

Deputy Head of Policy, Job Advert

About University Alliance

University Alliance is a mission group representing 18 universities in England and Wales. Our institutions are passionate about high quality teaching and deliver research with real-world impact. We educate 25% of all UK students, employ 54,000 staff, and with an estimated economic impact of over £10bn, Alliance universities excel in stimulating growth in their cities and regions. We are well-respected as a thoughtful and constructive force in the Higher Education sector.

Within our London office: we have three strategic work streams:

- **Champion our strengths:** We will create a strong brand that reflects our members' strengths. This will be reinforced by developing strategic alliances with appropriate UK organisations and similar university groups overseas
- **Shape Policy:** We will maintain excellent links with decision makers in Government and Parliament. We will work together to establish robust, evidence-based positions and use these to influence the policy debate.
- **Collaborate:** We will facilitate collective activity focusing on areas that showcase our strengths and support our policy arguments.

Our Team and Values

We're a small team of hard working professionals who are committed to creating a supportive, positive and rewarding work environment. The team is made up of a policy team of higher education experts, an outstanding communications team, our programmes team in charge of all collective activities between Alliance Universities (such as the Doctoral Training Alliance and Teaching Excellence Alliance programmes) and our operations team that supports our critical business functions.

We are passionate about what we do and ambitious to achieve excellence across our mission. We are open-minded and entrepreneurial – willing to consider new ideas, to work with partners and to innovate. We provide opportunity for all, embrace diversity and work openly, honestly and constructively for the good of UK higher education.

The University Alliance has Central London offices, close to Parliament and the role comes with generous terms and conditions.

Job Advert

Deputy Head of Policy

This is a highly varied role working across the full range of higher education policy issues, covering learning and teaching, research, innovation, sector regulation, international and European policy and related issues. The post holder will use a wide range of approaches to support this work, liaising with government officials and colleagues in the higher education sector, and responding to consultations. This activity will be underpinned by responsibility for managing our network groups and other member engagement at a senior level in our member universities. The successful candidate will demonstrate a strong aptitude in managing a highly diverse portfolio of work, moving flexibly to focus on changing priorities in a rapidly evolving policy landscape. They will also have excellent analytical, writing and presentation skills, and will require extensive previous experience as a specialist in at least one branch of higher education policy or public affairs, or a closely related field. They will have to be flexible in their approach to working, as is expected from a senior role holder in a small team.

Principal location of work: Central London, near Charing Cross / Piccadilly Circus

Line manager: Head of Policy

Contract type: permanent

Probation period: 6 months

Starting salary: circa £50k

Deadline: 11.59pm, Monday 1 October 2018

Interview: Tuesday 16th October / Wednesday 17th October 2018 (please state in your application if you are unavailable on one of these dates)

Application process: Please return completed application forms to: info@unialliance.ac.uk by the deadline date provided.

Job Description

Title of Post: Deputy Head of Policy

Overall purpose of post: The policy team works to advance the knowledge, understanding, influence and thought-leadership role of University Alliance and its members. This is a strategically important role working on behalf of member universities to build collaboration and support common aims across the group. The role will hold primary responsibility for managing the group's policy networks and responding to key policy developments, consultations and initiatives. Your work is likely to include the following activities:

- Develop evidence-based policy positions across a range of priority areas for University Alliance.
- Undertake high-quality (desk-based) policy research, including in-depth analysis.
- Organise network meetings for senior university staff. Establish and work closely with expert advisory groups and sponsors for major projects.
- Work closely with senior staff in member universities, and understand the informal networks by which things get done.
- Provide regular informal and concise briefings on a broad range of higher education policy issues for colleagues, often working to tight timescales.
- Develop close relationships with key stakeholders in the sector and inside government.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge across the full range of higher education issues.
- Maintain a close understanding of Government and Parliament.
- Contribute to press statements and other communication work.
- Deal directly and promptly with incoming policy-related issues and queries.
- Provide support for dissemination process for publications and briefings.
- Deputise for the Head of Policy as required.
- Provide cover in the office including dealing with telephone and personal enquiries as appropriate including press queries.

- On occasion, to provide additional support for University Alliance events if necessary.
- Contribute to the broader objectives of University Alliance, undertaking a broad range of tasks as needed within a small team.

Person specification

Specification	Essential
1. Education/ Training	High standard of qualifications to degree level or equivalent professional experience.
2. Relevant Experience	Experience of leading responses to policy issues, using multiple approaches to gathering others' views, focusing on the key points, and presenting a case in writing and verbally. Familiarity with current policy issues in higher education; considerable experience and track record of success in a role focused on at least one branch of HE policy or a related policy area.
3. Relevant Skills/Aptitudes	Very strong organisation skills, with experience in keeping several streams of work moving at once, liaising and maintaining contact with large numbers of stakeholders. Excellent written and oral communication skills enabling succinct distillation of often highly complex and/or technical issues. Design and delivery of activities to meet a wide range of different business needs; being agile, time efficient and imaginative. Able to define sensible deadlines and deliver to them, managing a varied workload with changing priorities.
4. Special Requirements	Professional approach and sensitivity to the political context. Self-motivated and able to use initiative. Able to work as part of a small team.
5. Other	Confident, open approach to dealing with colleagues of all levels, internally and externally.