University of Salford MANCHESTER

Job Description

Role Title:	Executive Assistant
School / Dept:	Faculty of Science, Engineering and Environment
Reference:	MPF2353
Grade:	Grade 6
Full or Part time:	Full time
Hours:	36.25 hours per week
Reports to:	Executive Support Manager

Overview

As a member of the University Leadership Team, The Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean (PVC Dean) for the School of Science, Engineering and Environment is leading the delivery of our exciting and ambitious vision for the University, delivered through the strategic objectives. As such, they require outstanding executive and personalised support to enable them to effectively drive these strategic objectives, including smart and efficient administrative, diary management and logistics support in this extremely demanding environment.

The Executive Assistant (EA) is responsible for managing the complex schedule of the PVC Dean and ensuring the smooth operation of their activities. The EA will also be an integral part of the Executive Support Team and will work closely with the team and Executive Support Manager. The EA must demonstrate outstanding customer service, time management and organisational skills and a high level of self-motivation and initiative in order to ensure that the PVC Dean can conduct their duties to the best of their ability.

They will be expected to work closely with the PVC Dean in dealing with delicate and highly confidential matters, providing sensitive liaison with senior management across a wide

range of issues, working closely and collaboratively with senior management, Schools and Professional Services and external bodies.

The role holder will be expected to engage with the Executive Support Manager to ensure pro-active management of business and information flow on behalf of the PVC Dean, ensuring that diary time and EA support is prioritised according to business need. They will be responsible for ensuring that the office remains aligned to the delivery of the key strategic objectives of the University and actions from the Executive and Council are followed up on and implemented.

Role Purpose

Reporting to the Executive Support Manager, the EA will provide high level, confidential and comprehensive executive administrative and personalised support to the Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean of School (PVC Dean), Professor Annalu Waller. The EA will also provide administrative support for Professor Waller's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) funded Research Network grant. To deliver the challenges of this role the EA will be expected to demonstrate high levels of initiative, outstanding time management and organisational skills and be creative, energetic, open and collaborative. The post requires familiarity and comfort with a range of contemporary office systems including Microsoft 365 and Teams. A full clean driving license and a willingness to travel are essential.

The post holder will have responsibility, with accountability to the Executive Support Manager, for the effective and efficient management of activities related to the effective discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the PVC Dean and the strategic priorities and objectives of the University.

The Executive Assistant will work in a way that commands the respect of internal and external stakeholders and will be expected to work closely with colleagues at all levels in the University to ensure they can effectively conduct their duties on behalf of the PVC Dean.

The post supports a busy office and will be expected to work closely with other team members, particularly those also in the pooled resource team. The post holder will have excellent time management skills and be able to work with the Executive Support Manager to agree priorities in this busy and ambitious environment.

Principal Duties & Responsibilities

- Manage accurately multiple complex diaries of the PVC Dean to ensure the smooth operation of the office and the PVC Dean's time;

- Prioritise and manage the demands and requests made of the PVC Dean in order to ensure appropriate attention is given to urgent issues, escalating timelines as required and in order to schedule diary commitments, working closely with the Executive Support Manager to understand the prioritisation of business needs.

- In conjunction with the Executive Support Manager, to take the lead in co-ordinating, managing and tracking the progress of initiatives, projects and issues and brief the PVC Dean on these as appropriate;

- To provide support to the PVC Dean in their roles leading/chairing committees, steering groups and other boards as appropriate, e.g., preparing and circulating agendas and minutes and making records of meetings, and following up in a well-informed manner on actions and decisions taken;

- To act as Administrator for Professor Waller's new EPSRC research project, contribute to grant management and assist in project managing activities across the network, including assisting in organisation and recording of meetings and conferences; responsible for network communications, including social media and webinars.

- To follow up on Council and Executive actions on behalf of the PVC Dean, utilising a current understanding of the business of Executive Members, ensuring members of the School are fully informed and engaged with the work required to satisfactorily complete the actions in a timely manner.

- To review incoming papers and reports, in the PVC Dean's portfolio, and efficiently collate documentation, communications, correspondence, reports, speeches and briefing papers as required;

- To liaise with the Executive Support Manager in working with colleagues across the University on a wide variety of strategic matters relating to the operational running of the University, and anticipate key issues for discussion at senior management/Executive meetings; This will involve the need for sensitivity; diplomacy, tenacity, attention to detail and a corporate approach;

- To nurture highly effective relationships with University employees, customers and stakeholders in order to develop and advance business goals and in order to expediate the work of the PVC Dean.

- To facilitate communication between the Office and other internal parties to ensure that agreed objectives are implemented and resolved in a timely matter.

- To be resourceful and innovative in resolving issues, exercising judgement and presenting information

- To contribute to the vision, mission and values of the University through adopting a positive and collaborative approach to work at all times.

- Work on own initiative to meet competing demands and to resolve problems.

- Provide a high quality, front line professional service for visitors to the PVC Dean and liaise with internal and external colleagues as required.

- Deal with incoming correspondence with discretion and courtesy and produce confidential letters, reports and electronic presentations on behalf of the PVC Dean.

- Take the lead on a number of tasks and projects that will require effective collaborative working with a wide range of staff throughout the University. Organising efficiently and effectively, internal and external meetings, and coordinate formal and informal events.

- Manage accessible travel arrangements for the PVC Dean, including travel reservations, visas, appointments and itineraries for journeys within the UK and abroad.

- Travel locally and abroad, accompanying the PVC Dean to conferences and meetings off campus – this will include driving the PVC Dean's car and international driving.

- Maintain and develop filing systems, operational procedures and technological solutions for the secure retention of information relating to the PVC Dean's responsibilities and the retrieval of such information as required.

- Process and maintain accurate records using spreadsheets, various University databases and software systems, and provide statistical information and reports as necessary,

- Establish and maintain appropriate records relating to the financial transactions of the Executive Members and the activities of the Office where required, including credit card transactions and domestic and international travel and hospitality expenses, utilizing the University's financial system to generate purchase orders etc.

- Work effectively as a team member, providing support when colleagues are absent and working to shared objectives when this is required; Working positively and creatively to support the Executive members, particularly during busy workloads when flexibility in working hours may be required.

- To ensure that sensitive and confidential issues are handled in an appropriate manner.

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Generic Duties

- Perform any other duties appropriate to the grade as may be required by the Head of School/Head of Division etc.
- Comply with the personal health and safety responsibilities specified in the University Health and Safety policy.
- To engage with the University's commitment to put our students first and deliver services which are customer orientated, represent value for money and contribute to the financial and environmental sustainability of the University when undertaking all duties and aspects of the role.
- Advance equality, support our work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination, foster an inclusive study and work environment for students, staff and visitors in accordance with our public sector equality duties and university policy.

This role detail is a guide to the work you will initially be required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. It does not form part of your Contract of Employment.

Person specification follows on next page

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Person Specification

The successful candidate should demonstrate the following, which are 'Essential' (E) or 'Desirable' (D)

Qualifications

1. Hold recognised PA or secretarial/IT qualifications or equivalent experience. **(E)**
2. Hold an HND, first degree in a related subject or equivalent relevant experience. **(E)**
3. Hold a full, clean UK driving license and be willing and able to drive in the UK and overseas. **(E)**

Background and Experience

4. Experience of working on behalf of senior colleagues in following up actions and intervening on business issues. **(E)**
5. Significant experience of providing effective, pro-active and business-informed executive level support to senior leaders within a complex organisation. **(E)**
6. Proven experience of the ability to analyse information and anticipate potential problems in a demanding environment, with the ability to confidently present to senior colleagues and provide solutions. **(E)**
7. Experience of managing external high-profile events, conferences or large internal staff/student events. **(D)**
8. Excellent communication skills with the ability to present oral and written information clearly. **(E)**
9. Experience of managing multiple complex diaries and email systems and handling a wide range of activities and prioritising these effectively. **(E)**
10. Experience of managing complex international and domestic travel, itineraries and Visas. **(E)**
11. Awareness of disability issues. **(D)**
12. Experience of meetings administration and taking minutes. **(E)**
13. Experience of working in a higher education environment. **(D)**

Knowledge

14. Office based practices and procedures, including maintenance of filing systems. **(E)**
15. A strong understanding of the Higher Education sector and the challenges it faces. **(D)**
16. Current strategic objectives and priorities of the Vice-Chancellor and the Executive. **(D)**
17. The University's executive and governance structures. **(D)**
18. Word processing, PowerPoint (and similar), spreadsheets and working with databases. **(E)**

Skills and Competencies

19. The capacity to provide senior administrative support. **(E)**
20. The ability to use initiative and make effective decisions. **(E)**

21. The ability to use a comprehensive range of IT software including Microsoft Office applications; email and on-line diary management; and the willingness to train in additional IT skills as and when required. **(E)**
22. An excellent level of accuracy and attention to detail, and the ability to work to very tight timeframes. **(E)**
23. An outstanding commitment to customer service; relationship building and networking skills. **(E)**
24. An aptitude for working in a fast-paced and demanding environment; Problem solving skills including being able to routinely identify potential issues with the ability to think quickly and innovatively and to react positively to changing requirements. **(E)**
25. The ability to act with complete discretion and confidentiality in managing highly sensitive business on behalf of senior colleagues. **(E)**
26. Strong organisational and project management skills. **(E)**
27. Outstanding interpersonal and communication skills, with a proactive approach and the ability to always act with emotional intelligence. **(E)**