

# University Alliance Job Description

**Post title:** Director of Communications  
**Responsible to:** Chief Executive  
**Responsible for:** Communications team

## Main purpose of the job

University Alliance (UA) is looking for an experienced communications professional to lead the communications and external affairs of the organisation, working closely with the Chief Executive, Policy and Programme Teams, as well as communications and public affairs teams across our growing membership.

This is a senior leadership role working directly to the Chief Executive to develop and deliver a proactive communications and external affairs strategy to promote the UA vision and mission, champion the strengths of our members, secure positive media coverage and generate stakeholder and political influence for our policy messages. In doing this, you will engage Government/s, Parliament, Whitehall, funding councils, sector agencies/bodies, national academies, industry representatives, key sector stakeholders and the media.

You will also provide leadership ambassadorship along with the Chief Executive as part of the Senior Management Team with line management responsibilities for the communications team.

## Responsibilities and duties

- To develop and deliver an effective and impactful communications strategy that brings to life the UA vision, mission and strategies; strengthens further the UA brand and voice; champions the expertise of UA institutions and provides a collective voice for our members on key strategic issues.
- To develop and deliver effective external affairs, engagement and campaign strategies to influence Government, Parliament, Whitehall, Devolved Administrations, funding councils, sector agencies/bodies, national academies and industry representatives in support of our agenda.
- To work effectively with the UA Policy, Programme and Network Teams to ensure all communications and external affairs activities and engagement are accurate, relevant and impactful.
- To build close and trusted relationships with national, specialist and sector media, securing consistent and positive media coverage for our policy messages, effectively managing, and rebutting negative stories.
- To oversee all UA's owned (and earned) channels and events to ensure content is relevant, engaging and impactful for current and prospective audiences.
- To build an effective and trusted network of communication and external affairs colleagues across our membership and in the Higher Education sector more widely.
- To effectively represent the organisation at key meetings with key partners and stakeholders.
- To effectively line manage and develop members of staff.
- To 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.
- To present at Subscriber Member Board meetings on the work of the Communication Team.
- Undertake a range of other appropriate tasks as directed by the Chief Executive in line with the role of a Director Communications.

## Responsibility for budgets

Responsible for Communication budget.

## Relationships/contacts

**Internal:** Staff across the organisation all levels.

**External:** Staff at all levels within our member universities including Directors of Communications and staff of professional, governmental and educational institutions, individuals and businesses where appropriate.

This document outlines the main duties required, for the time being, of the post-entitled Personal Assistant to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not intended to be a comprehensive or exhaustive list and we may vary duties, from time to time, which do not change the general character of the job, or the level of responsibility entailed.

## Person Specification

**Post title: Director of Communications**

Specification	Essential	Desirable
Education/ Training	Degree-level qualification and / or equivalent qualifications or experience	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Substantial experience in senior PR / external affairs / communications, media, and public affairs role</li><li>• Media and social media management</li><li>• Comms and campaign marketing</li><li>• Event management</li><li>• Digital communication</li><li>• Deploying various communication channels, techniques, and content to target and engage specific audiences</li><li>• Managing and developing effective teams/ individuals</li><li>• Experience of working at senior / national level and with Government and / or politicians and senior stakeholders</li><li>• Proven capability to develop and deliver effective communication and public strategies to deliver strategic organisational priorities</li><li>• Advising and supporting organisational spokespeople</li><li>• Proven networking ability at a senior level</li></ul>	Experience of National Higher Education communication issues

Specification	Essential	Desirable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in higher education policy and the sector</li> <li>• Understanding of Government and Whitehall</li> </ul>	
Skills/aptitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive self-starter</li> <li>• Results and outcomes driven</li> <li>• Creativity and innovation in deploying communications to deliver strategic priorities</li> <li>• Attention to detail</li> <li>• Ability to work in agile way and respond positively to a fast-moving environment</li> <li>• Excellent written skills</li> <li>• Confident communication skills</li> <li>• Ability to work effectively with and through others</li> </ul>	Experience of using video conferencing such as MS Teams
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident, open approach to dealing with colleagues of all levels, internally and externally</li> <li>• Work quickly and accurately to tight deadlines</li> <li>• A self-starter who can work independently as well as collaboratively as part of a team/project</li> <li>• Ability to work under pressure</li> <li>• Self-motivated and able to use initiative</li> <li>• Ability to work as part of a small team</li> <li>• Professional approach</li> <li>• Resilience to cope with uncertainty and changing deadlines and priorities</li> </ul>	Knowledge and interest in the higher education sector
Other	Willingness to travel to attend meetings and events as required	A willingness to undertake further training and development