

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

PARTICULARS OF APPOINTMENT

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO HEAD OF SCHOOL AND DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

VACANCY REF:HUM-027171

Salary:	Grade 5, £31,387 to £35,880 per annum, depending on relevant experience
Hours:	35 hours per week
Duration:	Permanent
Location:	Oxford Road, Manchester

Enquiries about the vacancy, shortlisting and interviews:

Name: Kerry McCann

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School Operations Team

The School Operations team provides a professional operational and administrative support service. Membership of the team includes a School Operations Manager, the Deputy School Operations Manager, Executive Assistant [EA], School Operations Senior Administrators, Operations Assistants, an Operations Intern and Department Administrators, who are closely aligned to the School's Departments.

The team provides a broad range of administrative and operational support across the School, working in partnership with our academic, research and professional services community. Activities include (but are not limited to) financial administration and purchasing, People & Organisational Development (P&OD) related processes, travel booking, committee servicing, events organisation, supporting our estate, health and safety tasks and providing general 'troubleshooting' advice and signposting.

The School Operations team works closely, and collaboratively, with other Operations and Professional Services functions across the School, Faculty and University to share best practice and to develop systems and processes in support of business improvement.

Context of the Role

To provide high-level administrative support to the Vice Dean and Head of School (HoS) and Director of School Operations (DoSO), including proactive diary management and email triage, demonstrating a high level of professionalism, discretion and the ability to manage conflicting demands.

The post holder will also ensure, along with other members of the School Operations management team, that the critical functions performed by School Operations are discharged efficiently and effectively, with the primary focus on operational activities to support the HoS/DoSO. This include proactively managing the School calendar of committees and events, planning the President's and Dean's visits to the School, coordination of the newly promoted Professor's workshop, reviewing and refining business processes, coordinating requests for approvals on behalf of the Head of School & Director of School Operations and providing support for key staff, including the School Leadership Team (SLT).

The EA will act as an office manager, managing and supervising staff members, delegating work, ensuring the smooth delivery of administrative processes, designing and improving School-wide processes and systems and undertaking projects. The postholder will be expected to ensure that the best service is provided at all times.

The post holder will report directly to the Deputy School Operations Manager.

Key Responsibilities

EA Support

- Provide high-level administrative support to the Head of School (HoS) and Director of School Operations (DoSO), including proactive diary management, email triage and logistical support for attendance at meetings, workshops and conferences.
- Act as a primary administrative point of contact for School Operations and SLT leadership, demonstrating a high level of professionalism, discretion and the ability to manage conflicting demands.
- Responsible for dealing with all papers and correspondence and, after investigation, drafting prompt and appropriate responses.
- Make travel arrangements and plan itineraries for UK and International visits by the Head of School, including liaison with senior internal and external contacts.
- Responsible for managing P&OD processes on behalf of the HoS, DoSO and SLT Leadership Team as needed. This may include:
 - Supporting the School/Deputy School Operations Manager with Academic Promotions and Probation, Non-Clinical Professorial Salary Review and coordinating the recruitment of Senior Leadership Team members
 - Development of further particulars, adverts and other documentation for the advertising, shortlisting and appointment of staff.
 - Contributing to induction material and arranging new staff inductions.

- Administration of the SEED professional services annual leave system, adding and removing team members and updating annual leave quotas as required
- Financial administration and procurement support for School Operations, including:
 - Raising requisitions, ensuring the payment of invoices and expenses, in line with University financial regulations
 - Providing advice and guidance to colleagues on financial processes and systems.
 - Administration of expenses and other related financial processes for the HoS and DoSO.
- Effective liaison and communication with academic and Professional Services (PS) colleagues at all levels on a daily basis, on a range of policies and activities within the School and the wider University and with external organisations locally, nationally and internationally, as required.
- Organising systems and processes to track HoS/DoSO approvals (e.g., travel risk assessments, external examiner requests, thank you voucher requests, academic returners scheme applications and honorary, IT and visitor applications).
- In conjunction with other colleagues, ensure that the Head of School and Director of School Operations are briefed on relevant matters within the School, Faculty and University that require their attention or awareness.
- Draft correspondence, announcements, presentation material and other communications (such as newsletters) sourcing relevant information and using judgement on content.
- Organise and service School committees and other meetings, including the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), School Policy and Resources Committee (SPRC) and the Professional Services Leadership Team (PSLT). This will include planning agendas, distributing papers, taking accurate minutes, and proactively following up on actions.

Managerial

- To delegate, supervise and oversee the delivery and completion of tasks associated with HoS/DoSO/School Operations activity, where necessary, ensuring they are carried out in an effective and timely manner
- Provide line management for professional services staff to ensure:
 - Performance Development Reviews [PDRs] are conducted for all PS staff, and cases for re-grading, rewarding exceptional performance and distinguished achievement awards are proactively considered.
 - Staff training needs are identified and met
 - Workloads are appropriate, requests for flexible working are considered and staffing levels are regularly reviewed.
 - Probationary periods are managed.
 - Performance issues are identified and managed.

- To provide training where necessary.
- To liaise with the Deputy School Operations Manager regularly to ensure the smooth running of School Office functions.

Project Support

- Work with the School Operations Manager (SOM) and Deputy School Operations Manager (DSOM) to review and improve School business processes and supporting change management.
- Champion a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration, consistency and innovation; and engage constructively with change initiatives. Seek and implement new initiatives, developing and improving processes and systems.
- Take responsibility for small projects as directed by the Head of School and/or Director of School Operations/Deputy or School Operations Manager.
- Schedule events and meetings for School projects and the Senior Leadership Team, including the organisation of away days.
- Research and provide briefing material across a range of policy and operational issues.

General

- Ensure the delivery of excellent customer service across the team, ensuring the effective resolution of queries in liaison with colleagues as appropriate, and escalating challenges and barriers appropriately when necessary.
- Ensure the provision of accurate and up to date information, advice and guidance to stakeholders, both internal and external, in support of excellent customer service.
- Proactively build and maintain links with other PS areas and keep up to date with processes and procedures, providing administrative advice and guidance to colleagues.
- Maintain electronic and paper filing systems, manage shared drives and Teams sites in line with University information governance policies and data retention schedules.
- Maintain confidentiality for all employee-related and sensitive information at all times in line with information governance policies.
- To participate in working groups and with communities of practice, as required.
- Have an understanding of and commitment to promote the University's policies and procedures.
- Undertake these duties in accordance with the University's Equality and Diversity Policy and positively promote equality and diversity.
- Ensure that all personal actions are in line with the overall environmental aims of The University of Manchester, undertaking all tasks in an environmentally sustainable manner and promoting environmental sustainability where opportunity presents.

- To comply with Health and Safety requirements, including having an awareness of personal responsibilities to maintain a safe working environment.
- To contribute to the University's agenda for social responsibility, including sustainability.
- Support any other duties in the School, Faculty and University, commensurate with the role, as may be required by the Head of School, Head of School Operations, School Operations Manager and Deputy School Operations Manager.

Professional Expectations

- Be a proactive team member, willing to work across organisational and geographical boundaries.
- Seek new knowledge and engage in opportunities for training, development and upskilling.
- Be flexible, open and responsive to change and innovation.
- Play an active role in establishing informal networks and actively participate in communities of practice in order to identify, develop and implement best practice.
- Commit to the University's strategy, vision and values, and ensure all activities within area of responsibility are working towards its goals.
- Ensure visibility and accessibility to key stakeholders across campus in order to provide excellent customer service and effective business partner relationships.
- Proactively engage with University communication channels, keeping abreast of developments in the institution and contributing to calls for feedback.
- Keep abreast of developments within the sector and maintain an understanding of the context the University is operating within.
- Maintain an awareness and active engagement with the need for diversity and inclusion in all that we do for example, when engaging with individuals who identify with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, students who are under-represented in higher education as outlined in the University's widening participation strategy.
- Act in accordance with and promote University policies, procedures and requirements at all times – in particular, those relating to health and safety; equality, diversity and inclusion and information governance.
- Champion a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration, consistency and innovation; and engage constructively with change initiatives.

Person Specification

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Educated to A-Level or equivalent and/or significant experience within a relevant field.
- A demonstrable track record of providing high-quality administrative advice, support and guidance.

- The ability to manage a demanding and dynamic workload, meet deadlines and manage competing priorities using own initiative.
- Excellent interpersonal, persuasion and influencing skills.
- Ability to work with a high level of discretion and professionalism and liaise effectively with a wide range of internal and external colleagues and stakeholders.
- Experience of building relationships/rapport with senior staff.
- A constructive team player demonstrating an ability to work collaboratively and openness to the views and ideas of others.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to write formal committee minutes.
- Highly proactive with excellent organisational skills.
- Strong numeracy skills and experience of using finance processes.
- Experience of HR administration and processes, including recruitment.
- Excellent IT skills with experience in using a range of office software and systems and ability to arrange appropriate audio-visual support for in-person, hybrid and online meetings and events.
- A good knowledge of organisation, governance and administrative functions, preferably within a Higher Education Institution.
- Self-motivation, flexibility and the ability to use initiative and judgement to resolve operational problems and complete tasks.
- Be adaptable and willing to undergo training.
- A commitment to the University's strategic goals, themes and values.

Desirable Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Event management (virtual, in person or hybrid) experience.
- Experience of using Microsoft 365 applications and demonstrable use of programmes such as Forms, SharePoint, Power Automate.
- Experience of website administration.
- Experience of delivering internal communication e.g., developing and writing newsletters, communicating key process updates and reminders to relevant staff and advocating best practice.