

CANDIDATE PACK

Director of College Operations

Academic Registrar's Department

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



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Director of College Operations

Reports to: Academic Registrar

Department: Academic Registrar's Department

Grade: L1

ROLE PURPOSE

To provide an effective interface between the University's and College management and governance structures, including authoritative advice to the Head of College and other senior members of the leadership team on matters relating to the implementation of policies, procedures and systems for College operations.

To direct the effective business operation of the College, driving continuous improvement in the provision of academic administration services, and through influencing and negotiating with other Professional Services teams to deliver the College's strategic objectives.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Provide strategic direction, input and support to the Head of College and College management team, leading on developing and implementing business planning processes including forward planning student recruitment and retention targets, and negotiating and agreeing on these on behalf of the College, resource planning, business continuity planning, and identifying, mitigating and managing risks in accordance with the College Risk Registers.
2. In collaboration with the College Professional Services Partners, drive forward on behalf of the Heads of College financial and budgetary planning, workforce planning, and estates and information systems strategies in order to advocate College needs, and to ensure the continued sustainability and development of the College.
3. Lead and manage the provision of a professional administrative support service to the College to ensure its effective business operation; work collaboratively with the other two Directors of College Operations in the development, implementation and monitoring of service level agreements in relation to the provision of such administrative support, in order to ensure the optimum student and staff experience. Establish and maintain quality and feedback measures in accordance with appropriate sector practice in relation to the provision of College support services, and develop and monitor performance indicators and benchmarks.
4. Lead on internal and external responses required to professional bodies on issues, managing and resolving complex problems as required. Develop robust business cases for College initiatives and developments.
5. Lead and manage the local College infrastructure to ensure the academic governance of the College, including



responsibility for the effectiveness of College academic committees, local annual monitoring processes, local student misconduct and complaints matters, student representative systems and PSRB liaison.

6. Provide professional advice to the Head of College and College management team on matters of College and University governance and compliance, policy, procedure and systems, liaising with specialist Registry teams as required; provide to the Head of College, as required, key management information, analysis and reports, and monitor College performance against KPIs and other University objectives.
7. Review and develop policies, procedures, guidelines and support systems in order to ensure the effective, efficient and consistent delivery of the College operations function, and to benchmark, develop and share good practice in College operations, working collaboratively with other senior ARD colleagues, in particular the other Directors of College Operations, to address College issues and effect change across the University.
8. Provide leadership and direction to College Administration staff to ensure that all staff are aware of their contribution to key tasks, and set clear objectives for the teams in accordance with departmental and University strategies. Through the Professional Development Review process, the postholder will ensure that the appropriate service standards are set, engaging and motivating staff to achieve maximum performance and flexibility through clear lines of accountability and responsibility, embedding cultural change as required.
9. In liaison with senior academic staff within the College and the University's Marketing department, ensure that the College's marketing needs are identified, negotiated and articulated at the appropriate time facilitating effective marketing of the College portfolio.
10. Work collaboratively with the Head of Campus Registry Services, the Registry operations managers, and the Director of Student and Academic Services, to ensure that the provision of student administration and student services supports the College's needs.
11. As a member of the Academic Registrar's Department senior management team, contribute to the development of departmental plans and operating models.
12. Undertake such other duties within their competence as may be requested by the Academic Registrar from time to time, and lead on projects and initiatives as required for the University or College.

CONTEXT

The Academic Registrar's Department is responsible for oversight of academic and student administration services across the University. It has an establishment of over 100 staff. In 2015 ARD adopted the following mission statement:

The Academic Registrar's Department will be recognised for excellence and professionalism in leading the University's academic administration and academic governance functions. As a team of specialist professional practitioners, and through



the provision of expert advice and the ownership and management of holistic and efficient administrative processes and policies, we will meet our responsibilities by:

- assuring academic standards and enhancing academic quality through the effective management of the University's academic infrastructure;
- supporting the strategic leadership and delivery of learning, teaching and research;
- delivering a seamless student journey through the administrative lifecycle from enrolment to graduation and beyond, wherever appropriate using technology to improve efficiency, remove barriers and provide solutions that will allow stakeholders to access our services wherever and whenever is convenient to them;
- ensuring the quality and integrity of all student- and course-related data, and developing effective and efficient data management and related business processes; and
- ensuring the effective delivery of academic programmes and Faculty events and activities through the provision of professional support to Deans and senior academic colleagues.

Our work will enhance the student experience through anticipating and responding to student need, and putting the student's expectations at the heart of all that we do.

The postholder is one of three Directors of College Operations (DoCOs), there being one Director for each of the University's three Colleges. The DoCOs will be expected to work collaboratively to ensure consistency in delivery of service provision across the three Colleges, that College processes and outcomes comply with University expectations and requirements, and College and University governance processes are aligned.

Colleges are the primary academic management units of the University. Each College comprises four academic Schools.

The DoCOs have a formal reporting line to the Academic Registrar, however each also has a 'dotted' reporting line to their respective Head of College, and on a day to day basis will be working closely with, providing support to, and taking direction from the Head of College and the College senior management team.

Each DoCO leads and manages the College Office, a small team of staff providing PA support to the Head of College, administrative support in relation to College operations, and academic administration in relation to local (College-based) academic governance matters, such as quality assurance activities, student conduct and complaints, College academic committees, PSRBs, annual monitoring etc.

The University requires all postholders to have an understanding of individual health and safety responsibilities and an awareness of the risks in the work environment, together with their potential impact on both individual work and that of others.

DIMENSIONS

The postholder will have the following direct reports:

- College Business Manager
- College Academic Administration Officer



- Executive Assistant & College Co-ordinator

The postholder will also have responsibility for the management of 8 non-direct reports.

The postholder will be responsible for:

- a pay budget of c. £550k
- a small non-pay budget.
- occasional responsibility for the deployment of project budget(s) and/or associated financial records

The postholder will also be responsible, in liaison with the College's Finance Business Partner, for monitoring, on behalf of the Head of College, College budgets totalling tens of millions of pounds.

The postholder will be a member or chair of a number of University and College committees

The postholder is a member of the ARD senior management team and the College senior management team.

The University operates seven days a week and some services are open in the evenings and weekends. The post-holder will be expected to be available during key times such as enrolment and graduation. Occasional out of hours working will be required as part of the role.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Head(s) of College
 Associate Heads of College
 Heads of Schools and other senior academic staff
 PSRBs
 Finance business partner and senior Finance staff
 Director of Planning & Performance
 Director of Marketing
 HR Partners and senior HR staff
 Director of Estates Services & Campus Services Manager
 Director of Information Systems & Support
 Campus Registries
 Professional Services Directors
 External networks
 External suppliers



PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- A relevant first degree or equivalent practical experience that demonstrates relevant levels of knowledge and skills.
- Membership of a relevant professional body (e.g. AUA or ICSA) or evidence of continuous professional development
- A management qualification or evidence of participation in a relevant management development programme or equivalent practical experience that demonstrates relevant levels of knowledge and skills.

Desirable

- A relevant higher degree or professional qualification

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Substantial experience of operational planning within the higher education sector and of interpreting policy into workable operational activity
- Demonstrable experience of successfully implementing strategic planning within the higher education sector and of interpreting strategy into workable implementation objectives
- Expert and applied knowledge of the UK HE legislative context and framework.
- Demonstrable commitment to excellent levels of service to internal and external clients and students
- Proven experience of researching and drafting complex and detailed documents for a range of audiences, including presentation of financial and statistical data
- Experience of high-level committee work, support and follow-up
- Demonstrable experience of building effective working relationships and exercising initiative, tact and discretion in dealing with highly sensitive and confidential matters
- Clear evidence of political acumen and proven ability to influence, negotiate with and inspire colleagues to act towards a common purpose as a means of achieving desired outcomes
- Experience of successful team development and management in a senior role, including performance management and professional development
- Evidence of successfully supporting the implementation of cultural change objectives or bringing about behavioural change
- Understanding of the legislative context and framework within which the University operates
- Demonstrable experience of budget planning and management
- Evidence of managing in multi-cultural environment and willingness to research and compare practices across HE and other sectors
- Competent in the use of Microsoft Office software applications



Desirable

- Working knowledge of project management processes and practices
- An understanding of the UK HE Research environment

APTITUDES, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Essential

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to establish rapport and liaise effectively with colleagues, students, and external clients
- Proven ability to build, lead and manage a team successfully to deliver high quality services
- Ability to effectively deliver conflicting priorities and challenging workloads by maintaining focus on agreed objectives and deliverables, whatever the circumstances, and monitoring progress against targets.
- Ability to work flexibly, taking account of new information/changed circumstances and modifying understanding of a problem or situation accordingly.
- Ability to write coherent, focused and concise reports, minutes and policy.
- Ability to think and plan strategically with an awareness of political contexts whilst ensuring that the services are effectively delivered.
- Ability to comprehend and communicate statistical information effectively
- Proven ability to build, lead and manage a team successfully to deliver high quality services
- Must share and exemplify University values.
- Personal credibility and authority and a persuasive approach
- Commitment to personal and professional development for self and others
- Good leadership qualities and drive.
- Integrity and independence of judgement
- Tact, sensitivity and diplomacy dealing with a range of stakeholders at all levels.
- Resilient managing in rapidly changing operating environments and comfortable with ambiguity
- Fully committed to creating a stimulating learning and working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which harassment and discrimination are neither tolerated nor acceptable.
- Openness, responsiveness and accessibility
- Willingness to travel to and work at all University sites
- Willingness to work outside normal working hours

Desirable

- High level analytical abilities using numeric and text documents



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 11 August 2024.

Interviews will take place on 11 September 2024.

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.





[westminster.ac.uk](https://www.westminster.ac.uk)

The University of Westminster is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Registration number: 977818. Registered office: 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2UW. 9860/08.23/JT

