

Job Description – Assistant Director: Governance, Resources & Operations

About the Role

This is an excellent opportunity for an experienced education specialist and leader to join the executive team at the Open University in Scotland and play a pivotal role in the organisation's future.

Working as the core lead for the organisation's operational activities, the role has a wide range of responsibilities, primarily focused on delivering outstanding support for the organisation across vital areas such as governance, resource management, directorate organisation, risk management, support services, project coordination, and resource management.

In addition, the post holder will operate in a role with similar functions to a university secretary as a key member of the Open University in Scotland leadership team, providing an oversight of organisation and sector issues to provide a unifying organisational approach as well as providing aide and counsel to the Director, with a core focus on effective problem solving, communication, and effective relationship building, internally and externally.

This is an exciting time for the Open University in Scotland as we deliver life-changing education right across Scotland, as well as preparing for our forthcoming office move, and the postholder will play an important role in supporting a wide and complex range of functions.

The OU in Scotland is the largest provider of part-time undergraduate higher education in Scotland, and our open access policy, flexible part-time delivery, national bridging programme with schools, college articulation agreements and geographical reach position us well as Scotland's national widening access university. 20% of our undergraduate students have qualifications below standard university entrance level when they joined the OU, 26% have a declared disability and 20% are resident in the most deprived areas of Scotland (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

We are proud to have ranked first in Scotland for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey 2024.

The OU works with Scotland's employers and businesses to provide high quality learning and skills including a range of funding to enable training. 74% of OU students in Scotland are in full-time or part-time employment, and three out of four FTSE 100 companies have sponsored staff to take OU courses. In Scotland, 23% of students are living in rural or remote areas and 85% of graduates are remaining in the location where they studied - so their talent and skills benefit local communities.

For further information please visit [The Open University](#).

Key Responsibilities

- Lead and coordinate the governance and internal executive meeting and engagement structures of the Open University in Scotland, including internally with executive and other groups, with the wider Open University and with key external stakeholders.
- Liaise with the Scottish Government, the Scottish Funding Council and other relevant bodies on funding and financial support and governance, in conjunction with OUIS lead SFC contact and other strategy colleagues.
- Lead the Support Services Team and manage related processes and resources on behalf of the Nation Director, including human resources, accommodation, facilities, health and safety, graduation ceremonies and internal events and oversee management of the University's physical estate and technological infrastructure in the Edinburgh offices.
- Support the Nation Director on business planning, finance and resource management, and lead organisational risk management within The Open University in Scotland.
- Act as the key point of contact with other units within the University in relation to planning, compliance and funding, with particular regard to providing assurance to Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council.
- Liaise with university secretaries in Scotland and represent The OU in Scotland at the Universities Scotland Secretaries Group.
- Provide oversight of OUIS-wide returns, reports and submissions in conjunction with strategy colleagues, and oversight of OUIS-wide projects, working in partnership with key directorate partners.

- Provide aide and counsel to the Director, with effective problem solving, communication, and effective relationship building, internally and externally.
- Manage the Directorate PA Team and their processes and activity, including records and data management and, along with other OUIs executive leaders, deputise for the Director, Scotland where appropriate.

Skills and Experience

Essential:

- Degree level qualification.
- Demonstrable understanding and awareness of the external environment and government policies as they impact on further and higher education in Scotland.
- Proven ability and recent or current experience within adult, further or higher education.
- Excellent ability to deliver highly-organised and detailed governance and operational organisation, board or committee management in an education context, including the management of risk, resources and other key governance activity.
- Evidence of updating and continuing professional development in a relevant field.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- The ability to engage internally and externally with a complex range of stakeholders and to build and maintain effective relationships
- Computer literacy, sufficient to use IT systems effectively as planning and management tools, including complex planning to a high level.
- Knowledge and experience of budget and/or resource management.

- A strong commitment to excellence in working with a diverse student population (academic-related posts).

Desirable:

- Experience of managing staff and/or activities and projects, and of operating in a complex environment aligned to people services and employment law requirements.
- Knowledge and experience of budget management within a devolved framework.

The Open University is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion which is reflected in our mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas. We aim to foster a diverse and inclusive environment so that all in our OU community can reach their potential. We recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and culture, and that this difference brings great strength. We strive to recruit, retain and develop the careers of a diverse pool of students and staff, and particularly encourage applications from all underrepresented groups. We also aspire to make The Open University a supportive workplace for all through our policies, services and staff networks.

