Job Related Information

This document includes information about the role for which you are applying and the information you will need to provide with your application.

1. Role Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vacancy reference</th>
<th>14092</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Director of Strategy, Planning and Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£32,548 to £38,833 per annum, according to qualifications and experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>Academic Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>G7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>37 hours, Monday – Friday 09:00-17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Walton Hall, Milton Keynes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing date:</td>
<td>Noon on 8 November 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of application form accepted:</td>
<td>Long Application (see section 7 for more details)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of referees required:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit recruitment contact:</td>
<td>The Recruitment Assistant, email <a href="mailto:FASS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk">FASS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Summary of duties

Purpose Statement

As Executive Assistant to the Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, you will provide dedicated, proactive, efficient, adaptable and professional support to the Executive Dean, and will be responsible for the execution of a wide range of duties, as is required to enable the Executive Dean to maximise his capacity as a key leader within The Open University.

This is a position of trust, providing the highest level of support. You are key to the management of the Executive Dean’s schedule and controlling the flow of information, requiring a high level of initiative and personal judgement, to handle highly confidential and sensitive materials.

You will be required to maintain an understanding of the Executive Dean’s strategic priorities and the strategic priorities of the University and apply this awareness to support the Executive Dean.

This role also requires a close working relationship with the Director (Strategy, Planning and Resources), understanding their strategic priorities and ensuring the Director is kept up to date and fully supported, as well as facilitate the immediate and accurate flow of information between the Executive Dean and Director, within the context of their extremely demanding roles.

The workload is demanding and requires preparedness at all times, as well as attention to detail, sound judgement, excellent personal organisation and flexibility and the ability to work to absolute deadlines.

The role requires excellent interpersonal skills, requiring negotiation and influencing across senior staff and an understanding of leadership challenges and approaches within a complex environment.

The role works within a wider team supporting the Executive Dean and the work of the faculty including senior academic and administrative leaders and a range of support staff. The role holder will be required to work closely across this team sharing appropriate information and seeking advice and support when required.

Job Specification

1. Administration

To manage all administrative aspects of the Executive Dean role in an efficient, effective and professional manner.

To work without supervision, be self-motivated and be able to prioritise issues, activities and problems on behalf of the Executive Dean, ensuring that urgent, critical information and documentation is always brought to his/her attention promptly, whilst also recognising when to seek advice on other urgent, difficult or sensitive issues from the appropriate senior staff.

To manage and coordinate the collation of all relevant documentation, to ensure timely provision to the Executive Dean. To identify gaps or shortfalls in information and search for sources to fill them and to brief the Executive Dean prior to attendance at meetings.

To summarise key information and identify connections between and across activities and the flow of business over time to ensure the briefings provided to the Executive Dean are appropriate and complete.

To provide a proactive identification of activity that needs to be managed and progressed on behalf of the Executive Dean, ensuring that issues are properly progressed through appropriate routes and staff, following up and ensuring the Executive Dean has complete and relevant information.
To provide a courteous, professional and knowledgeable point of contact, promoting the positive image of the Open University at all times.

2. Correspondence

To deal with incoming correspondence, both independently and on behalf of the Executive Dean, assessing its significance and ensuring that the Executive Dean is engaged only with essential items that require his attention/response.

To work closely with other administrative teams in the Faculty where appropriate to ensure information flow and informed responses are provided.

To draft correspondence and messages on behalf of the Executive Dean.

3. Meetings

To proactively plan meetings, bringing to the attention of the Executive Dean any items that may need to be brought to the agenda for meetings.

To request suitable briefings from appropriate sources and ensure their availability to the Executive Dean in a timely fashion.

To support the development of papers for meetings, including requesting information, drafting outlines and content, collating responses, following up previous activity etc.

To circulate any pre-reading, take minutes and log actions where required; To follow up outstanding actions as appropriate or to understand changing circumstances. To keep excellent records of key meetings and decision making processes as appropriate.

To be responsible for taking the minutes at the Executive Dean’s Executive team or other meetings as and when required.

To support the Executive Dean in any disciplinary hearings, appeals, tribunals etc or other HR processes.

4. Secretary

To act as Secretary to the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Executive Team, ‘ASSET’ which the Executive Dean Chairs.

Organising the agenda items (liaising with members of ASSET when necessary), receiving and circulating papers within a timely manner and keeping track of outstanding actions.

To produce the minutes/action notes following each meeting and ensure ASSET is kept up to date with any developments in between meetings.

The Secretary is also responsible for ASSET meetings in each of the OU’s national offices (Wales, Scotland and Ireland) and East Campus, including liaising with national colleagues to organise these visits.

Any other duties appropriate as required as Secretary to ASSET.

5. Relationship management

To develop a strong working relationship within the Faculty particularly with the Director of Strategy, Planning and Resources (who will be the line manager) and the sub-unit leads, to facilitate the delivery of strategic and operational objectives and appropriate dissemination of information within the Faculty.
To build a strong network of key contacts the University and also externally, internal and external to the Higher Education sector, in order to ensure excellent working relationships at the appropriate levels, to facilitate efficient dissemination and exchange of information and to promote a positive and professional image.

To develop an understanding of the leadership role of the Executive Dean in a complex academic environment and develop the necessary influencing and negotiating skills required to support the Executive Dean in the development and delivery of agreed priorities.

6. Overview of Diary

To thoroughly understand and support the Executive Dean’s working style and priorities and ensure his/her schedule is always practicable and deliverable for him/her.

To maintain a keen overview of the Executive Dean’s diary commitments, to ensure that all agreed appointments/meetings can be accomplished successfully and to be able to react to and accommodate unexpected last minute changes in the schedule and redirect the Executive Dean accordingly.

To proactively manage the Executive Dean’s time efficiently and to an agreed plan, using initiative and judgement to ensure that the Executive Dean is as effective as possible at all times.

7. Travel Planning and Management

Working with the Executive Dean’s PA, to oversee and be responsible for the trip’s agendas, full briefing documentation, including itemised time schedule, overview of each meeting, full details of people to be met, relevant addresses, currency etc. and provide to Executive Dean in a timely manner.

To oversee the work of the Executive Dean’s PA to ensure the electronic calendar is kept up-to-date with full meeting information: venue addresses, phone numbers, attendees etc.

8. Line Management

Line management of the Dean’s PA and associated duties for secretarial and clerical staff, as required.

9. Other duties

To undertake specific project work, as identified by the Executive Dean.

Flexible support to the Faculty promotions processes as required.

Any other duties appropriate to the grade and as required by the Executive Dean.
## 3. Person specification

### Requirements  (E = Essential/ D = Desirable)

#### Education, qualifications and training

| Essential | A degree or equivalent professional qualification  
| GCSE Grade C / equivalent or above in at least English Language and Mathematics |

#### Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

| Essential | Previous experience working at Executive level both internally and externally in a large organisation  
| Previous experience as Committee Secretary  
| Ability to lead and motivate others  
| Assimilating, analysing and interpreting complex information  
| Implementing and maintaining efficient office systems and procedures  
| Working effectively and collaboratively as part of a team  
| Drafting correspondence and responding on behalf of senior management  
| At least intermediate level skills in Word, Excel and PowerPoint  
| Advanced Outlook skills  
| Strong IT skills  
| Understanding of and commitment to Equal Opportunities and diversity issues |

#### Personal abilities and qualities

| Essential | Professionalism, confidence and diplomacy in communicating effectively with a wide range of people, including those at an executive level in governmental and other external bodies  
| Advanced organisational ability, with excellent planning and prioritising capabilities, and able to cope with multiple demands effectively  
| Excellent interpersonal skills, in particular the ability to work with and influence a wide range of people  
| Proactive service driven approach, working independently to develop understanding and provide excellent support  
| Accurate, grammatical and error-free writing skills  
| Proven ability to work with minimum supervision and to use initiative and flexibility  
| Calm and composed in role, presenting a professional image both internally and externally at all times  
<p>| Exceptional time management skills and the ability to work to pressured deadlines, and to respond with appropriate urgency and flexibility to situations and events that require a quick turnaround |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to preserve confidentiality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to team working and the ability to work harmoniously and cooperatively with colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adaptable and responsible to changing duties and working practices in a fast moving environment</td>
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4. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working

May require out of hours working in event of emergency.

5. About the unit

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

The Faculty 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. Noted for the strength of our interdisciplinary approaches, our scholars of international standing teach and research a very wide range of topics and themes in specific subject areas, recognized as world class or internationally excellent in the latest Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, and having a direct and profound influence on our undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

The Faculty is organised into four Schools:

- School of Psychology
- School of Politics, Philosophy, Economics, Development, Geography
- School of History, Religious Studies, Sociology, Social Policy & Criminology
- School of Art History, Classical Studies, English & Creative Writing, Music

Students are supported by three Student Support Teams. These teams offer specialist study support to students undertaking our qualifications across the University. Members of academic staff, including regional academics, form part of these teams in sustaining and improving student progression and retention.

The Faculty works closely with important organisations and institutions in the UK and other parts of the world in a range of validated partnerships and collaborations. Engaged in world-class, agenda setting research tackling the most difficult challenges facing us in the 21st Century, with work in numerous subject-based and interdisciplinary research groups and projects.

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.

To find out more about the Faculty’s teaching, learning and research, please visit: [http://fass.open.ac.uk/](http://fass.open.ac.uk/).
6. How to obtain more information about the role or application process

If you would like to discuss the particulars of this role before making an application please email: 
Emma.Rowney@open.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact the Recruitment Assistant, email: 
FASS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk.

7. The application process and where to send completed applications

| Please ensure that your application reaches the University by: | 12 noon on 8 November 2017. 
**Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.** |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Your application should include:                            | • A completed application form (long version) 
• A covering letter in which you set out precisely the evidence of how you meet the person specification (addressing each element in turn) and what you can bring to this post 
A CV is not required and will not be used as part of the selection process. |
| Post it to:                                                 | The Recruitment Assistant                                        |
| Department/Unit:                                           | Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences                               |
| Address:                                                   | Room 140, 1st floor of Briggs Building 
The Open University 
Walton Hall 
Milton Keynes |
| Post Code:                                                 | MK7 6AA                                                          |
| Or e-mail your application to:                             | FASS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk                                     |

8. Selection process and date of interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The interview panel will be chaired by:</th>
<th>Sue Dutton, Director of Strategy, Planning and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The other members of the interview panel will be:           | Ian Fribbance, Executive Dean 
Sue Brewster, Office Manager of Vice Chancellor’s Office |
| The interviews will take place on:                         | Wednesday 29 November 2017                                        |
| The selection process for this post will include:          | A desk exercise and a 45 minute interview.                        |
We will let you know as soon as possible after the closing date whether you have been shortlisted for interview. Further details on the selection process will also be sent to shortlisted candidates.