

# CANDIDATE PACK

## Head of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs

Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and  
Communications

UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER 



# OUR UNIVERSITY

Under the inspirational leadership of Professor Peter Bonfield OBE, the University of Westminster is a place where discoveries are made, barriers are broken, diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. Serving more than 21,000 undergraduate, postgraduate, apprentice and executive students, our mission is to transform the lives of young people from all backgrounds. We seek to make the world a more inclusive, sustainable, better and healthier place through our educational, research and knowledge exchange endeavours.

Since our founding in 1838 we have stood out as innovators, committed to tackling social inequalities. In 2021, our University ranked 2nd in England out of more than 100 higher education institutions for social mobility. The ranking - produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Sutton Trust - compares the number of students from low-income backgrounds at universities, and the extent to which their studies helped them to move up the income ladder. Westminster has the second highest performance among universities in England.

As we focus forward to 2029, we will continue to do so in a way that is true to our progressive, compassionate and responsible values. Our education offer will be more personalised and authentic, giving students from all backgrounds an opportunity of transformative learning, helping them succeed in their studies and professional lives. Our curriculum will be employability-linked, leading to stronger outcomes and helping prepare our graduates for the world of work and for life. Our research and knowledge exchange will enable us to maximise our positive impact on societies in the UK and around the world in an environment where everyone is inspired to succeed. Our priorities of wellbeing, inclusion and sustainable development will help us as we navigate through the challenges and opportunities towards 2029.





# OUR PRIORITIES

The University's 2022-2029 strategy, *Being Westminster*, sets us apart and builds on our unique history and achievements. In our University, we value social justice, moral conscience, inclusivity and equality, acting positively together to make change for good.

The University of Westminster has three priorities.

## WELLBEING

Working and studying together at Westminster as a community of students and colleagues is a big part of our lives – doing so in an environment that places our wellbeing front and centre helps us to be safe and feel safe. We care for the safety, health and wellbeing of those around us as well as ourselves.

## INCLUSION

All Westminster, colleagues and students are in a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and is a place where harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. As a responsible institution, we strive to ensure and to champion equality. As a progressive institution, we take pride in our diversity. As a compassionate institution, we commit to an inclusive culture that allows students and colleagues to reach their full potential.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We take inspiration from the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in how we drive our actions and activities and governance across our University. As a community, we bring together our collective energies to play our part in addressing the climate crisis and inequalities to enable a more sustainable and socially just world. We are one of the top 20 universities in the world in SDG 5 for providing equal access and supporting the academic progression of women. We are one of the top 25 universities in the world in SDG 10 tackling economic, health based and international inequalities. We are in the top 50 universities in SDG 12 for promoting resource and energy efficiency, having a sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services for all.





# OUR OBJECTIVES 2022-2029

Against a backdrop of a changing and challenging higher education environment, the University has recently completed a major review of its objectives and strategy, and has published its commitments for the period 2022-29.

## EDUCATION

We will offer personalised and authentic education, underpinned by an inclusive curriculum, to enable all our students, from all backgrounds, to engage in transformative learning and to succeed in their studies and professional lives. We will address global, political, and social challenges through a relevant demand-led and forward-looking portfolio. We will do this by offering authentic teaching, learning and assessment modes which immerse students in the wider-world through live projects, work-based learning and global opportunities. We will invest in our people to enable all teaching colleagues to plan and deliver exceptional learning experiences and professional colleagues to offer exceptional support. Students will be empowered by working in partnership with colleagues and fellow students to shape the Westminster experience. We will develop an integrated physical and digital environment that supports excellent practical, active and collaborative learning for all our students.

## RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Research and knowledge exchange are fundamental to our commitment to making a positive difference to the world and transforming lives. We are committed to research in four priority areas: Diversity and Inclusion; Health Innovation and Wellbeing; Sustainable Cities and the Urban Environment; Arts, Communication and Culture. Our excellence in research and knowledge exchange will infuse our education endeavour, inspiring and equipping our students as agents of change locally as well as globally. We will continue to grow our community of PhD researchers, ensuring that the Westminster postgraduate research experience remains sector leading and the foundation for great careers. In knowledge exchange we will focus on engagement with government, business and with the public and local community. We will achieve more when we identify shared interests and build partnerships with our communities and collaborate for the public good with a clear civic purpose.

## EMPLOYABILITY

We will ensure that all our students benefit from employability-led learning and purposeful engagement with employers, business and industry, to give students from every background the best possible preparation for the world of work and enable the best possible employability outcomes. We will do this through the further extension and embedding of programmes such as work-based and placement learning; the Westminster Employability Award; Westminster Working Cultures; mentoring; and student enterprise. Employability-related learning will be a core and critical part of the courses and curriculum we offer, right across the University. It will be front and centre of life at the University for students and colleagues.



A key priority will be the development of a dedicated Centre for Employability and Enterprise at 29 Marylebone Road, intended to transform our student experience and our engagement with business, industry and employers. The Centre will provide a game-changing experience through which undergraduate and postgraduate students from across Westminster will come together and practise enterprise; develop an entrepreneurial mindset and skills; access training, work, projects, business advice and mentoring; and connect directly with employers. The future-focused environment of the Centre will scale up our employability provision, helping our students to be 'fit for the future' in the most challenging of post-pandemic labour markets and economic environments. It will strengthen links between our UK-based and international employer partners and our motivated, bright, work-ready students, affording employers access to a diverse mix of people right for the needs of the contemporary workforce.

## GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

We will raise the international reputation and reach of the University, ensuring that 30% of our undergraduate community and 70% of our taught postgraduates come to us from overseas. Overseas partnerships will remain central to our global engagements. We will prioritise the outward mobility of our students to partner institutions, Contributing to students' development of employability skills and competences. We will extend and deepen our Trans-National Education relationships. These partnerships, particularly that with Westminster International University in Tashkent, will move beyond franchised or validated arrangements to embrace employability, alumni-related research, CPD and knowledge exchange connections.





# OUR STRUCTURE

## ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

Our structure is built to deliver an enhanced learning environment, stronger and broader industrial, international and professional connections and pioneering and impactful research. The University comprises three Colleges:

### Westminster Business School

- School of Organisations, Economy and Society
- School of Finance and Accounting
- School of Applied Management
- School of Management and Marketing

### Design, Creative and Digital Industries

- School of Architecture and Cities
- Westminster School of Arts
- School of Computer Science and Engineering
- Westminster School of Media and Communications

### Liberal Arts and Sciences

- School of Social Sciences
- Westminster Law School
- School of Humanities
- School of Life Sciences

The University Executive Board comprises:

- Vice Chancellor and President
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Employability and Global Engagement)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
- Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
- Three Heads of College

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Our Professional Services teams support the effective and professional delivery of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange and the management of student residences and sports facilities.

- Academic Registry
- Business Engagement
- Estates
- Finance and Commercial Activities
- Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications
- Information Systems and Support
- People, Culture and Wellbeing
- Strategy, Planning and Performance
- Student and Academic Services
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Graduate School
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement



# JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title: Head of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs**

**Reports to: Director of Marketing and Communications**

**Department: Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications**

**Grade: L1**

## ROLE PURPOSE

The Head of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs strategically leads the corporate communications, public relations and public affairs agenda to ensure the University of Westminster's reputation continues to grow and flourish, in line with the 'Being Westminster' strategy, building and supporting key external and internal relationships that enable the University's success.

In addition to leading, managing and inspiring the Corporate Communications, Public Relations and Public Affairs team, the role holder will help manage the Vice-Chancellor and University Executive Board relationships, working with external and internal University corporate governance frameworks and policies, in the management of programmes and resources, and embedding a culture in line with the University's vision, values and corporate objectives.

## PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Responsibility for the leadership, development and management of the Corporate Communications, Public Relations and Public Affairs Team encompassing public and media relations, internal communications, public affairs, crisis communications and issues management.
2. Lead integrated corporate communications campaigns for internal and external audiences and plan and deliver the annual work programme to ensure the delivery of business objectives. All communications to be underpinned by the story of the brand which brings the student, professional, academic and alumni communities to life.
3. Providing strategic support and advice to the Vice-Chancellor, Executive Board and senior leadership on major flagship corporate programmes and issues of reputational risk; political engagement and public affairs and reputation management - identifying and handling rising tide issues proactively to support and protect the University's brand and reputation.
4. Manage the annual budget process ensuring all functional budgets and forecasts are updated and managed on a monthly basis to deliver activities on budget.
5. Set and monitor KPI's for the team's performance and activities and enable the function to deliver the best possible professional communications service to





colleagues across the University. Conduct the training needs analysis for the team and allocate resources to invest into CPD.

6. Monitor, evaluate, and analyse corporate communications, media relations and policy engagement outputs and impacts, creating an adaptable culture of continuous improvement and proven impact.
7. Lead a high-impact, digital-first, content-led function - ensuring corporate communications are coordinated across multiple channels to maximise profile and reach our key audiences.
8. Manage the University's crisis communications process, ensuring it is robust, tested and resourced - to ensure colleagues, students and key stakeholders are properly informed to support and protect the University's brand and reputation. Includes membership of Major Incident Silver Command.
9. Be an agent and champion for change, supporting the University's strategic goals. Where required, take responsibility for shaping, influencing and leading transformational change both within the team and function, and as a nominated member to other University-wide strategic groups.
10. Work with the Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications Directorate's SMT to deliver the overall strategy and delivery plan, driving high quality outputs and excellent service.
11. Act as an ambassador for the University - representing the Vice-Chancellor and other senior leadership externally where appropriate and, as required, orchestrate and manage internal media spokespersons, particularly in relation to crisis communications.
12. Be an ambassador for the Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications Directorate, always working constructively, positively and collaboratively with colleagues and stakeholders, and to undertake any other duties as appropriate and as required by the Director of Global Recruitment, Marketing and Communications including on key University Committees.
13. Assist the Vice-Chancellor and University Executive Board on communications around the key areas of strategic focus and identifying metrics for success.
14. Business improvement: On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and in close collaboration with the other senior leads, including the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, develop and lead a clear strategic communications and public affairs programme that will motivate and inspire others, delivered through detailed plans and activities that are integrated and interdisciplinary.
15. Act as a key thought partner, brainstorming and identifying solutions to challenges.





16. Internal and External Communications: working with Corporate Communications colleagues on the drafting of University bulletins, blogs, colleague briefings, reports, social media posts, speeches and presentations.
17. Monitor information flow on key strategic projects: Sometimes acting as a gatekeeper, ensuring the Vice-Chancellor's involvement in a project or decision-making process at the right time.
18. Implementing the Vice-Chancellor's decisions within formal decision-making processes, ensuring compliance with University governance processes.
19. Lead the University's Public Affairs strategy, managing related partnerships and provide a stakeholder management role on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor (including relevant Government, regional, local and sector authorities and associations).
20. Representing the Vice-Chancellor at a senior level as a champion of the Westminster brand and seeking relevant opportunities for working on matters of mutual interest and influencing policy.
21. Participate as required at University Executive Board, Court of Governors, Senior Management Team and College Executive meetings, and other internal and external meetings and events as required.
22. Oversee and manage a variety of cross-organisational projects, often cross-functional University-wide projects or initiatives, as delegated and approved through University Executive Board.
23. Monitor alignment, identifying gaps and proactively implementing cross-functional solutions of all University-wide strategies and plans with the strategic objectives of the University, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.
24. Support business improvement activities via horizon-scanning, and direct mentoring.
25. Bring together multiple stakeholders and help drive decisions.

## CONTEXT

The Head of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs is a member of the Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications Senior Management Team and is intrinsic in shaping and developing the strategic direction of the directorate with SMT colleagues. The role is responsible for leading and developing a team of up to seven communication professionals. This role holds budgetary responsibilities of up to £100k per annum and will deliver excellent value for money and return on investment. The role necessitates significant resilience, tact, diplomacy and the ability to keep the strategic intent of the institution always, whilst appropriately challenging and influencing. The role holder is responsible for managing external agencies and freelancers. The role holder will develop positive,



forward-looking relationships with academic and professional services colleagues and foster a service ethos whereby efficient, effective and consistent support frameworks, policies and processes are developed in partnership with colleagues; innovation is supported and encouraged, and all activities support the achievement of University objectives by enhancing the quality of the student and colleague experience. The Head of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs is ultimately responsible for managing the progression of the positive reputation of the University of Westminster and will lead the Corporate Communications Team to deliver the relevant targets as set out in the 'Being Westminster' strategy.

The role holder will be required from time to time to attend University Executive Board and Court of Governors meetings.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- Director of Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications
- Vice-Chancellor and President
- Deputy Vice-Chancellors
- University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer
- Heads of College
- Head of Functions, particularly Student Services, People, Culture and Wellbeing, University of Westminster Students' Union
- Internal colleague networks
- Media, including Sector Experts
- External Stakeholders
- Government – International, UK and Local





# PERSON SPECIFICATION

## QUALIFICATIONS

- First Degree or equivalent practical experience that demonstrates appropriate levels of knowledge, skill and practical application.
- Postgraduate qualification e.g. Communications, management qualification or equivalent practical experience that demonstrates relevant levels of knowledge and skill (NVQ level 5 or 7 or equivalent).
- Relevant professional qualification and membership of a relevant professional body.

## TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

- Delivering high-impact corporate communications and engagement for high-profile, organisations – nationally and internationally.
- Extensive demonstrable success at building relationships and networks at all levels within a complex organisation.
- Extensive demonstrable success at influencing others to achieve outcomes.
- Proven track record in building organisations' profile, reputation and brand PR internationally and nationally
- Outstanding written and verbal communications skills – and experience of presentation.
- Experience of management and implementation of effective quality procedures, including active involvement in committees and working groups.
- Experience of initiating, managing and implementing organisation-wide projects delivering results to business performance objectives, deadlines and budget.
- Evidence of managing political agendas in a complex organisational environment at senior level to influence decision making and bring about cultural change.
- Applied knowledge and experience of business planning, resource management, and of the issues affecting Higher Education.
- Strong record of building contacts, networks and relationships – able to influence and shape business, policy and stakeholders internally and externally
- Proven record of winning trust and confidence at Board and CEO-level through demonstrating sound judgement.
- Knowledge of University structures, UK Government policies in education, external agency and legislative requirements, and the international operating environment.
- Experience of management of staff and staffing budgets, including the effective handling of appraisal/performance reviews and staff development activities.
- Experience of developing business plans, budgets and project plans and successfully managing resources within them.
- Experience of drafting high-impact quality communications for senior colleagues.



## APTITUDES, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Thrives on helping others be their best selves and anticipating their needs before they are spoken.
- Experience in wide-ranging or cross-functional areas, and an eagerness to learn new skills.
- Planning, developing and delivering communication strategies and plans
- Strategic thinker
- Strong written and verbal communication; listens well and can easily learn to communicate in someone else's "written voice".
- A team-player who engenders an inclusive and enabling ethos.
- Ability to influence policy development and decision-making at senior levels.
- Excellent negotiation and influencing skills and highly developed team working skills.
- Ability to take ownership and control and exercise leadership; initiating action and taking responsibility.
- Ability to exercise judgement in line with organisational strategy and priorities.
- Aptitude for horizon-scanning to identify and evaluate new opportunities.
- Ability to work both strategically and operationally concurrently.
- Sound ambassadorial qualities for external representation of the University.





# HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this vacancy, please visit our [vacancies page](#) where you will be able to download our application form template. You will then be requested to complete a quick registration before being able to upload completed application form and any supporting documentation.

## Applications should include:

- A concise statement in support (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification and motivation for applying.
- You may also include an up to date curriculum vitae;
- names and contact details of two referees (although referees will only be approached at offer stage).

**The deadline for receipt of applications is midnight on 30 June 2025.**

**Interviews will take place on a date to be confirmed.**

An appointment will be made subject to proof of eligibility to work in the UK and satisfactory references being obtained.

At the University of Westminster, diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders.

We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

*The University has adopted Smart Working principles to support and further our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims of being an inclusive, collaborative and flexible employer. Further details of Smart Working can be discussed at interview stage.*



# OUR BENEFITS

The University offers a range of wellbeing and work-life balance benefits to recognise and reward the essential contribution our colleagues make to success and growth. Our benefits are inclusive for colleagues of all backgrounds including LGBTQ+ colleagues, disabled colleagues, pregnant colleagues, parents and carers, as well as colleagues of all genders, age, ethnicities, nationalities, religion and beliefs, and marriage and civil partnership status.

- 35 days annual leave per year, plus bank/national holidays and University of Westminster closure days (pro-rata for part-time staff).
- A generous occupational pension scheme.
- Annual incremental progression and/or cost of living reviews.
- Generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave.
- Flexible working and smart working.
- Learning and development opportunities.
- Free membership rates for a wide range of sporting facilities, including gyms at Regent Street and Harrow campuses, as well as the Chiswick Sports Ground.
- Employee assistance programme.
- The opportunity to participate in other attractive employee benefit schemes such as Cycle to Work, Eye Care Vouchers, Season Ticket Loans, and Give As You Earn.







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