

The logo for the University of Manchester, featuring the word "MANCHESTER" in a serif font with "1824" below it, all in white text on a purple rectangular background.

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

Vacancy ref: PSX-030805

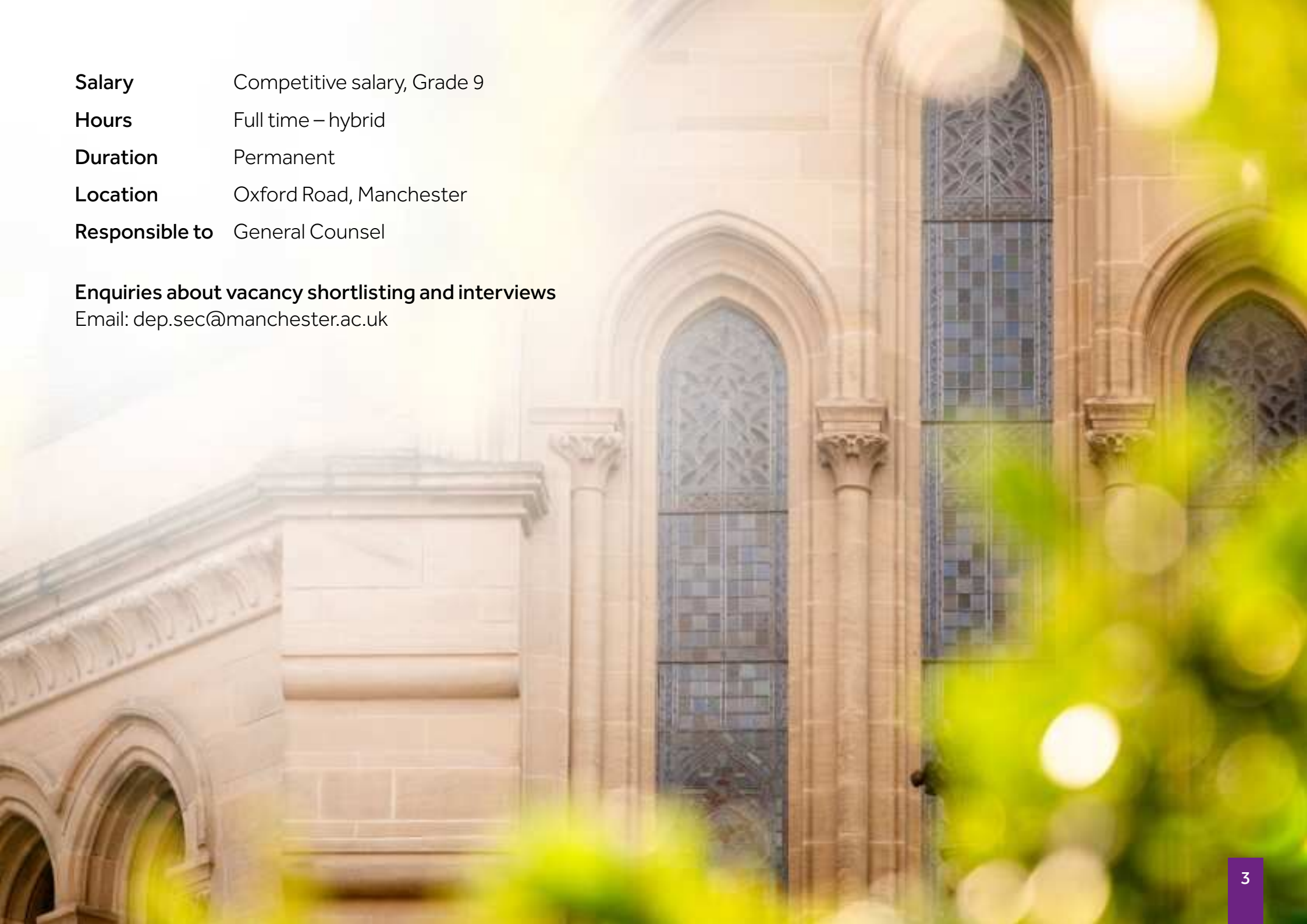
Particulars of appointment
Professional Services
Directorate of Legal Affairs and Board Secretariat

Deputy Secretary and
Director of Governance

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Salary Competitive salary, Grade 9
Hours Full time – hybrid
Duration Permanent
Location Oxford Road, Manchester
Responsible to General Counsel

Enquiries about vacancy shortlisting and interviews

Email: dep.sec@manchester.ac.uk

Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the role of Deputy Secretary and Director of Governance at the University of Manchester. This is an exciting opportunity to play a central leadership role within one of the UK's most ambitious and globally significant universities, at a time of renewed purpose and momentum.

The University of Manchester is proud to be the world's first modern civic university, with a long-standing commitment to harnessing knowledge for the public good. With nearly 13,000 staff and 46,000 students, we are deeply rooted in the city of Manchester and the wider region, and we work to ensure that our research, education and partnerships deliver meaningful civic and social impact.

Our Manchester 2035 strategy sets out a bold vision for the University's future, underpinned by excellence, integrity and responsible leadership. Robust, transparent and inclusive governance is fundamental to delivering this ambition.

We are now seeking an exceptional individual to take on the role of Deputy Secretary and Director of Governance, a senior and influential position at the heart of the University's governance framework. The Deputy Secretary and Director of Governance is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness, integrity and continuous improvement of governance arrangements across the institution.

The role provides trusted advice to senior leaders and Board members, delivers high-quality governance and committee services, and supports fair, robust decision-making in line with statutory and regulatory requirements. The Deputy Secretary also plays a pivotal role in appointments to the Board, strengthening assurance, and fostering effective relationships between the Board, Senate, the University Executive and the wider University community.

Working closely with colleagues across Professional Services and the academic community, the Deputy Secretary

will contribute to the University's strategic leadership, helping to ensure that governance enables, rather than constrains, innovation, accountability and impact, and supports a culture in which Freedom of Speech and Expression are respected and protected across the University.

The successful candidate will be a highly credible, thoughtful and collaborative leader, with a strong track record in governance, regulation or institutional leadership within a complex organisation. They will bring sound judgement, integrity and political awareness, alongside a commitment to inclusive, transparent and effective governance.

If this opportunity excites you, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Best regards,

Patrick Hackett,

Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer

The University of Manchester

About The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester is a global institution committed to teaching and research excellence, innovation with impact, and with social responsibility at the heart of our mission. Our purpose is to advance education, knowledge and wisdom for the good of society – a mission that is as urgent today as at any point in our history.

In 2025, The University of Manchester set out a clear strategic ambition to be a great civic university for the 21st century.

Our new strategy to 2035, *From Manchester for the World*, is rooted in Manchester and the North, creating knowledge, innovation and solutions that bring local benefits and scale globally.



Our history and present

Formed in 2004 through the merger of the Victoria University of Manchester and UMIST, our University builds on a rich heritage of civic innovation. Our foundations trace back to 1824 and include the Manchester Mechanics' Institute and Manchester Royal School of Medicine – part of a wider movement to provide education for working people.

We have a long tradition of attracting brilliant minds. 26 Nobel laureates have studied or worked here, including Ernest Rutherford, Arthur Lewis, Andre Geim and Kostya Novoselov, whose work on graphene continues to shape global innovation. In 2024 alumnus Professor Simon Johnson won the Nobel Prize in Economics for his groundbreaking research on 'how institutions are formed and affect prosperity'.

Today, The University of Manchester is one of the UK's largest single-site universities, with more than 46,000 students, nearly 13,000 staff and 585,000 alumni around the world, and a turnover of more than £1.4 billion.

We are a founding member of the Russell Group, with a broad disciplinary base across STEM, humanities and the social sciences. We are also the second most popular UK university for undergraduate applications via UCAS and home to one of the UK's largest international student communities.

We combine global research leadership with a strong civic ethos. Our students are attracted by our academic reputation, diverse course offering and commitment to real-world impact – as well as by Manchester's distinctive energy, culture and character.





Global rankings and reputation

The University enjoys a global reputation for excellence in research, teaching and civic engagement:

- 35th in the world (QS World University Rankings 2026).
- 93% of our research is rated 'world-leading' (4*) or 'internationally excellent' (3*) (Research Excellence Framework 2021).
- 1st in the UK and Europe and 2nd in the world for social and environmental impact (*Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2025*), we are the only university to rank consistently in the global top 10 since the rankings began.

Manchester and the region

Manchester is the original modern city – birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, trade unionism, the cooperative movement and the suffragette struggle. That spirit of innovation, inclusion and challenge continues to define the city and the University today.

We are proud to be an anchor institution, deeply embedded in the region's economy, culture and communities. We work closely with partners across Greater Manchester through our Civic University Agreement, signed with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and fellow universities in the region. Together, we are driving change in areas including health inequalities, digital inclusion and place-based regeneration.

The city is regularly ranked among the world's best places to live and visit – according to *The New York Times*, *Lonely Planet* and *The Economist* – and offers a rich mix of cultural life, including the Hallé Orchestra, Aviva Studios, HOME and a thriving independent arts and food scene. The University is a key contributor to this cultural ecosystem through our own world-class venues such as the Manchester Museum, The Whitworth, and the John Rylands Research Institute and Library.

From Manchester for the world

Our strategy to 2035 focuses on five areas to go further and faster, driving innovation, skills and good jobs in the region and country, while also addressing global challenges from climate change and growing political polarisation, to social inequalities.

They are:

- Flexible, personalised and digitally enabled learning – more personalised, applied and digitally enabled study that fits diverse lives.
- Accelerating the path from research excellence to impact – faster routes from discovery to policy, practice and industry.
- A powerhouse of innovation – translating strengths into start-ups and scale-ups to create inclusive growth.
- The university to partner with – easier routes for partners to work with the University on collaborations that focus on making a difference.
- Digital inside and out – modern, data-driven and AI-enabled services and systems that make studying and collaborating with Manchester simpler.

These priorities build on firm foundations – we remain committed to excellence in teaching and research, values-led social responsibility, our deep civic roots with global reach, and a culture with equity, diversity and inclusion at its heart.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

From our earliest days, we've worked to break down barriers and improve lives. Today, we are committed to building a truly inclusive University – where equity, access and belonging shape how we work and what we achieve.





Particulars of appointment

Deputy Secretary and Director of Governance

Job purpose

As Deputy to the Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (RSCOO) in their role as Secretary to the University's Board of Governors (Board), the Deputy Secretary and Director of Governance is our senior governance professional, ensuring the effectiveness, integrity and transparency of the University's governance system. The role provides authoritative, independent advice to senior officers and lay members on compliance with legislation and University policy, and leads the continuous improvement of secretariat services across our statutory bodies and committees (including the Board, Senate, General Assembly and the University Executive).

The RSCOO is both a member of the University Executive and Secretary to the Board. This requires the RSCOO to maintain a balance between his executive role and his role as the most senior governance advisor to the Board and its committees.

The role of Deputy Secretary does not report to the RSCOO and provides an important leadership role in safeguarding the independence of the governance function.



Principal accountabilities

- Lead the ongoing design, operation and assurance of University governance arrangements to ensure relevance, effectiveness and legal/regulatory compliance in a modern, fast-paced environment.
- Own and develop the University's Policy Framework and related policies; coordinate best practice in committee servicing and provide advice, guidance and training to committee secretaries across the institution.
- Provide authoritative advice to senior leadership and lay officers (especially the Chair of the Board) on the University's constitutional and regulatory framework (Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and General Regulations), drafting proposed changes and overseeing consultation, communication and implementation.
- Act as Secretary to relevant Committees and oversee the delivery of high-quality secretariat for the Board, Senate, General Assembly and the University Executive – including forward planning, agenda setting, minute-taking and production of clear, concise board papers that distil complex matters for decision.
- Ensure timely and accurate statutory and regulatory returns, including (where appropriate) to the Office for Students, and embed transparent dissemination of decisions and governance information within and beyond the University.
- Facilitate effective relationships among and between the Chair, Board members, the Vice-Chancellor and senior officers; act as key point of contact and trusted adviser, enabling Board members to discharge their responsibilities.

Principal accountabilities (continued)

- Establish and manage processes for the appointment of senior officers of the Board (including the Chair and deputies), reporting on appointment activity and outcomes.
- Lead induction, development and ongoing engagement for Board, Board committee and Senate members to support inclusive, evidence-informed decision-making.
- Undertake governance projects and research to develop policy and strengthen assurance, working closely with colleagues across the University.
- Act for the Registrar, Secretary and COO on constitutional, regulatory or governance issues, including arrangements for elections or appointments to authoritative bodies and to the office of the Chancellor.
- Maintain authoritative records of membership and business for the Board, Senate, General Assembly, University Executive and Board Committees; oversee the University's Register of Interests.
- Oversee representation of the University on external organisations and build productive relationships with regulators, sector bodies and auditors.
- Work closely with solicitors in the Directorate of Legal Affairs where legal advice is required for compliance and regulatory matters; liaise with senior colleagues (including the Director of Information Governance) on responses to complex Freedom of Information requests and act as lead contact for Public Interest Disclosure (whistleblowing) policy and procedures.
- Oversee work on the University's obligations in securing and promoting Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom
- Oversee due-diligence procedures for events within the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, ensuring alignment with legislative obligations.



University governance

Board: The University's governing body, carrying ultimate responsibility for strategic direction and the management of finances, property and affairs, including employment arrangements for all staff. The Board meets formally at least five times a year and includes a majority of lay members. The Chair of the Board, Philippa Hird, is appointed from the lay category.

Senate: The University's principal academic authority, responsible to the Board for the promotion of research, the regulation and monitoring of teaching standards, and the regulation of student discipline.

General Assembly: Acts as a two-way channel of communication between the University and its broader constituencies, providing feedback and advice on University business.

University Executive: Provides leadership and oversight of the University's core missions and professional services, develops and monitors institutional policies, strategies and KPIs, and manages strategic initiatives, risks and compliance. Accountability flows through the President and Vice-Chancellor to the Board.

www.manchester.ac.uk/about/governance



Internal and external relationships

External

Office for Students; other national regulatory bodies and regional/ local associations; external and internal auditors; alumni; Students' Union; and outside representatives on governance bodies.

Internal

Chair of the Board; Board committee chairs; Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer; President and Vice-Chancellor; Chief of Staff; Senior Officers; University Executive; Professional Services Leadership Team; Faculty Leadership Teams; colleagues, staff and students.

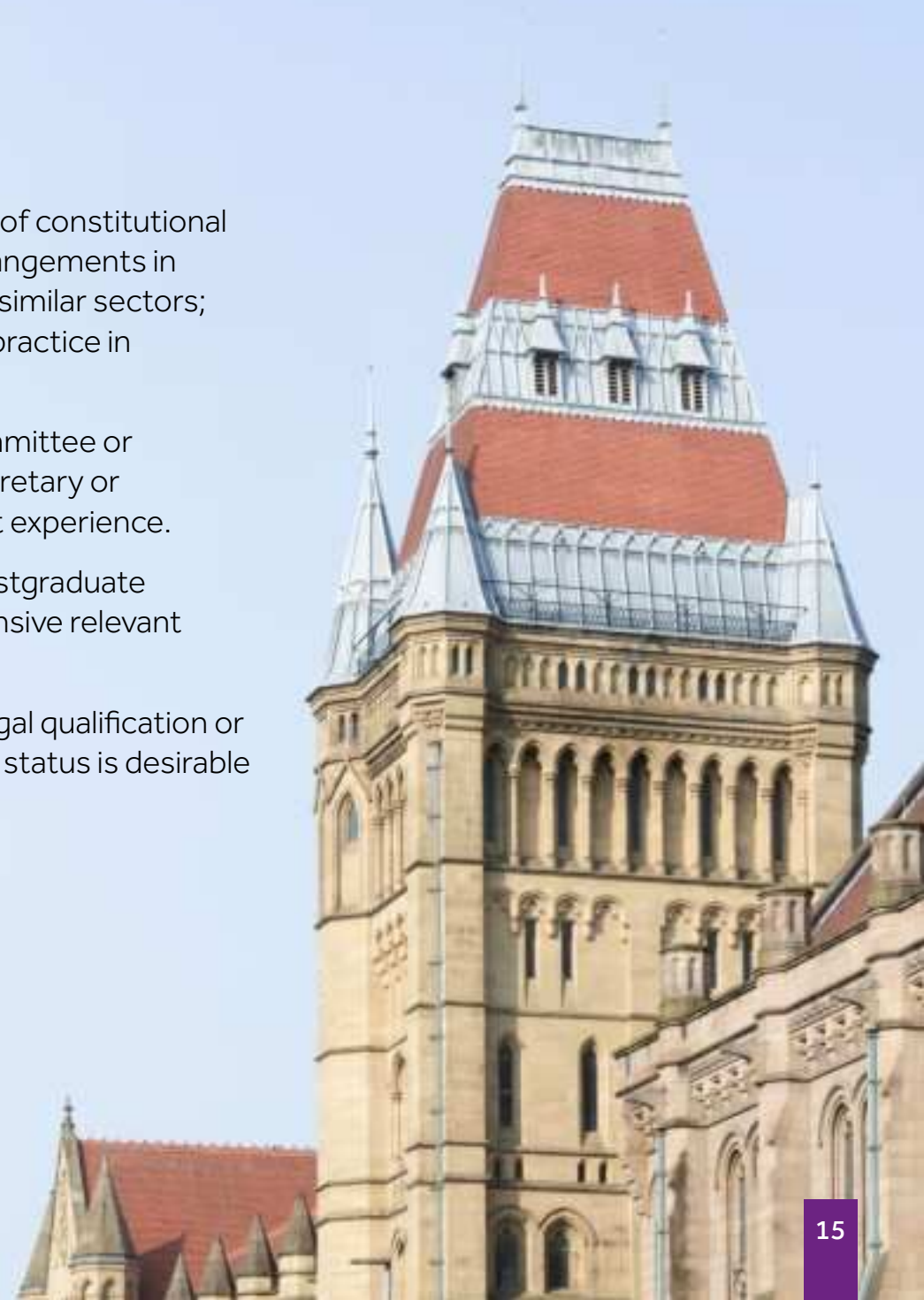
The Deputy Secretary's office is based within the Directorate of Legal Affairs and Board Secretariat and comprises 6.8 FTE staff. The Deputy Secretary will work closely with the Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer.



Person specification

Qualifications, experience and expertise

- Ability to combine statutory and regulatory obligations with support for senior leadership in delivering our strategy to 2035.
- A deep understanding of legal and corporate governance frameworks relevant to universities or comparable organisations, and commitment to continued professional development and best practice.
- Appreciation of the University's academic strengths and the sector's opportunities and challenges; awareness of the particular role of lay members and how best to support them.
- Working knowledge of constitutional and governance arrangements in higher education or similar sectors; reputation for best practice in governance.
- Experience as a committee or sub-committee Secretary or comparable relevant experience.
- Relevant degree/postgraduate qualification or extensive relevant experience.
- Legal experience, legal qualification or chartered secretary status is desirable but not essential.



Person specification (continued)

Knowledge, skills and behaviours

- High-level communication and interpersonal skills, with a proven ability to provide clear and balanced advice to senior colleagues and stakeholders.
- Notable experience in managing, supporting and developing teams successfully, both directly and indirectly.
- Ability to organise a significant and diverse workload, balancing long-term governance priorities with immediate operational needs.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, with the credibility to influence and shape policy through inclusive, respectful engagement with senior stakeholders within and beyond the University.
- Exceptional written communication skills for a formal governance environment, with a track record of clear, concise papers and minutes.
- An innovative and pragmatic problem-solver, able to design practical solutions through collaborative approaches.
- Demonstrates strong judgement, diplomacy and appropriate decisiveness, operating with initiative while engaging constructively with others and exercising sound accountability.
- Sensitivity to context, with an informed and pragmatic approach to risk assessment and management.
- As a leader can role model and live our values of humanity, wisdom and knowledge.



Job description

Key behaviours

- **One University:** A 'One University' approach, whereby we break down silos and work collaboratively towards furthering the University's strategic goals, vision and values.
- **Service excellence:** Committed to prioritising service excellence and high performance to deliver great people-centred experiences.
- **Agility:** Demonstrate a commitment to agility and continuous improvement by embracing change, championing innovation, with flexibility to adapt.
- **Sustainability:** A sustainable approach that safeguards the University of the future by championing environmental practices, advancing digital capability, and supporting financial stability and philanthropic initiatives.
- **Inclusion:** A commitment to furthering wellbeing and a positive and inclusive work environment and culture.
- **Social responsibility:** Promote and champion the University's social responsibility ambitions to advance social inclusion, prosperous communities, better health, and cultural engagement.
- **Freedom of speech and academic freedom:** Support the University's commitment to securing and actively promoting the importance of free speech and academic freedom within our community.
- **People leadership:** Demonstrates effective leadership by empowering, motivating, and developing teams to achieve high performance. Builds a collaborative and inclusive work environment and provides clear direction, support, and feedback.



How to apply

Candidates should apply for this role via the job advert on the University website, reference PSX-030805.

The closing date for applications is Sunday 1st March at midnight.

For informal enquiries please contact, Carrie Hunt, dep.sec@manchester.ac.uk

In accordance with GDPR guidelines*, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent.

Key dates and activities to note (may be subject to change other than the main panel interview)

- **Week commencing 1 March**
Screening calls if applicable. These are likely to be early in the week.
- **Week commencing 9 March**
Shortlisting meetings and candidate briefings.
- **Week commencing 16 March**
Shortlisted candidates will have an opportunity to meet with key stakeholders.
- **Week commencing 30 March**
Stakeholder and main panel interviews and campus tour.

**GDPR personal data notice – please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data, including the contact details of your chosen referees (without prior agreement), within your CV and covering letter. Your completed 'equal opportunities monitoring and consent form' will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. We are committed to further enhancing the diversity of our University Executive and particularly welcome applications from women, Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority candidates, candidates with disabilities and candidates with other protected characteristics.*

Enquiries about vacancy shortlisting and interviews

Email: dep.sec@manchester.ac.uk

