Director of Strategic Planning

Job Description

Background

About Royal Holloway

1. Royal Holloway, University of London, is one of the UK’s leading universities. Through world-class research and the dedication of our teaching and professional services staff, ours is a community that inspires individuals to succeed academically, socially and personally.

2. Royal Holloway was formed in 1985 through the merger of Royal Holloway and Bedford Colleges, founded in 1849 and 1886 respectively. Both were established by social reformers who championed academic excellence and inclusivity by establishing two of the first higher education institutions for women.

3. In 1900, Royal Holloway College and Bedford College became part of the University of London and became the first institutions in the UK to award degrees to women. Both Bedford and Royal Holloway admitted male undergraduates for the first time in 1965, but their commitment to women’s education remained, and the College continues to value those principles of excellence and inclusivity today.

4. As one of the UK’s leading research-intensive universities we are home to some of the foremost authorities in the sciences, arts, business, economics and law. We are strengthened by diversity, and welcome students and staff from all over the world to study and work here.

5. Our campus is one of the most beautiful in the UK, dominated by the Grade 1 list Founder’s Building established in 1886, and with numerous teaching and study spaces, bars and cafes, high quality accommodation and sports facilities. All this is set in 135 acres of stunning parkland.

Key facts about Royal Holloway


7. Royal Holloway sits within the top 25% of universities in the UK for research rated ‘world-leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’ by the Research Excellence Framework, 2014. Our research continues to address global challenges, including the development of treatments and therapies for rare diseases and life-limiting conditions, the rapid decline of bees, and protecting the UK’s national infrastructure from cyber-attack.

8. Many of our academics in the arts, humanities and sciences act as advisors to policy-makers and the Government on a wide range of issues, such as combating radicalism and terrorism.
9. The College has an excellent teaching record, delivering a broad range of traditional subjects and cutting-edge modern courses across 21 academic Schools/Departments. Royal Holloway was awarded ‘Silver’ ranking in the most recent Teaching and Student Outcomes Excellence Framework.

10. The College is consistently first among the University of London institutions for student satisfaction as recorded in the National Student Survey.

11. The current student population is c. 10,000. The College has met student number growth targets in recent years despite a very competitive environment and anticipates further growth as part of its next strategic plan.

12. We have c. 1,600 members of staff across academic, administrative and support areas. In addition, we have visiting teachers, student interns and student staff who work across campus.

13. The College benefits the UK economy by c. £480m a year, with about £230m benefiting the county of Surrey.

14. There are over 74,000 alumni of Bedford College, Royal Holloway College, and Royal Holloway and Bedford New College worldwide. Our notable alumni include novelist George Elliot, suffragette Emily Wilding Davison, the first woman doctor in the west Dr Elizabeth Blackwell, actor Mark Strong, politician Baroness Cathy Ashton, broadcaster and scientist David Bellamy and Paralympian triple model medallist Sophie Christianson.

Postholder relationships

15. The College is led by an Executive team headed by our Principal, who is supported by two Senior Vice-Principals, a number of Vice-Principals, the Chief Financial Officer, some Directors of Professional Services and the Chief Operating Officer and Secretary to Council. The Senior Management Team for the College includes academic Heads of Departments, Associate Deans and the remaining Directors of Professional Services.

16. The postholder will report directly to the Chief Operating Officer and Secretary to Council, Dr David Ashton, who is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the College and for the College’s governance framework, ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and for implementing decisions made by the governing body. They will join the Professional Services leadership team and will be expected to contribute to the development of the Professional Services across disciplinary portfolios.

17. The postholder will attend weekly meetings of the Executive Board chaired by the Principal and will be responsible for secretariat support to the Executive Board.

18. The postholder will also attend termly meetings of the Senior Management Team. They can expect to work closely with colleagues across the senior team.
19. The College is governed by the College Council comprising 24 independent and staff members. From time to time, the postholder will be required to advise council members, or members of its sub-committees, on matters of strategy, performance against agreed metrics, strategic and operational risk and risk management and individual change projects. The postholder will attend the Council’s annual two-day away day each year and well as report as required at Council meetings or meetings of sub-committees.

About the role

1. The College is seeking a new Director of Strategic Planning at a crucial time. A new institutional strategy is to be agreed for the period from 2020 in a process currently under way led by the College Principal, Professor Paul Layzell. New internal organisational and operational models are also under consideration, and a change agenda, agreed across the Professional Services one year ago is under way in its implementation, but with more to do.

2. Moreover, the College has recently appointed a new Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy, Partnerships and Resources), Professor Ken Badcock, who will be responsible *inter alia* for the College’s academic portfolio. With Professor Badcock’s imminent arrival from the University of Liverpool, the postholder will have the opportunity to support the review and development of the College’s academic portfolio from its outset.

Futures strategizing

3. A crucial part of the role is futures strategizing. The postholder must have the ability to anticipate trends in the higher education sector and across the broader political environment, investigate possible opportunities and risks associated with these trends, and inform and guide the senior leadership team accordingly. To this end, they should expect to advise the Principal on matters of strategy on a one-to-one basis, as well as the Chief Operating Officer, the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy, Partnerships and Resource) and the remaining members of the Executive. Further, they should be able to operationalise strategy and support all stages from concept to delivery.

4. Horizon scanning: the postholder should be able to horizon scan the higher education sector and explore and present new ways for the College to shape its future. Related, the postholder must also be able to identify emerging issues outwith the higher education sector and how these might affect the College, or how the College might proactively respond. In particular, they must be able to identify disruptive trends that might challenge the College, present risk, and propose solutions to issues before they arise. The College will look to the Director of Strategic Planning to provide regular reports on the above matters to a standard that can drive critical analysis of performance in a manner that will command the confidence and buy-in of all parts of the College community.

5. In similar fashion, the postholder will be expected to provide guidance to the College Council. The post holder must be able to synthesize data to present complex issues with the clarity required to support councillors in the execution of their fiduciary responsibilities to the College.
**External Relationship Management**

6. A second key area of the role is external relationship management. The postholder will be responsible for managing many of the College’s relationships with key external agencies; for example, the Office for Students, the Higher Education Statistics Agency, and the Department for Education. They will advise the College on relationship management with these agencies. Further, the postholder will lever critical insights from the process of engagement with sector agencies and adopt these to inform the College’s future strategic and operational plans.

7. Statutory returns: the postholder will be responsible for the administration of the College’s reporting obligations to these external agencies; again for example, the Office for Students, the Higher Education Statistics Agency, and the Department for Education. They will ensure the accuracy of the College’s returns, and the College’s compliance with legislation and other sector level-requirements.

8. The postholder will be required to network and build partnerships with other HEIs, sharing best practice and lessons learned to enhance the College’s approach to strategy and strategic risk management and project management.

**Analysis and Insight**

9. In partnership with the Director of Information Technology and other senior stakeholders, the postholder will lead the introduction of a business intelligence (BI) capability on behalf of the College. Key to the College’s long term success is the ability of the Strategic Planning directorate to deliver not only data but translate data into analysis and insight, and enable colleagues in Academic Departments and Professional Service Directorates to do likewise. The postholder will be required to lead a step-change in the delivery of BI in support of the core academic mission, academic quality and standards, and the student experience. By the provision of relevant analysis and insight they will further inform strategic and operational plans, determine measures of efficacy and effectiveness, and drive the analysis of performance against targets.

10. The postholder will be responsible for recommending Key Performance Indicators and other measures of strategic and operational success, for measurement of such indicators, for their sharing and reporting including dashboard reporting, and for advising the College on their use towards performance improvement.

11. The postholder will be responsible for developing and managing analysis of externally produced indicators (e.g. league tables) and producing internal briefings on performance across the sector.

**Strategy implementation and Reporting**
12. The postholder will administer the College’s planning processes; develop, implement and report performance indicators, and co-ordinate the reporting of School/Department/Professional Service/College-wide performance against planned objectives.

13. The postholder will support the regular review of the College’s Strategy Plan and the development of strategic initiatives through analysis, bid writing, feasibility studies and options appraisals, etc.

14. The postholder will ensure that strategic and operational risks spanning the College are identified and managed effectively and will be responsible for providing risk assurance to College. They will manage the College’s strategic and operational risk management processes and advise Council, some of its sub-committees, the Executive and the wider Senior Management Team on risk and risk mitigation.

15. From time to time, the postholder will be required to lead College-wide projects. The postholder will act as Sponsor to the College Reporting project currently underway.

Executive Secretariat

16. The postholder will ensure full secretariat support to the Executive, being responsible for the administration of meetings and the formal record of meeting outcomes.

Leadership and Management

17. The postholder will lead the Strategic Planning directorate, be responsible for people and budgetary management and for ensuring the correct application of College policies relating to both.

Postholder skills and experience

Qualifications

18. Educated to first degree level.

19. Proven track record in strategic planning and management aligned to the requirements of the post. This may be in higher education, consultancy, or other

20. Strong planning and analytical skills and the ability to collate and present complex data and information; high levels of oral and written expression; strong numerical and analytical skills including a good understanding of finance.

21. An ability to translate strategy into delivery and an ability to understand and respond to the operational and capability requirements at team/directorate/College levels needed to ensure the successful delivery of strategy.
22. Highly developed management skills required both to leading the Strategic Planning directorate and to manage upwards within the organisation including an open approachable, and proactive management style with a commitment to colleague development.

23. The communicative skills to convey vision, ideas and goals, to articulate issues both sector-wide and with regard to the governance, management, operation and performance of the College; to be able to produce high-end reports and publications appropriate to the senior leadership and governance contexts in which the Director will work.

24. Highly developed communication and negotiating skills, negotiating the use of resources, budgets, schedules and a track record of influencing successful outcomes.

25. Highly developed drafting and minute writing skills commensurate with responsibility for the formal record of Executive meetings.

26. An ability to work collaboratively across complex internal organisational structures.