
Experience of working in a membership organisation, including building consensus and direction on difficult or contentious issues.	Application form Interview
<p data-bbox="240 607 1077 645"><i>Specialist Knowledge</i></p> <p data-bbox="240 680 1077 801">Understanding and experience of working in a highly political environment, with good knowledge of the UK parliamentary system.</p>	Application form Interview
<p data-bbox="240 844 1077 882"><i>Specialist Knowledge</i></p> <p data-bbox="240 918 1077 994">Experience of working in or with higher education, in a policy leadership or analytical capacity.</p>	Application form Interview
<p data-bbox="240 1039 1077 1077"><i>Specialist Knowledge</i></p> <p data-bbox="240 1113 1077 1189">An awareness of the public relations and campaigning aspects of policy development.</p>	Application form Interview

# Working at UUK: Benefits

If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and impact wider society, joining our team is a great opportunity.

Universities play a huge part in our everyday lives, and we want to help them make even more of a difference. We bring together leaders of UK universities to discuss higher education issues and represent and campaign on their behalf to the government, business, the media and beyond.

People drive our success, and we value everyone's work.

Universities UK operates a hybrid working framework involving the opportunity to work from home and in the office. There will be a small number of roles where employees will be required to work from an office, but typically the majority of employees will be able to work remotely on average 60% of their working week. All employees are welcome to use their contractual office for their whole working week if that is their preference.

*"I joined Universities UK three months after leaving university, and I immediately felt so welcomed and supported. I've been given opportunities to develop new skills, get involved in such a variety of interesting projects and work with colleagues across the organisation. It's a really friendly place to work and I feel trusted and valued to put my own views and ideas into practice."*

Sofia Henderson, Senior Content Producer

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT STAFF BENEFITS AND WELLBEING, VISIT OUR [WORKING AT UUK PAGE](#)**

# Staff benefits

## Leave



- 27 days annual leave rising to 30 days after 3 years' service and 32 days after 5 years' service plus bank holidays.
- 4 closure days between Christmas and New year.
- 2 days paid leave each year for volunteering activities

## Well being



- Access to 24 hour 7 day a week Employee Assistant Programme which extends access to close family.
- Virtual Medical Care – 24 hour access to GP consultations.
- Mental Health First Aiders.
- Staff network groups.

## Financial wellbeing



- Interest free season ticket loans after 6 months.
- Staff benefit fund loan scheme
- 'learn for you' – claim £75 each year tax free towards hobbies and activities outside of work.
- Funding support for continuing development, up to 2/3 of course costs paid with the remaining funded through an interest free loan recovered through monthly pay.
- Generous pension scheme (USS or SAUL depending on role).
- Salary sacrifice Cyclescheme.
- Salary progression plans.
- a £45 contribution every two years towards eye tests and the purchase of glasses where required.

## Home working



- Hybrid Working policy – 40% of time averaged over a month to be spent in the office or meeting face to face with stakeholders, allowing 60% of time to be worked from home.
- Support for homeworking set up.

## External schemes



- Charity worker discounts.
- Apple hardware discount scheme.
- Access to Able Futures for mental wellbeing support.

## Our office facilities



- Tea/coffee/milk provided for refreshments.
- Kitchens available in all offices with access to fridges and microwaves.
- Shower facilities available (London and Cardiff).
- Cycle storage facilities.



# Equality, diversity and inclusion

We want every member of staff to feel that they belong, can be themselves and that their opinion counts.

We can only reach our ambitious goals with multi-skilled, multi-experienced teams. Different perspectives make our work better.

What unites us is a passion for higher education and the enthusiasm to spread the message about the positive impacts UK universities have on our society.

We are committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and do not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership. We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join UUK.

## An equal, inclusive and diverse place to work

Equality, diversity and inclusion help create new ideas and approaches to teaching, learning and research. With that in mind, we're building a culture where difference is valued. We're constantly evolving the programmes and tools that help all employees grow and manage rewarding careers.

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT UNIVERSITIES UK,  
READ OUR [INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN](#)**

# Staff engagement and wellbeing at work

## Staff engagement

In our 2023 staff survey, we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

## Wellbeing at work

We care about the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff. Having open and honest conversations about mental health is important to us. Our commitment to staff wellbeing includes:

- Training some members of staff to become mental health first aiders so they are there for colleagues who need support and advice.
- Raising awareness by recognising Mental Health Awareness Week with external speakers, opportunities to come together and talk and take part in activities
- Training for managers and all staff on mental health awareness
- Employee Assistance support helpline.



Universities UK is the collective voice of 141 universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our mission is to create the conditions for

UK universities to be the best in the world; maximising their positive impact locally, nationally and globally.

Universities UK acts on behalf of universities, represented by their heads of institution



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