Job Related Information

This document includes information about our organisation, the role for which you are applying, the person specification and the selection process.

1. Role details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12672</th>
<th>Policy and Public Affairs Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Policy and Public Affairs Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£33,797 - £40,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>OU Students Association Senior Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade:</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>12 months Fixed Term Contract initially with potential to extend subject to funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>Full time, 37+ hours a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Open University’s Walton Hall campus, Milton Keynes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing date:</td>
<td>Monday 14 October 2019 at 12pm (midday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of application form accepted:</td>
<td>OU Students Association Application Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of referees required:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment contact:</td>
<td>Rob Avann, Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview date:</td>
<td>Wednesday 30 October 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The Open University Students Association

The Open University Students Association was established by the Open University’s Royal Charter. Our current membership is around 170,000 students spread across the UK, continental Europe and beyond. The overwhelming majority of our students study part time and at a distance. Our student body is among the most diverse in the UK Higher Education sector, with for example the largest single community of disabled students in Europe. We are a Student Union under the definition of the Education Act 1994 and a charity registered with the Charity Commission and Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

Generally, the Association is an organisation of students, run by students, operating through a democratic structure. It is headed by our elected student President. Elections for all student positions are held every two years, with by-elections twice a year to fill any vacancies. Our next all-out election will take place early in 2020.

As a registered charity, ultimate authority and responsibility for all of the Association’s activities is vested in the Board of Trustees, which currently comprises nine elected student positions and a further three external trustees. Our Central Executive Committee sets our student-facing policy and acts as the representative voice of students within the University and in the external world.

The OU Students Association also operates a trading subsidiary, OUSA (Services) Ltd trading as the OU Students Shop which sells a range of branded merchandise and study aids. We also administer a separate grant-giving charity, the Open University Students Educational Trust (OUSET), which supports students in financial hardship.

The Chief Executive is a permanent member of staff appointed by the Board of Trustees and is responsible for advising the President, Board of Trustees and the Central Executive Committee. The Chief Executive is also responsible for managing the Association’s staff team and services.

Our new strategy to 2022/23 is nearing completion, with approval due in September 2019 and launch in October 2019. Our new mission, subject to approval, is proposed to be ‘to make a positive difference for all OU students’ and our four shared values are Integrity; Equality and Inclusivity; Openness; and Collaboration.

Our three new strategic aims are as follows:

✓ Inform and Support
✓ Engage and Involve
✓ Influence and Transform

3. The OU Students Association staff team

We are based on the Open University’s beautiful campus in Milton Keynes. Our staff team works closely with our elected student representatives and colleagues within the Open University. The staff team is responsible for delivering the wide range of services, activities and functions undertaken by the Association.

Currently we have nine specialised teams and a short (but far from comprehensive) overview is provided below:

The Digital Communications team manage our website, branding, social media platforms, online broadcasts and online magazine in addition to improving the Association’s ability to adopt and utilise new technology and digital tools.

The Executive Support and Staff Welfare team supports the Association’s Chief Executive and President with diary management, events organisation, administrating our
Central Executive Committee meetings and the Board of Trustees, handling all matters of HR administration and supporting a positive working culture with a focus on staff wellbeing and development.

The Operations team provide the first point of contact for students and manage our grant-giving educational trust (OUSET) and our OU Students Shop, including our web store and our marketing presence at events such as degree ceremonies. They also manage our suite of online forums.

The Resources team handle all elements of financial management, processing and monitoring. They support annual budget setting and subvention negotiations with the University and oversee purchasing and general maintenance and administration of the office.

The Strategic Projects and Change Coordinator supports the President and Chief Executive by leading on the development and implementation of the Association’s strategy, leading strategic projects, supporting business planning and co-ordinating the Association’s input into University-wide change initiatives.

The Student Community team undertake projects to engage students in their Association and University community which includes supporting student societies and the planning and delivery of online events such as Freshers.

The Student Support Team manages services designed to support student welfare including Nightline and Peer Support. They lead on the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda and support student groups including the Disabled Students Group and Plexus.

The Student Voice team focus on our work in the areas of education policy, including the recruitment and support of our team of Central Committee Representatives, student consultation, representation and research.

The Student Volunteering Team is dedicated to recruiting, training and supporting current Student volunteers and creating new opportunities to volunteer and get involved with the Students Association as well as leading a series of projects.

The Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives and manager(s) of each team meet monthly as a Management Team (MT) to discuss issues, ideas and developments. Our management culture is to support, empower and enable our staff and to encourage collaboration across teams and with our colleagues in the Open University. We are a busy, multi-functional, friendly and dynamic team juggling a huge variety of responsibilities and activities supporting elected student leaders who are geographically dispersed from us and from each other.

4. The Role

**Purpose and rationale for the role**

This is a new role with funding agreed for the 12-month initial period and excellent potential to extend beyond subject to further funding.

This is a really exciting opportunity to join us at a brave new dawn for the Association as we launch into our new and ambitious strategy, and this post-holder will play a leading role in driving forward our delivery on the strategic aim to ‘Influence and Transform’. Here we are looking to empower students to take a leading role in influencing the decisions that impact their study journey and their student experience. We want to achieve positive policy change which provides support for our predominantly part-time and distance learning students who are combining their studies with work, caring and life commitments. We believe that lifelong learning is vital to the future economy and to
addressing skills gaps. We are also saddened by the reduction in part-time student numbers since 2012 and determined to see policy change to better support our students with the full variety of challenges that face them.

This role will be predominantly focused on engaging with the UK Government policy agenda at Westminster, but with an additional aim of taking forward our work in one of the other UK nations (Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland) to pilot new ways that we can support our student voice in the Nations. In the future, we will be looking at ways to roll out these approaches to the other Nations depending on funding and resources. In addition, this role will also support us to examine ways in which we can support OU students studying in continental Europe. At the outset, a workplan will be the developed to set the scope for the role and identify areas and approaches for us to work on in the initial 12 months period to secure impact.

Alongside standard public affairs and policy work and further to the full role description set out below, we have a number of specific initiatives we are looking to take forward under this aim, which includes such potential projects as:

- Working on international recognition of OU degrees
- Working to develop and pilot our approach to support policy development and political engagement in one of the devolved UK nations, with a view towards rolling this out further in future years, alongside seeking to make significant progress with the UK government
- Taking forward our stakeholder engagement in the policy development and advocacy arena
- Examining and trialling the mobilisation of OU students to support our work in this space
- Developing and implementing mechanisms for high quality and effective campaigns and other tactical interventions where appropriate, with an understanding and a focus on the ‘right tool for the job’

This work will be conducted and taken forward in partnership with various areas of the Open University, not least the Government and External Affairs team (GEA) who are a key partner and who will provide an array of support and expertise. In addition, we will also look to the individual to work closely with the OU’s nation offices where relevant and with other units across the institution as the projects require.

We are student-led and the post-holder will be expected to work well with our elected representatives and Trustees to ensure that the student voice permeates projects and priorities.

The role is ideally suited to someone with collaboration and partnership working as a core part of their values and approach to work; someone with bags of energy, enthusiasm and tenacity to see this work through, someone who has a keen interest and positive attitude about our work and about the wider political and policy environment in which we operate allied with a sense of the risks and opportunities to mitigate those risks in order to protect the Association’s political impartiality and safeguard our reputation and resources. Our work will be about policy rather than politics.

In return we offer the opportunity to join a busy, multifunctional and vibrant team of committed, friendly and supportive colleagues with a real agenda for change for the future. You will be supported and encouraged to make the role your own and make a real impact.

Role Description
Networking and partnership working
✓ To work alongside the Association’s President and Chief Executive to build strong links and an active partnership with the Open University's Government and External Affairs team (GEA), through regular open dialogue and the sharing of ongoing work and priorities. To encourage open and honest exchanges of information and positions on policy matters and operate a 'no surprises’ approach to all liaison.
✓ To prepare and accompany the President, Chief Executive and/or other Association elected representatives and senior staff to attend meetings and events. To deputise where relevant and appropriate.
✓ To develop and implement a stakeholder engagement approach for the Association, including mapping and co-ordinating relevant internal and external links, setting objectives and monitoring performance. To work closely with the Open University’s GEA team to combine efforts and to ensure clarity in message where appropriate.

Monitoring
✓ To build and continually enhance own expertise on all matters of policy developments affecting OU students, using information to drive and inform all work. This to include:
  o Maintaining a keen interest in political trends and legislation, staying up to date on developments across the charity sector context, student unions, the wider HE sector, good practice tactics and legalities via a range of sources and approaches.
  o Monitoring and communicating political and policy developments in general and on specific policy areas, seeking to capitalise on available opportunities whilst highlighting and mitigating any risks to the Students Association.
  o Following and digesting all relevant sources of information and views from partner organisations, OU data and policy, GEA briefings, external research and policy reports, submissions from other organisations to government consultations and calls for evidence.
  o Developing and continually refining own understanding of OU students, the Open University’s offer and strategic direction and Association policy goals.
  o Building a portfolio of relevant data, case studies and evidence to use to inform future projects and submissions.

Information Provision
✓ To research and write briefings for senior Association staff, elected representatives and Trustees.
✓ To draft, via consultation and wider input, Association responses to policy consultations and calls for evidence etc. To engage with and work collaboratively with the Open University’s Government and External Affairs team on such external responses.
✓ To work with colleagues on responses to any media interest or wider opportunities to publicise and share the outcomes of such work.
✓ To support the wider understanding of policy and public affairs matters and tactics across the Association and the staff team.

Influencing
✓ To champion and protect at all times the Association’s political impartiality and actively safeguard against the risks inherent in charity campaigning and lobbying.
✓ To develop and enhance a distinctive, clear and impactful voice for the OU Students Association in policy matters, which respects and seeks to work in conjunction with, and not opposition to, the University’s own voice and goals as
an overriding aim wherever possible. To support the development of Association policy through critical analysis, consultation and research.

✓ To develop, manage and evaluate specific, appropriate and evidence-based tactical interventions including events, projects, campaigns, and/or production of materials, to influence and achieve agreed policy change.

✓ To develop, implement and improve mechanisms and methodologies for the consideration, planning, approval, resourcing, governance and evaluation of policy projects, materials and tactical interventions (including campaigns).

Mobilisation

✓ To explore, in partnership with the Open University’s Government and External Affairs team, mechanisms and approaches to organise and mobilise OU students to assist with the achievement of our mutual aims where relevant and appropriate.

Nations perspective

✓ To work with the Chief Executive, President and other elected representatives together with the Open University to explore the feasibility of a dual focus on a nation jurisdiction in addition to the UK government. To seek to progress meetings and proposals for such an approach, including planning for evaluation and potential roll-out to wider nations in the future.

General

✓ To maintain confidentiality and sensitivity as appropriate.
✓ To seek to build a team ethos and contribute to a wider sense of unity and collaboration across the Association.
✓ To plan, prioritise and manage own workload and provide oversight of that of any staff under direct supervision. To support team members to use their initiative to plan and manage their own work, assisting them to enhance their approach in achieving this and lead by example in meeting deadlines.
✓ To prepare and deliver papers and presentations as relevant for the OU Students Association Central Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, internal or external meetings. To contribute to the preparation of papers by other managers as directed by line manager.
✓ To contribute to the successful delivery of the Association’s Conference.
✓ Play an active role in the staff management team including attending, participating in and occasionally leading management meetings; offering honest and constructive opinions and feedback on issues for debate; suggesting improvements; bringing forth ideas and concerns; seeking to work collaboratively with other managers; and preparing papers and presentations where relevant.
✓ To seek to solve problems or issues in a creative and logical fashion, raising them to line manager where a solution cannot be found, has wider implications or is contentious.
✓ To support annual business planning, undertaking planning work for the team and contributing to the plan for the organisation.
✓ To foster own professional development, including undertaking relevant training and implementing the learning as appropriate. To attend regular one-to-one meetings and participate fully.
✓ To undertake occasional additional projects or duties as relevant to role as a member of the staff Management Team, by prior arrangement and by mutual agreement with line manager.
✓ To maintain a safe and productive working environment throughout the Association, whether in the office or at events or meetings.

To undertake any other duties as directed by line manager, commensurate with the grade of the post.
## 5. The Person

**Note:** Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential experience and knowledge will not be short-listed. Desirable elements are those that it would be useful for the post holder to possess, and will be used to assist the short-listing process where we receive a high volume of good applications. In your personal statement, it is important that you draw on examples to provide evidence of how you meet the criteria. The criteria in the capabilities and qualities section will be factors that we will look to be displayed throughout the application process but candidates are not expected to highlight these in the personal statement part of the application form.

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<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education, knowledge and training</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge of UK Parliament and political affairs, with an understanding of how to influence them</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educated to Degree standard or with equivalent experience in a relevant role and policy arena.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Experience and skills</strong></td>
<td>Experience of representing an organisation’s views</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience and/or demonstrable interest in policy development or advocacy</td>
<td>Experience of delivering effective and relevant projects with tangible impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of delivering effective and relevant projects with tangible impact</td>
<td>Experience of partnership working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of translating complex information into a digestable and accessible format suited to the audience</td>
<td>Experience of evidence-based research and analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of writing engaging, accurate and persuasive copy</td>
<td>Experience of writing for, and presenting to, senior level audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of writing for, and presenting to, senior level audiences</td>
<td>Experience of working with volunteers and/or elected representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of negotiation and influencing skills</td>
<td>Experience of working with volunteers and/or elected representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of working with volunteers and/or elected representatives</td>
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</tr>
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## Capabilities and qualities

| Excellent interpersonal and communication skills. |
| Confident and assertive, balanced with a respect for others, diplomacy and tact. |
| Enthusiasm for the work and strategic goals of the OU Students Association. |
| Highly self-motivated with excellent organisational skills, attention to detail and a can-do positive attitude. |
| Flexibility, adaptability, calmness under pressure and resilience. |
| Relishes the challenge of working in a busy, diverse and multi-functional team environment. |
| Keen interest in political developments and policy change. |
| Self-aware, with a mature and professional outlook and a high degree of integrity. |
| A team player, with collaboration as a key personal value in approach to work. |
| Ability to work co-operatively across boundaries, both within the Association and between organisations. |
| Ability to work sensitively with people who may have strong and divergent opinions. |
| Understanding and empathy with the challenges faced by OU students. |
| Digitally adept, agile and enthusiastic. |

## Additional requirements and special working conditions

| Some evening and weekend working is expected in order to complete the necessary duties of the post. Applicants should be willing and able to work outside office hours on an occasional basis, with prior notice and agreement. |
| Must be able to work our Conference, 26-28 June 2020. |
| Commitment to equality and diversity. |
| Commitment to own professional development. |
6. General information

Terms and Conditions
This position is offered on an initial 12 months Fixed Term Contract, with the potential to extend subject to funding. Our staff policies are currently under review. The OU Students Association is a member of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) and staff are auto-enrolled into this pension with the ability to opt out.

Hours of Work
This is a full-time position of 37+ hours a week. We operate flexibility on how the hours are worked in meeting business needs. Core hours are 10am to 11:30am and 2pm to 4pm daily with flexible start and finish times between 7am and 7pm. This role will be based in our office in Milton Keynes. The post-holder will manage their own hours. The OU Students Association encourages staff to maintain a healthy work-life balance and supports family friendly arrangements, occasional home working and agile working. Staff also have access to clubs and leisure activities which are also open to Open University staff.

There will be occasional evening and weekend commitments by prior notice and arrangement to accommodate discussions with our student volunteers who are geographically dispersed and have their own work and life commitments outside of their study and voluntary capacities. This will include occasional attendance at Central Executive Committee meetings, our Board of Trustees and supporting our biennial Conference (which is due to take place on the weekend of 26-28 June 2020). These are currently recompensed through a system of time off in lieu and minor payments.

Probation
The appointment will be subject to a probationary period of six months prior to confirmation of appointment.

Salary
This role is on the Grade 7 salary scale which is currently £33,797 - £40,322 per annum. It is our usual practice to appoint at the lowest point of the scale to enable progression, but we will of course consider the circumstances and current salary of the successful candidate when making an offer. The post-holder will be entitled to an automatic increment on 1 October 2020 and each year on the same date thereafter until they reach the top of the scale.

Annual Leave
The OU Students Association annual leave period runs in line with our financial year from 1 August to 31 July. The annual entitlement is 33 working days, in addition to public holidays and days on which the campus is closed (which generally includes three days at Christmas in addition to the bank holidays).

Development Opportunities
The OU Students Association is committed to developing its staff and provides appropriate induction, training and networking opportunities. OU Students Association staff are able to study Open University modules and qualifications for free. We are members of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Charity Finance Group (CFG) and we encourage our staff to make use of their resources.

Staff structure
Our current staff structure chart is provided at the rear of this pack.
7. **How to obtain more information**

The details provided here are intended to be a comprehensive overview of the role and our organisation. However, there is also a considerable amount of information about the OU Students Association on our website: [oustudents.com](http://oustudents.com).

If you have a specific appropriate question that is not covered here and you wish to ask it before making an application then please contact us on [OUstudents-Jobs@open.ac.uk](mailto:OUstudents-Jobs@open.ac.uk). Please note that CVs sent to this address will not be accepted.

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8. **The application process and where to send completed applications**

Applications will only be accepted on the OU Students Association application form. CVs and/or applications on other forms will not be accepted.

The deadline for applications is **Monday 14 October 2019 at 12pm (midday)**.

Please e-mail your application form to: [OUstudents-Jobs@open.ac.uk](mailto:OUstudents-Jobs@open.ac.uk) with the job title included in the subject line. You will receive an automated response to acknowledge receipt.

If you do not hear from us within 2 weeks of the closing date, you should assume that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.

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9. **Selection process and interview date**

**Stage 1:** Candidates should use the descriptions above of the role and the Person Specification to complete the Application form. Please note that the statement section of the application form should focus upon the knowledge and experience criteria. Applicants should use clear examples and evidence to support their statement. Applicants are not expected to explicitly cover in their application form all of the capabilities and qualities criteria in addition to knowledge and experience.

Please submit completed application forms via email to [OUstudents-Jobs@open.ac.uk](mailto:OUstudents-Jobs@open.ac.uk). All applications will be reviewed by the short-listing panel. We are unable to offer feedback to applicants who are not short-listed at this stage.

**Stage 2:** Short-listed candidates will be invited to a panel interview which will take place at our office in Milton Keynes on **Wednesday 30 October 2019**. The interview will usually include a practical exercise and further details of this will be sent to short-listed candidates. Applicants should note the date in their diaries and keep it available, as we will not be in a position to offer any alternative dates. We reserve the right to call candidates back for a second panel interview if deemed necessary. All unsuccessful interviewees will be offered the opportunity of feedback.

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**PLEASE NOTE:** THIS IS AN APPOINTMENT TO THE OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION AND NOT THE OPEN UNIVERSITY.
Organisation Chart

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Rob Avann

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (STUDENT & STAFF ENGAGEMENT)
Wendy Burrell

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS
HEAD OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS
Heather Bloomer
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Sam Kenealy
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS OPTIMISATION OFFICER
Leah McDougall

STUDENT SUPPORT
HEAD OF STUDENT SUPPORT
Verity Robinson
PROJECTS OFFICER
Samantha Wright
STUDENT SUPPORT ASSISTANT
Anna Mahon

STUDENT COMMUNITY
HEAD OF STUDENT COMMUNITY
Peter Turner
PROJECTS OFFICER
Ellie Broad
PROJECTS OFFICER
Amy Ferguson
STUDENT COMMUNITY ASSISTANT
Sandra Carter

STUDENT VOICE
HEAD OF STUDENT VOICE
Samantha Harding
REPRESENTATION OFFICER
Allan Musinguzi
REPRESENTATION OFFICER
Hannah Whittaker
RESEARCH & INFORMATION OFFICER
Rebecca Coster
PROJECTS & MEDIA ASSISTANT
James Phillips

STUDENT VOLUNTEERING
HEAD OF STUDENT VOLUNTEERING
Beth Metcalf
STUDENT VOLUNTEERING OFFICER
Nicola Powell
STUDENT VOLUNTEERING ASSISTANT
Tracey Bates

OPERATIONS
HEAD OF OPERATIONS
Magda Hadrys
TEAM SUPERVISOR
Ryan Cragg
OPERATIONS ASSISTANT
Mandy Turner
OPERATIONS ASSISTANT
Keith Minter
OPERATIONS ASSISTANT
Adam Goldberg

RESOURCES
FINANCE & RESOURCES OFFICER
Tazneen Gardner
FINANCE & RESOURCES ASSISTANT
Diane Woodford

EXECUTIVE SUPPORT & STAFF WELFARE
HEAD OF EXECUTIVE SUPPORT & STAFF WELFARE
Leanne Quainton
EXECUTIVE SUPPORT ASSISTANT
Vacant

STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

OU