



Executive Director Student Journey

Candidate pack



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Welcome from the Vice-Chancellor and Principal



Thank you for your interest in the role of becoming Executive Director Student Journey at Royal Holloway. This is a really significant moment in the progress of the university. As a community and as a senior leadership team, we are seeking to inform a future that is as brave, bold and pioneering as the principles which were at the heart of our two founding colleges, Bedford and Royal Holloway, which opened to enable women's education in 1849 and 1879 respectively – breaking down barriers, equipping and empowering graduates of all disciplines.

As the new Vice-Chancellor and Principal, I am very proud to lead an institution of dedicated colleagues, working together across academic and professional services, and an astonishing global community of students, past, present and future.

Walking around our established Egham campus, learning about the exciting educational and research activities going on in our six schools as well as the creative, discovery-led endeavours taking place in our performance spaces, sound studios, research laboratories and volunteering and enterprise hubs, is endlessly inspiring.

Similarly, we now have a thriving presence in central London through our expanding portfolio of postgraduate programmes and our partnership work as a member of the globally recognised University of London federation. At Royal Holloway, we have the best of both worlds, with

everything a close-knit campus provides alongside access to all the stimulus and possibility of a great world city.

We are dedicated in everything we do to the principles of academic excellence, inclusivity and social justice. That shared purpose is threaded through our education, our research and the ways in which our students and colleagues engage with wider society in local, national and global contexts.

This is a journey that we were embarked on even before the onset of the pandemic and the unprecedented impact on education that it has undoubtedly caused – colleagues will be delighted to explain the thinking behind this should you wish to discuss more.

The role of Executive Director Student Journey is a pivotal role that links those academic and professional services teams seeking to deliver a sector-leading educational and student life experience. The role-holder will be central to delivering on that vision and mission, and we hope that you will see in us a values-led and ambitious community of practice that you will be excited to join. You will have the opportunity to work with, and to build, engaged and dedicated teams with specialisms in everything from widening access, educational transition and success, curriculum design, pedagogies and assessment, employability and skills, and wellbeing and student engagement, and to operate in partnership with our students to foster an inclusive and supportive culture of high achievement and continuous improvement. We, in turn, are looking for someone who can amplify and extend the work of truly committed teams delivering the support and interventions needed along the student journey in ways that are future-facing, open and responsive to student voice at every stage.

We really hope that you will want to join us in this effort, and we look forward to speaking to you about the opportunity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Julie Sanders'.

Professor Julie Sanders
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

A photograph of a person with blonde hair, seen from the side, operating a large, professional audio mixing console in a recording studio. The console is filled with numerous knobs, sliders, and buttons. In the background, there are various pieces of audio equipment, including a rack of modules and a monitor. The scene is dimly lit, with warm ambient lighting.

Royal Holloway, University of London

Royal Holloway, University of London, is ranked in the top 30 universities in the UK*. Through world-class research that expands minds and changes lives, the dedication of our teachers and the feel of the Royal Holloway experience, ours is a community that inspires individuals to succeed academically, socially and personally.

The university was founded by two social reformers who pioneered the ideal of education and knowledge for all who could benefit. Their vision lives on today.

As one of the UK's leading research-intensive universities we are home to some of the world's foremost authorities in the sciences, arts, business, economics and law. We are strengthened by diversity, and welcome students and academics who travel from all over the world to study and work here, ensuring an international and multicultural perspective within a close-knit and historic campus.

*Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, 2023

Key facts

- Royal Holloway is currently ranked in the top 30 in the UK in the Times and Sunday Times.
- Good University Guide, 2023. We are also ranked in the top 400 in the world and 41st overall in the UK in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2023. In its category 'International Outlook', Royal Holloway is ranked in the UK's top 40 universities.
- 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 (REF) 2021.
- The National Student Survey (NSS) 2022 revealed that Royal Holloway, with a rating of 79%, remains above the sector average.
- Our world-leading researchers continue 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.
- Recognised as world-class experts in the arts, humanities and sciences, many Royal Holloway academics act as advisors to policy-makers and the Government on a wide range of issues ranging from cybersecurity to climate change.
- Royal Holloway has a total of 11,844 students (FTE, at December 2022). Of these 9,421 are from the UK, 601 are from the EU and 2,002 are from further afield internationally. We currently have 9,943 undergraduates, 1,308 postgraduate taught and 595 postgraduate research students.
- In addition to the main campus in Egham, Surrey we also have a growing London presence with spaces at Bedford Square and Stewart House closely adjacent to the wider University of London facilities, where over 300 of our postgraduate students are taught.
- We have 1,671 FTE of staff working at Royal Holloway across academic, professional services and support areas.
- Royal Holloway has an annual income of around £201 million (2021/22). We estimate that in the same year, we contributed c.£657.1m to the UK economy*.
- There are over 95,000 alumni of Royal Holloway and Bedford College worldwide. Notable alumni include novelist George Eliot, suffragette Emily Wilding Davison, the first woman doctor in the west Dr Elizabeth Blackwell, actor Mark Strong, EU Foreign Minister Baroness Cathy Ashton, writer, actor and campaigner Sir Lenny Henry, and Paralympic triple gold medallist Sophie Christiansen.

*Biggar Economic



Our strategic plan, 2021-2024

We have a bold vision for Royal Holloway's future and a clear strategy for how to make this happen.

The strategic plan considers how we can meet the needs of our modern times in terms of the provision of higher education and research based innovation.

By building on our well regarded academic strengths, and by aligning to needs, for example in graduate employability, programme portfolio, access, civic influence, partnership and knowledge exchange, we can deliver on our purpose as a university.

Our three year strategic plan, covering 2021 to 2024, was inspired by the Deed of Foundation which established Royal Holloway College in 1886. Royal Holloway College merged with Bedford College in 1985, providing the foundations of the university we are today.

Our strategic plan has three strategic priority pillars:

- Respond to the higher education needs and ambitions of an expanding London population.
- Build strong and sustainable international partnerships that expand the horizons of all our students.
- Develop strengths in challenge-led research and contribute to addressing key issues of our modern time.

Vision for the future

- Throughout the plan is a strong focus on managing our resources effectively and efficiently. In doing so we protect the legacy of our founders and enable Royal Holloway to meet the modern needs of future generations.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion are a central part of our efforts to realise this future. As a university we are ambitious to foster an inclusive environment which supports excellence in education, research and student and colleague experience.



Our strategic plan, 2021-2024

"The Founder believes that the education of women should not be exclusively regulated by the tradition and method of former ages; but that it should be founded on those studies and sciences which the experience of modern times has shown to be the most valuable, and the best adapted to meet the intellectual and social requirements of the students."

**Deed of
Foundation,
1883**

Aligning to the opportunities and requirements of our modern times to address local and global needs

**Strategic
ambition**

Respond to the higher education needs and ambitions of an expanding London population

Build strong and sustainable international partnerships that expand the horizons of all our students

Develop strengths in challenge-led research and contribute to addressing key issues of our modern time

**Strategic
priority
pillars**

Manage resources effectively and efficiently to ensure a financially sustainable future, creating value through and for our people.

Operational routes to delivery

Academic routes to delivery

Simplify and rationalise professional services / processes / procedures

Strengthen employability, inclusion, reasons for firm choice student recruitment

Maximise benefits of information technology and digitisation

Grow international experiences for our students

Relentless focus on service / continuous improvement / partnership working

Expand challenge-led research from investigator-led research basis

**Strategy
to action:
academy and
professional
services**

The role

The Executive Director is responsible for all centrally delivered student services that cover the Student Journey, from application through to attainment. They have a critical strategic and coordinating role ensuring professional teams deliver a modern and fully integrated service that covers all the stages of our students' education and the experience that supports successful outcomes. They are a key player within Professional Services working to support the VC & Principal, the PVC (Education & Student Experience) and the senior leadership team of Executive Directors and Executive Deans in the delivery of the university's strategic plans, culture and operations.

Strategic and Operational leadership

- Lead the student services teams in supporting all our students from application through to graduation and successful futures, through modern and inclusive practices and delivery channels
- Ensure the Student Voice is appropriately represented in all the directorate's activities
- Support the PVC (Education & Student Experience) in the development of education and student experience strategy (for undergraduates and postgraduates, including online and hybrid, as well as in-person, courses)
- Provide strategic and operational leadership to a large and diverse directorate, fostering a culture of high performance, collaboration and process improvement across the university's campuses, driving forward as project sponsor existing and proposed institutional projects to deliver high quality outcomes
- Lead the student services teams in supporting all our students from application through to graduation and successful futures, through modern and inclusive practices and delivery channels



- Ensure the Student Voice is appropriately represented in all the directorate's activities.
- Support the PVC (Education & Student Experience) in the development of education and student experience strategy (for undergraduates and postgraduates, including online and hybrid, as well as in-person, courses).
- Provide strategic and operational leadership to a large and diverse directorate, fostering a culture of high performance, collaboration and process improvement across the university's campuses, driving forward as project sponsor existing and proposed institutional projects to deliver high quality outcomes.
- Articulate and own meaningful and measurable objectives in alignment with the university's strategy and work with colleagues to drive their timely and effective implementation.
- Develop the teams to ensure coherence, leveraging their expertise and empowering them to deliver solutions to ensure an outstanding student experience.
- Support the cross-university working with Vice Deans, School Managers and School Offices.
- Lead the teams in resolving situations of challenge or crisis for students and the wider university community, acting as a key member of Gold Response in liaising with other professional services and the Students' Union in respect of student facing matters.
- Providing assurance in the organisation and running of the Joint Executive Committee, managing the action log on matters arising from this committee and reviewing the outputs of the university's Memorandum of Cooperation with the Students' Union.
- Ensure compliance with university policies, procedures and regulations (including amongst others, the Student Conduct Regulations, Dignity & Respect and Upholding Freedom of Speech), leading their application and resolving the escalation of issues, making recommendations to the senior leadership team.
- Manage the directorate's budget effectively, optimising value for money and in alignment with strategic objectives, issues within the school, ensuring a culture of fairness and inclusion.



Engagement and wider responsibilities

- Maintain up to date awareness of professional developments in student services, applying this knowledge as appropriate to develop the services and teams.
- Develop strong relationships with academic and other professional services departments to ensure full integration of support for the student experience, representing the student journey portfolio at university Committees and Boards as appropriate.
- Contribute to the university's external representation and develop beneficial relationships with relevant professional networks nationally and internationally
- Maintain a seamless and positive relationship with the Students' Union.

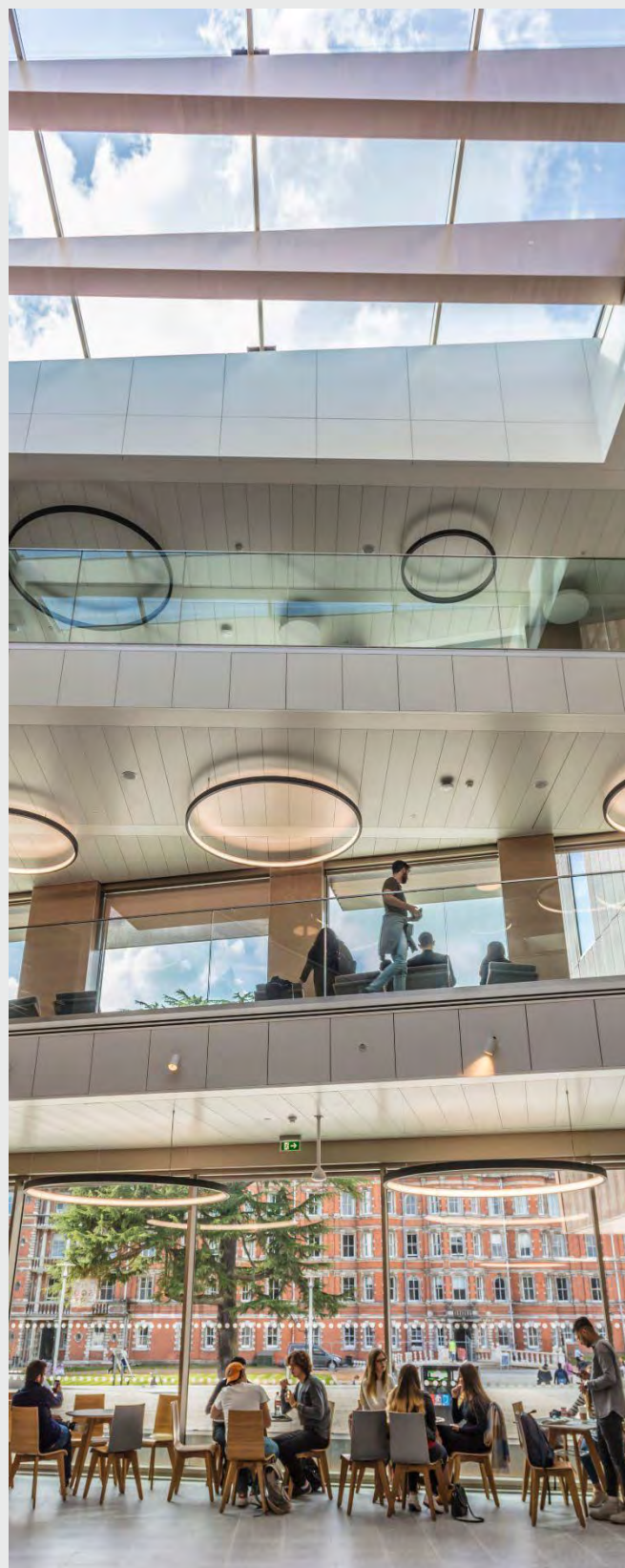
Other duties

The duties listed are not exhaustive and may be varied from time to time as dictated by the changing needs of the university. The post holder will be expected to undertake other duties as appropriate and as requested by their manager. The post holder may be required to work at any of the locations at which the business of Royal Holloway is conducted.

Internal and external relationships

The following list is not exhaustive but the post holder will be required to liaise with:

- VC & Principal, Executive Board, Heads of Operations.
- The University's Council or members of its sub-committees to advise on matters related to the Student Journey.
- Students' Union.
- Other university colleagues and in particular the School leadership teams, and Strategic Planning in respect of monitoring and reporting.
- External networks and contacts, including dialogue and reporting to the OfS, advisory engagement with UUK, and participation in representative bodies that cover the remit of the Student Journey.



Person specification

Knowledge, Education, Qualifications and Training *Essential*

- Educated to first degree level or equivalent.
- Well-developed understanding of relevant issues in higher education of access, retention, academic success and progression with a deep understanding of one or more of the aspects of widening access, innovative education support, student experience and graduate outcomes.
- Deep understanding of relevant regulatory frameworks.

Desirable

- Higher Degree or professional body accredited.

Skills and/or Abilities *Essential*

- Ability to work with students to co-create strategy and innovation.
- Proven ability to develop performance at team and individual level to achieve tangible results
- Ability to create and lead culture change, set strategic objectives and drive implementation, instilling a culture of solution focused delivery.
- Sound and robust business acumen.
- Clear and compelling style of communication, with the ability to engage, inspire and persuade.
- Leading by example to ensure the highest standards of professional service delivery, with an ability to anticipate and address evolving student and customer needs in the changing HE landscape.
- Ability to create high-quality, student-centred services.





- Excellent communication skills both verbal and written including excellent skills.
- Demonstrable interpersonal skills that ensure effective team working, with strong business awareness, cultural appreciation and emotional intelligence.
- Excellent prioritisation and time management skills.
- Excellent ability to work well under pressure and meet tight deadlines.
- The ability to work collaboratively and develop authentic and productive professional relationships across the university and its partners.

Desirable

- Excellent presentation skills to represent Royal Holloway at external events.

Experience

Essential

- Strong, proven track record of achievement in a comparable student-facing function.
- Extensive experience of successful leadership and management at senior level, with a proven record of successful project delivery against agreed strategy, timeframes and budget.

- Delivery experience of one of more aspects of aspects of widening access, innovative education support, student experience and graduate outcomes.
- Extensive experience of crisis management support and incident resolution
- Demonstrable experience of effective financial management, including multi-million pound budgetary responsibility.
- Proven experience of successfully leading and managing a team to deliver a successful outcome/objectives to the benefit of an organisation.

Desirable

- Delivery experience of all aspects of widening access, innovative education support, student experience and graduate outcomes.
- Significant experience of building strong working networks with others in the field and using these to benefit an organisation.

How to apply

Please apply through Royal Holloway's online recruitment system at jobs.royalholloway.ac.uk by the closing date: 21 April 2023.

Interview date: 15 May 2023

For an informal discussion about the role please contact
Professor Julie Sanders, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, at: Julie.sanders@royalholloway.ac.uk



Royal Holloway, University of London
Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX
01784 434455
royalholloway.ac.uk