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 faculty 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 gold medallist Sophie Christianson.

**Postholder relationships**

15. The College is led by an Executive team headed by our Principal, who is supported by two Deputy Principals, a number of (Senior) Vice-Principals, the Chief Financial Officer, some Directors of Professional Services and the 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 Deputy Principal (Operations), who is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the College.

17. 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.

**About the role**

**External Returns and External Relationship Management**

1. A key area of the role is oversight of statutory returns.
a. The postholder will be responsible for overseeing the administration of the College’s reporting obligations to the Higher Education Statistics Agency and all other statutory bodies including the Office for Students. They will ensure the accuracy of the College’s returns, and the College’s compliance with legislation and other sector level-requirements.

b. Supporting the Deputy Principal (Operations), the postholder will be responsible for managing the College’s relationship with the Office for Students. An essential part of this relationship, they will administer the College’s Access Agreement.

2. 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.

Analytics and Insight

1. In partnership with the Director of Information Technology and other senior stakeholders, the postholder will support 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. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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

1. The postholder must have the ability to help shape thinking on future strategy. They must be able 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, and work closely with the two Deputy Principals. Further, they should be able to operationalise strategy and support all stages from concept to delivery.

2. 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.
3. Supporting the Senior Vice-Principal, 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.

4. The postholder will ensure that strategic and operational risks spanning the College 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. The postholder will manage the Risk Register and will report to the Audit and Compliance Committee on matters relating to risk.

Secretariat and Project Management

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

6. From time to time, the postholder will be required to lead College-wide projects.

Leadership and Management

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

Postholder skills and experience

Qualifications

8. Educated to first degree level.

9. Proven track record in strategic planning and management aligned to the requirements of the post.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.
13. 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.

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

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

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

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