Job Description – Communications Manager

About the role
You will develop content, deliver communications projects or manage communications channels in order to support the delivery of professional, timely and trusted communications which motivate, inspire, inform and engage stakeholders across a number of key areas for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) and its wider community. This will include supporting our curriculum, research and external engagement activities. The variety of activities undertaken by FASS Comms & Online Services is wide-ranging and includes social media engagement, events, creation of digital assets, copywriting for print and online platforms.

About the Faculty
The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is the largest and most diverse at The Open University, with some 50,000 students studying our modules with excellent completion rates and consistently outstanding student satisfaction ratings. Delving into history’s darkest moments, scaling the heights of Homer’s epic poetry and exploring current issues such as global warming and extremism, The Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences deals with the full range of human experience. Intrinsically interdisciplinary in approach, the Faculty produces cutting-edge research that informs our world-class teaching and inspires our students, academics and the general public.

We have 14 disciplines spread across 3 Schools:

- School of Arts & Humanities
- School of Social Sciences & Global Studies
- School of Psychology & Counselling

With c.1800 members of staff comprising academics, associate lecturers, support staff and full-time research students working across the locations of the University, combining originality and innovation in research and curriculum, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is a vibrant and exciting place to study and work.

Key responsibilities

1. Working proactively with channel owners and communications project sponsors, develop and deliver creative, impactful, integrated communications, engagement plans and campaigns.
2. Provide professional service support to both academic and professional services staff in the Faculty to communicate key messages to both internal and external audiences, maximising impact of engagement activities.
3. To own and manage communications projects, whilst proactively planning and collaborating with team members to successfully mobilise resource required for successful project delivery taking accountability and ownership of relevant project outcomes.
4. Contribute creative ideas and the latest sector thinking to shape the direction of the projects allocated to you, recommending the right media, channels, production solutions and creative expression to achieve the best results against the brief.

5. To be responsible for understanding and keeping up-to-date with the Schools’ research and teaching agendas, proactively seeking opportunities to demonstrate and share thought leadership, and to identify and create opportunities for profiling Arts and Social Sciences academics.

6. Liaise with key units across the university to inform the projects related to their needs and to optimise their delivery.

7. Manage the delivery of your projects on brief, on budget and on time, maximising results. You will be required to effectively report on project progress, issues and options at agreed intervals with channel owners and communications project sponsors.

8. Locate, research, write, sub-edit and proof stories for your channels and projects. Where appropriate also story-board, script, film and edit footage in liaison with the Audio Visual person.

9. Monitor and respond to feedback to campaigns or projects, perhaps via email, forums and within social media, answering queries or questions related to your campaign or project.

10. Responsible for delivering, evaluating and articulating impact of campaigns against objectives, ensuring implementation of recommendations for future project/campaign planning.

11. Represent FASS Comms with an agreed range of internal clients within the faculty. You will seek to understand the client’s communications objectives and requirements whilst also delivering leads to meet the editorial needs of the communications team’s objectives. You will liaise with central Marcomms and other service areas to arrange the delivery of the client’s needs as necessary.

12. You will be required to occasionally attend external events, providing communications support, or work collectively and flexibly with the FASS Comms team to support events ‘at a distance’.

Skills and experience

- First degree, or equivalent academic qualification, or work experience at a similar level in a subject area relevant to the role

- Excellent writing skills adaptable for a range of outlets to captivate different audiences, with a proven ability to deliver effective and impactful internal and external communications

- Proven experience of editorial planning and copywriting for websites, social media and print publications, with sound editorial judgement

- An understanding of the role research plays within a university and the ability to engage with specialized academic material across many disciplines and make it accessible to broader audiences

- Project management qualification and/or experience of successful project management in a multi-stakeholder environment
• Excellent interpersonal skills, with ability to network and build/manage contacts and working relationships internally within the Faculty and University, and externally with stakeholders and students

• High level of discretion over sensitive and confidential issues

• The ability to work collaboratively and flexibly in a variety of team environments; someone who proactively takes responsibility and supports others

• Good analytical skills to assess campaign performance

• A self-starter, with the ability to work creatively to develop innovative and workable solutions. Confident, articulate and professionally resilient to changing priorities

• Commitment to continuing personal development

• A commitment to equal opportunities, policies and practices.

Desirable

• Suitable Professional qualification

• Experience of the HE sector

• Advanced skills in Microsoft Office, scheduling software and ability to pick up new software as required