

# CANDIDATE PACK

## Head of Student Support and Residential Life

Student and Academic Services

UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER 



# OUR UNIVERSITY

Under the inspirational leadership of Dr 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 of:

- Vice-Chancellor and President
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Employability and Global Engagement)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
- Three Pro Vice-Chancellor 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: Head of Student Support and Residential Life  
Reports to: Director of Student and Academic Services

## ROLE PURPOSE

As a member of the Student and Academic Services (SAS) Leadership Team the post holder leads the University's Student Support and Residential Life services, ensuring alignment of teams and activities with University priorities. They are responsible for strategic planning, management, development, delivery and reporting of activities and all associated budgets; creating a culture which enables an outstanding user service experience; delivering relevant University KPIs and targets annually, ensuring timely management reporting and audit are undertaken; working collaboratively with academic and Professional Services teams.

## PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 1) Design, implement and develop systems, services and processes to deliver a whole-university approach to promoting and delivering student wellbeing, inclusion and safeguarding, ensuring a coordinated structure for holistic and responsive interventions, continual impact assessment and ongoing professional development for relevant colleagues across the University.
- 2) Manage and develop the University's policies and processes in relation to all areas within the remit of the University's Student Support and Residential Life services; lead the Student Wellbeing Framework and the associated implementation plan. Acting as the Principal Student Safeguarding Officer for the University (as specified in the University Safeguarding Framework).
- 3) Liaise with stakeholders, in particular with senior academic colleagues, the University Safety, Health & Wellbeing team and the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU), to create a culture which enables an outstanding student experience; ensuring that all provision complies with regulatory, statutory and legislative requirements and which anticipates requirements in learning, teaching and student success and ensuring effective utilisation of resource in alignment with the University's strategy.
- 4) Develop and implement an operational plan to deliver relevant University KPIs and targets annually, within the context of the 3 - 5-year planning cycle, and in accordance with the University's priorities; report on strategic and operational activities; monitor, evaluate, and produce reports using financial and other data from relevant colleagues and systems; ensure that the production of records and reports complies with University procedures and legislative requirements.
- 5) Lead and manage a senior team which is responsible for delivering all activities in the portfolio, providing oversight,





direction and coordination in respect of the overall quality of user experience, standards, availability and service delivery, in consultation with key stakeholders; engaging and motivating colleagues to achieve maximum performance and flexibility within clear lines of accountability and responsibility; promoting effective relations with academic departments and other areas of Professional Services.

- 6) Identify, plan, resource and manage the overall expenditure (circa £5.4M) and income (circa £8.2M) budgets for the service, as well as project funding, within the specific parameters of the University's capital and revenue budgets using commitment accounting procedures; manage within the allocated budget, obtaining best value in particular through the use of rigorous project management and targeted planning. Ensure that tendering and contracting arrangements for external provision adhere to financial regulations and that all bought-in services are delivered to contract specification, within budget forecasts and evaluated for impact and value for money.
- 7) Lead and manage partnerships with relevant NHS and public health providers to ensure effective and responsive health services for students, including the provision of an appropriate out-of-hours response in the case of student related emergencies. Within this context, the post holder will manage all issues related to the Fitness to Study and Crisis Intervention Procedures for Student Emergencies ensuring that the Director is kept informed of all developments and providing specialist advice and guidance on the welfare of students to other relevant senior colleagues.
- 8) To raise the profile of the University's provision for students through representation and participation in relevant external networks, conferences and other professional activities; undertake environmental scanning and analysis of trends in student needs and satisfaction, year on year, providing relevant information to the SAS Senior Leadership Team and other related Committees and Groups.
- 9) Shape and contribute to the strategic development of the Directorate as a member of the SAS Senior Leadership Team, working with other members of the team to integrate services and provide a coherent experience for students, researchers and teaching colleagues, alongside Professional Services colleagues who are supported by the Directorates activities.
- 10) To undertake such other duties within their competence as may be requested by the Director of Student and Academic Services.

## CONTEXT

This senior management post in Student & Academic Services (SAS) is responsible for the Student Support and Residential Life cluster. The post holder will lead the services within their remit to create a coherent wellbeing experience for students which maximises the synergies between all the teams and draws on the different professional disciplines. The role holder will ensure that services are fully aligned with other SAS teams, activities across Professional Services and complement the





academic offer, to enable the University to deliver its priorities and meet its statutory obligations.

Student Support and Residential Life comprises circa 70 colleagues working in the following 6 teams:

- Interfaith Advice
- Residential Life (including 3 University-owned halls and external accommodation partnerships)
- Student Advice and Funding
- Student Counselling
- Student Inclusion and Wellbeing
- Student Support Development

Student Support and Residential Life is part of Student and Academic Services (SAS). SAS provides professional, efficient, effective and consistent researcher and student-focused support and services. It leads on professional support for a wide range of governance, research, learning, employability and wellbeing interventions that enhance the experience of students, colleagues and alumni throughout their relationship with the University.

SAS activities are key to the delivery of the University's strategic objectives and enable the University to deliver on its mission:

To help students and colleagues from different backgrounds fulfil their potential and contribute to a more sustainable, equitable and healthier society.

To achieve this, SAS is organised into six clusters:

- Business Operations
- Employability and Graduate Success
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement
- Library and Archive Services
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Office
- Student Support and Residential Life

Uniting these services in a single Directorate enables a powerful synergy between support for learning, teaching, employability and research & knowledge exchange and co-locates these with the professionals who lead on student wellbeing. In turn, this informs the Whole-University approach to the wellbeing of all colleagues.

SAS teams contribute to increasing success in the NSS/PTES/PRES, TEF, REF, KEF and Graduate Outcomes and therefore positively impact league tables. Services delivered by SAS student-facing teams are critical to achieving the priorities of the University's Access and Participation Plan.

SAS is a large and diverse Directorate comprising circa 240 colleagues who, between them, work in every university building and have a strong online presence to support and collaborate with students and colleagues who prefer/need to work virtually. SAS teams are very flexible and roles evolve with changing needs.

The post is based in the West End but the post holder may be expected to work at any of the University sites as required. 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.

The post holder is required to represent the Director on University level committees (or attend for specific items of business). They will be expected to represent the University in appropriate external and national fora in respect of professional functions. They will contribute to strategic and operational planning for the University's international activities and may be required to undertake international travel.

The post holder will champion innovation and improvement in services, providing leadership to colleagues in their teams and expert advice to senior management. Collaboration within SAS and with internal and external partners will also be a key activity, including service planning based on active partnership with key stakeholders.

The post-holder will support delivery of services in relation to the University's aspirations to deliver exceptional student experience and in line with relevant strategies.

The University operates a large and complex range of cloud-based web services and systems; the post holder is responsible for all such systems, which directly deliver the activities within the remit of the post. They maintain a strong working relationship with Information Systems and Services, which is responsible for the University's business systems and services, many of which are critical to the post holder's role.

They will be expected to use a project management framework in order to manage increasing demands.

The University requires all post holders 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

- Line management responsibility for up to 6 direct reports and indirect responsibility for the leadership of circa 70 colleagues working in a range of locations.
- Staffing budget approximately £2.2M
- Oversight of £3.2M in Scholarships, non-pay budgets and externally funded projects, and/or associated financial records.
- Oversight of circa £8.2M income from university-owned student residences
- Contract responsibility for nominations agreements for residential provision
- The post-holder will be the Principal Designated Safeguarding Officer for Students
- Deputising for Director of Student & Academic Services
- Member of Student and Academic Services Senior Leadership Team
- Member of all relevant University Committees and working groups
- The University operates seven days a week and some student services are open in the evenings and





weekends. This might on occasion require the working of unsocial hours.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- DVC Education
- DVC Global and Employability
- Chairs and members of Teaching Committee and Student Voice Forum
- Chair and members of Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Professional Services Directors with responsibilities for student-facing services
- Senior colleagues in the Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation, CETI
- Heads of College and Schools
- Associate Heads of Colleges
- Directors of Learning, Teaching and Quality and other College or School specific appointments with a cross-College or School role linked to learning, teaching and/or the student experience.
- Deputy Registrar Quality and Standards
- Senior and Disability Tutors
- Officers and colleagues of University of Westminster Student Union and other representative student groups
- Senior Professional Services colleagues
- Partner Colleges – UK and overseas
- Peer role holders from other Universities
- Relevant external bodies including, London Higher, AMOSSHE, UKCISA, Student Finance England, Student Loans Company



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

## QUALIFICATIONS

- A relevant first degree or equivalent practical experience that demonstrates relevant levels of knowledge and skills.
- A relevant accredited professional qualification or CPD programme completion in one of the core professional practice areas within the remit of the post

## EXPERIENCE

- Practical experience that demonstrates relevant levels of knowledge and skills
- Significant experience and a track record of successful delivery in developing, managing and operation of student wellbeing services including provision of front facing services, in a complex, demanding and multifunctional user- focused environment, both in a professional and managerial capacity
- Successful experience of managing colleagues from different professional backgrounds to deliver exceptional services.
- Significant experience of contributing to, developing, and/or implementing strategy in all/some of the functional areas which are in the remit of the postholder.
- Thorough knowledge of how student wellbeing contributes to the delivery of strategic objectives in higher education, including in relation to statutory obligations.
- Evidence of relevant external professional activity at a regional or national level
- A track record of success in project scoping and implementation
- Knowledge of the challenges facing higher education
- Knowledge of the application of IT to the development and delivery of student wellbeing services
- A successful record of achieving targets and objectives.
- Experience of effective resource management including budgets
- Experience of successfully leading and implementing change processes
- Experience of contributing positively as a member of a senior team with the accompanying demands and responsibilities
- Experience of effective decision-making with wide reaching organisational impacts

Essential attributes would include a track record of significant achievement in the following areas:

- Organisational management; including implementing plans and strategy and taking responsibility for the successful delivery of all aspects of work.





- Communication, written and oral; including the ability to present and receive complex ideas with clarity and to ensure other colleagues understand these ideas.
- Interpersonal relations; including the ability to question others effectively in order to understand ideas, comprehending the views of others and then involving others in shared goals
- Confident and effective communicating with people at all levels i.e. building effective relationships; facilitating discussions with individuals and groups in a multi-cultural environment
- Ability to handle and resolve conflict.
- Able to embrace a variety of methods to gain support for both their own, and others, ideas.
- Possessing high internal work standards with a need to do things better, innovating and improving.

## APTITUDES, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

Essential qualities include:

- 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.
- Willingness to tailor working hours as required according to the needs of the service



# 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 :

- Be concise, addressing the criteria in the Person Specification and motivation for applying.
- You may also provide 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 3 December 2023**

**Interviews will take place on 15 December 2023.**

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.
- An option to subscribe to the Simply Health Cash plan, which covers private healthcare services and treatments.
- 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

