



Head of Policy

About the University Alliance

University Alliance is a mission group, representing and supporting modern civic universities with a professional and technical focus. We are respected as a thoughtful and constructive force in the higher education sector and are committed to becoming a much stronger lobbying force within the sector, and for our members.

Alliance universities have been proud leaders in technical and professional education since the industrial revolution and continue to play a crucial role to the success of cities and sectors today, providing flexible and responsive R&D to businesses of all sizes and solving the problems facing society locally, nationally and across the globe with a commitment to widening access to higher education, to transforming the communities in which we are based and the lives of the students we educate.

For more information, please visit: www.unialliance.ac.uk

A dynamic new Head of Policy is sought to advance the influence and thought-leadership role of the 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 proactively influencing government policy and responding on behalf of our members to consultations and initiatives. In doing this, you will engage effectively and constructively with Government, Parliament, Whitehall, Devolved Administrations, funding councils, national academies, industry and sector representatives and partners.

You will also provide support to the Chief Executive as part of the Senior Management Team with line management responsibilities for 1-2 members of staff.



Our Objectives

As a mission group, we champion technical and professional universities, and lobby national and local government on their behalf.

- We promote the value of Alliance universities to the UK and government policy goals in the context of Brexit, the Industrial Strategy and devolution to the nations of the UK and the English regions.
- We maintain excellent links with decision-makers and influencers to shape policy.
- We establish robust, evidence-based positions and use these to influence the policy debate.
- We collaborate on projects that benefit our members, showcase our strengths and support our policy arguments.
- We support our members with lobbying at the local, regional and national level.

Our Values

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, 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, and to maintain its profile and reputation in the UK and globally.

The Role

This is a highly varied role working across the full range of higher education policy issues, covering funding, teaching and learning, research and 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 and publications.

The successful candidate will demonstrate a strong aptitude to 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.

Main responsibilities

- Lead the University Alliance's Policy Team proactively advising the CEO on all policy matters in relation to the University Alliance, HE and wider sector.
- Develop and oversee the University Alliance strategy on policy.



- Oversee research and policy development programme, holding responsibility for the budget, in order to produce evidence-based policy positions across each of the priority areas for University Alliance.
- Provide effective leadership, management and development of the Deputy Head of Policy.
- Oversee, undertake and commission high quality research and projects, including in-depth data analysis, for a range of outputs to demonstrate evidence of impact.
- Work closely with Head of Communications & Public Affairs to ensure the seamless integration of communications, public affairs and policy / research strategies
- Play a key role as a member of the Senior Management Team in leading and shaping the longer-term strategic direction of the University Alliance
- As necessary attend and present at Board meetings of the Vice Chancellors of Alliance universities.

Represent the University Alliance externally including:

- Develop close relationships with senior stakeholders in the sector and wider HE policy-making environment including Government.
- Oversee a wider programme of representation of University Alliance via the policy team with key external stakeholders in HE policy / research environment.
- Represent the Alliance externally, including public presentation of projects.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of higher education policies, publications, current initiatives, projects and issues, particularly those relevant to the Alliance.
- Maintain a close understanding of Government priorities.

Providing flexible support in a senior role including:

- Deputise for the Chief Executive, as and when appropriate or necessary
- Alongside the Chief Executive and the Head of Communications & Public Affairs, help shape the future strategic direction of the University Alliance
- Contribute to the broader objectives of the University Alliance with a willingness to undertake a broad range of tasks as needed within a small team

Main terms and conditions

This position is a permanent, full-time position. University Alliance staff benefit from generous terms and conditions including 25 days' leave plus 7 concessionary days (supplementary to bank holiday), flexible working practices, pension scheme and a commitment to investing in and developing staff.

Principal location of work: 109 -117 Middlesex Street, London, E1 7JF.

Line manager: Chief Executive Officer, Vanessa Wilson.

Probation period: 6 months.

Starting salary: c. £50,000 per annum.

Conditions: full-time, permanent.



Application Deadline: 11.59pm, 27th May 2019

Application process: to apply please download the application form provided on our website and follow instructions provided.

Please send the completed application form with the subject line 'Head of Policy' to info@unialliance.ac.uk by the deadline date.

Interview: Interviews will be held on Monday 10th June 2019

Person specification

Specification	Essential	Desirable
1. Education/Training	High standard of qualifications to degree level or equivalent professional experience.	Postgraduate qualification
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.	