

Job Description

Job title:	Senior Systems Administrator
Directorate:	IT Services
Job type	Professional Services
Grade:	8
Accountable to:	Head of Hybrid Cloud
Purpose of the post	
The Senior Systems Administrator plays a pivotal role in delivering robust, secure, and innovative IT services within the University's Hybrid Cloud environment. Working collaboratively with the Hybrid Cloud team, this position ensures our platforms and services operate at peak performance, providing exceptional support and driving continuous improvement. As a subject matter expert in Microsoft technologies, you will lead the administration of the University's Microsoft 365 applications and tenancies, shaping service delivery and implementing best-in-class security practices across our hybrid Microsoft estate. Your expertise will guide the investigation, recommendation, and deployment of cutting-edge solutions that enhance user experience and safeguard our infrastructure. You will be accountable for the reliability and security of our Microsoft ecosystem, ensuring systems are thoughtfully designed and governed so they remain stable, secure, and resilient by default. This role is responsible for the proactive monitoring of Microsoft services, as well as contributing to automation, change management, and incident resolution. Beyond operational excellence, you will contribute strategic insights to evolve our services and processes. You will be responsible for the design and administration of Microsoft Entra ID, with a focus on secure, well-governed identity and access across our Microsoft 365 services. This includes authentication and Conditional Access, privileged access management, identity lifecycle and access governance, application and workload identities, and external user collaboration. The role emphasises sensible design, least-privilege access, and automation to ensure identity remains secure, resilient, and unobtrusive to end users. You will be responsible for the administration and evolution of our customer-facing Microsoft 365 services, including Exchange Online, OneDrive, SharePoint, Teams, and the Power Platform. This role focuses on ensuring these platforms are well-designed, secure, and scalable, delivering a reliable and consistent experience for users. Additionally, you will develop and share best-practice procedures, fostering knowledge transfer within the Hybrid Cloud team and the wider IT Services Directorate.	
Key Tasks	
1. Be a subject matter expert on the day to day running of the Microsoft 365 estate as well as security best practises based on our usage and userbase.	

2. Support the design, operation and governance of Microsoft Entra ID and hybrid identity services, including authentication, Conditional Access, privileged access, identity lifecycle management, and Entra Connect, ensuring secure access to Microsoft 365 and cloud services.
3. Build on the existing Microsoft 365 and infrastructure strategy, contributing to the development and implementation of improved service standards, with particular focus on SharePoint, OneDrive, and the Power Platform.
4. Support and develop core infrastructure applications and services, by optimising and continually monitoring usage of the data centres. Key services include Microsoft 365 applications, including Power Platform, SharePoint, OneDrive, user-facing apps previously known as Office, as well as Azure, Entra, and others.
5. Advise on emerging technologies and trends within the Microsoft ecosystem, identifying practical opportunities to improve services and user experience. This includes monitoring the Microsoft Roadmap and change notifications and applying this knowledge to Royal Holloway's configurations.
6. To undertake the routine monitoring of the performance of the HC infrastructure components for troubleshooting, pre-emptive problem identification and capacity-planning purposes, in particular Entra and AAD Connect.
7. When required, to participate in technical account management meetings for the services across the infrastructure area (Azure, Greenlake, AWS etc.).
8. To liaise with other Information Services and IT Service Delivery staff on issues relating to the HC infrastructure.
9. To support the development of, and ensure compliance with, applicable policies, procedures and working practices.
10. To take the technical lead role on various infrastructure projects (to be defined on an ongoing basis) providing leadership on the design, implementation, service transition and service improvement.
11. Advise on the use of emerging technologies, particularly in the Microsoft stack, and trends to make best practical use of new technologies.
12. To share knowledge and train other members of the IT team on technologies in the domain.
13. Understand some of the wider aspects of how the department and University work, often working with colleagues from across the organization.
14. Support in the management of the Hybrid Cloud hosting platforms (HPE Greenlake, VMware etc), ensuring that we are sized accordingly and monitor usage to scale up (or down) as required.
15. Ensure the efficient maintenance and operation of the HC infrastructure, including but not limited to, the on-premises and cloud hosted servers and applications, the hardware and operating systems of all production, test and development environments, backup and replication platforms, Enterprise traffic managers, Storage platforms, Identity and access management systems, communication and collaboration tools, Azure and AWS cloud tenants, M365 apps, Data Centre maintenance etc.

16. Any other duties, commensurate with the grade of the post.

Other duties and expectations

The duties listed above may be varied from time to time as dictated by the changing needs of the University. The post holder will also be expected to undertake additional duties as appropriate and as requested by their manager.

The post holder may be required to work occasional unsociable hours and be available to support incident response.

The post holder may be required to work at any of the locations at which the business of Royal Holloway is conducted.

Our Values

Advancing equity and inclusion is central to our identity as a University of Social Purpose, guided by our values of being Respectful, Innovative, Open, and Daring. We strive to build a fair and inclusive environment for all colleagues and students, where we challenge ourselves and others with integrity, and approach difference with understanding and kindness. Every member of our community is expected to treat others with dignity, work collaboratively across a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives, and contribute to a place where everyone can participate fully and feel valued.

Person Specification

Details on the qualifications, experience, skills, knowledge and abilities that are needed to fulfil this role are set out below.

Job Title: Senior Systems Administrator

Directorate: IT Services

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge, Education, Experience, Qualifications and Training		
Undergraduate degree or equivalent experience.	X	
Knowledge and experience of IT Service Delivery and Hybrid Cloud Infrastructure in support of large-scale business critical services and events.	X	
Knowledge of working with customers in an IT Service Environment.	X	
Deep working knowledge and experience of the Microsoft Azure cloud infrastructure platform, M365 applications, security best practices of a large organisation's cloud tenant, building and migrating on premise infrastructure and applications to the Cloud.	X	
Demonstrable experience designing, configuring, and governing Microsoft Entra ID and hybrid identity services, including authentication, Conditional Access, privileged access, identity lifecycle management, and integration with on-premises or cloud workloads.	X	
Significant hands-on experience administering and optimising Microsoft 365 services, including Exchange Online, SharePoint, OneDrive, Teams, and the Power Platform, ensuring secure, reliable, and user-focused delivery.	X	
Extensive experience of service management in the Hybrid Cloud area and specifically the transition of ICT Services and applications from on premise to the Cloud including Azure and AWS.		X
Understanding of the unique requirements for enterprise use of private cloud, hybrid cloud, and public cloud.	X	
Experience of working with IT change control.	X	
Inquisitive nature, eager to explore new concepts and approaches. Aptitude and interest to learn from a new environment and make an impact quickly.	X	

In depth knowledge and understanding of the HE sector and student life cycle.		X
Experience of development and innovation utilising Agile or iterative project techniques and methodologies.		X
Skills and Abilities		
Proven ability to work as part of team and support colleagues, as well as a readiness to work on own initiative and act pro-actively.	X	
Methodical approach to diagnosing and fixing problems.	X	
Excellent organisational skills and proven ability to work under pressure and prioritise conflicting demands.	X	
Proven ability to use creative problem-solving techniques.	X	
Effective verbal and written communication skills and the ability to explain complex technical concepts to a varied audience.	X	