

Universities UK is offering an exciting opportunity to be part of a busy political affairs team to support our political engagement and parliamentary campaigning activities.

With the UK's exit from the EU on the horizon, and a government review of post-18 education and funding published, the work of the political affairs team is at the forefront of UUK's priorities for the year ahead.

The Political Affairs Officer will bring experience from Westminster/Whitehall to play a significant role in building and maintaining relationships with politicians, civil servants, think tanks and other key stakeholders to ensure that UUK's strategic priorities and activities inform influential audiences in the most effective way. The post-holder will have previous political/public affairs experience, be proactive in identifying opportunities and offer advice on key political developments, be able to demonstrate and be able to communicate confidently with a range of stakeholders.

Political Affairs Officer (Operational 1 level)

Job Description

- Informing and advising UUK senior staff on political and parliamentary developments relevant to UUK priorities
- Be the political lead for some UUK policy programmes, including coordinating work across press, social media and policy colleagues and writing strategic communications plans
- Stakeholder mapping of political targets for UUK influencing
- Leading on briefings for parliamentarians ahead of parliamentary debates and oral questions
- Prepare briefings on key political and policy issues for senior UUK staff and vice-chancellors ahead of political meetings and events
- Administration of and attendance at UUK political affairs events, including party conferences
- Day-to-day correspondence with parliamentarians and their offices
- Manage relationships with various stakeholders, including MPs and researchers
- Support the team in compiling items for UUK newsletters such as the Political Affairs Digest
- Support UUK's secretariat role for the All Party Parliamentary Universities Group

- The post-holder will be part of the Communications Group, line-managed by the Assistant Director. They will be expected to work as part of a cross-functional team on high-priority projects and may be asked to carry out other duties in support of communications/campaigning priorities.

Person specification

- Excellent project management skills and ability to prioritise effectively
- Strong time management and organisational skills
- Excellent communication skills both verbally and in writing
- An excellent understanding of the political environment in UK
- An ability to summarise complex information and policy ideas in ways that are suitable for political audiences, in collaboration with other staff
- IT literate – (knowledge of MS Office and databases)
- Ability to balance competing demands in a fast-paced work environment whilst maintaining quality and attention to detail
- Can-do attitude and willingness to take on additional responsibilities as required
- A demonstrable interest in, and knowledge of, UK political affairs and the higher education sector

Person Specification

Essential/ Desirable	QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING	ASSESSED
	A. WORK BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE	
<i>Essential</i>	Experience of working in a political, campaigning or communications environment in Whitehall or Westminster	<i>Interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Knowledge and experience of how Parliament works, its processes, working in a political environment, and engagement with parliamentarians and influencing government.	<i>Application form/ interview</i>
	B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED	
<i>Essential</i>	Extremely high standard of written English and experience including drafting letters, newsletters, and briefings for a range of audiences	<i>Application form / interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Excellent oral communication. Ability to present confidently in internal and external meetings and to respond to enquiries.	<i>Interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Confident in administering events, from arranging invites to catering, and speaker briefings.	<i>Application form/interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Be highly organised and well planned with proven experience of strategic coordination of people, information, diary management and relationships.	<i>Interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Ability to provide proactive and timely support within and across different teams on several projects at once. Must be capable of prioritising own workload to ensure key deadlines are met.	<i>Application form/Interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Ability to manage and maintain key information and databases such as contact lists.	<i>Interview</i>

C. SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED		
<i>Desirable</i>	Knowledge and experience of the higher education sector and policy development.	<i>Interview</i>
<i>Desirable</i>	Experience or knowledge of working with other parliaments/national assemblies	<i>Interview</i>
D . PERSONAL QUALITIES		
<i>Essential</i>	Flexible to the needs of the organisation, including attendance at party conferences, evening and breakfast events when required.	<i>Interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Ability to secure results and willingly tackles demanding tasks.	<i>Application form/ interview</i>
<i>Essential</i>	Ability to work under pressure in a calm, professional and efficient manner.	<i>Interview</i>