

# Policy Officer

Recruitment pack

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## A message from our CEO, Vivienne Stern

Universities UK (UUK) is the collective voice of universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We bring them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

My journey at UUK started as a Parliamentary Officer and I have progressed through the organisation from there, with the opportunity to work across a range of different teams, up to becoming CEO. This is testament to the fact that at UUK we support our people to succeed, helping us achieve our ambitious goals as an organisation as a result.

At UUK we believe that supporting our people to succeed involves prioritising wellbeing at work and being an inclusive employer. We employ a total of just under 160 staff across the UUK Group. In our 2023 staff survey, I am proud that we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

I am continually inspired by the passion and talent of the team at UUK. If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and its impact on wider society, then, in my opinion, there is no better place to do it than here.

# Who are we?

At Universities UK, we harness the power of the UK's universities and create the conditions for them to thrive. We are the collective voice of 142 universities, bringing them together to pursue a common cause: thriving universities, serving society.

This mission forms the core of our [strategic plan](#) which runs to 2030 and sets out our ambitions for the sector. Our influence, convening power, and insight will enable our universities to:

- transform the lives of more people from the UK and around the world through high-quality education.
- drive greater growth and prosperity through the knowledge and skills they generate, creating places that allow communities to flourish.
- be globally competitive centres of research, at the forefront of making ground-breaking discoveries with the power to change our world.

To help them achieve this we will:

- secure sustainable funding that enables our universities to serve society better.
- build trust and confidence that our universities are a national asset to be proud of and are acting in the best interests of society.



# Role description

**Post title:** Policy Officer

**Responsible to:** Head of Research Policy

**Salary:** £34,646 – £38,496 (dependent on experience)

**Location:** London

**The Team:** Policy Group

**Job Summary:** We are looking for a person that is passionate about making a difference to join the Universities UK policy team. We shape the future of higher education, which changes the lives of students, graduates, researchers, university staff and local communities.

Working within a wider team structure, with support from managers, this role will work to increase the reach and impact of Universities UK's policy and advocacy work on research and development (R&D), including through quantitative and qualitative analysis that provides insight and supports a strong evidence base.

**Who we are:** UUK is the collective voice of universities in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Our mission is to help UK universities be the best in the world, through their research and teaching, and the positive impact they have locally, nationally, and globally. UUK's policy group is a team of around 25 staff working in multi-disciplinary teams to influence policies that matter to universities.

We combine working from home with attending UUK's London Office at Woburn House, 20 Tavistock Square (near Euston station) to network and build relationships both online and in person. UUK's policy group encourages office-based working on Tuesdays and Thursdays for in person meetings.

## Main responsibilities:

The Policy Officer role undertakes research, analysis, as well as member and stakeholder engagement to provide insight, develop the evidence base and create policy solutions using a wide range of intelligence and data, and their understanding of the latest developments and the political environment. Your work will directly influence policy decisions and shape the future of higher education.

The postholder will have proven analytical skills, will be passionate about providing insight, with a desire for their work to have impact. No day is a typical, working with the Head of Research Policy, you may be called upon to analyse data to address emerging policy issues, lead a project to support our members, or work with our external communications team in responding to queries.

- You will be applying skills in analysis, research and relationship-building to policy challenges by working collaboratively with the Head of Research Policy and your team, using data-driven approaches to explore issues affecting universities, their staff, and students, to demonstrate their broader impact on society and the economy.
- You will be identifying and solving problems, and generating insight to inform UUK policy work, thorough gathering and interpreting evidence to explore potential options and solutions, working closely with colleagues to ensure a robust analytical foundation for policy work.
- You will be delivering high-quality outputs through strong attention to detail and accuracy, and produce clear, accessible content such as briefings, data visualisations, and responses to media enquiries.
- You will be leading on sharing knowledge and developments in your own area of policy —such as changes in data collections or new research —proactively communicating relevant updates to your team.
- You will be managing multiple priorities by balancing work across different policy issues, using strong written and verbal communication skills to present complex information clearly to non-technical audiences, with support from your team and the Head of Research Policy.

## **Compliance and governance**

- to take responsibility for own health and safety in line with UUK H&S policy and current legislation and undertake such responsibilities as they relate to any employees, volunteers or contractors for which the post is responsible.
- to ensure compliance with UUK's internal procedures and all external legal requirements.

## **Personal effectiveness**

- to take responsibility as far as is practical for own personal development to ensure that personal knowledge and skills are updated to ensure effectiveness in meeting work objectives.

## **General**

- to show respect to colleagues, external partners and stakeholders, and to understand and adhere to UUK's Equal Opportunity policy, UUK Staff Standards of Conduct, and UUK's organisational capabilities.
- to work collegially, and to support all the teams which the post has contact with, in achieving the organisation's objectives.
- any other duties commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the necessary experience and/or training.
- This job description will be reviewed and amended in the light of changing professional demands. A job description is not a rigid or inflexible document but acts to provide guidelines to the duties expected while in post.

Last reviewed: *April 2026*

# Person specification

## Essential skills:

Essential skills	Assessment
<p><b>Critical analysis skills</b></p> <p>Education to degree level, or equivalent</p>	Application form
<p><b>Analytical skills</b></p> <p>Ability to analyse data using appropriate methods, to draw meaningful insights, identify trends, and inform decisions. Experience of, or a willingness to, learn new techniques for presenting and analysing data.</p>	Application form, Interview, Test
<p><b>Policy skills</b></p> <p>Ability to understand the wider public policy environment, identify the motivations and needs of different stakeholders, and policy issues, and apply this to your analysis.</p>	Application form, Interview, Test
<p><b>Communication skills</b></p> <p>Excellent written and oral communication skills, with the ability to tailor communications and explain technical findings and analysis to a wide range of audiences, in a clear and accessible manner.</p>	Application form, Interview, Test
<p><b>Collaboration skills</b></p> <p>Ability to build positive and constructive relationships with individuals across a</p>	Application form, Interview

range of skills and seniority, both within and outside of the organisation.

**Managing projects and workload**

Application form, Interview

Ability to manage own workload across projects, prioritise, and deliver to deadlines that can change.

Understanding of, and commitment to, equality, diversity and inclusion as set out in UUK's Equal Opportunity policy.

Application form, Interview

**Desirable skills:**

**Desirable skills**

**Assessed by**

**Influencing skills**

Application form, Interview

Knowledge or experience of working with stakeholders to influence policy.

# Working at UUK: Benefits

If you care about higher education, its ability to transform people's lives and impact wider society, joining our team is a great opportunity.

Universities play a huge part in our everyday lives, and we want to help them make even more of a difference. We bring together leaders of UK universities to discuss higher education issues and represent and campaign on their behalf to the government, business, the media and beyond.

People drive our success, and we value everyone's work.

Universities UK operates a hybrid working framework involving the opportunity to work from home and in the office. There will be a small number of roles where employees will be required to work from an office, but typically the majority of employees will be able to work remotely on average 60% of their working week. All employees are welcome to use their contractual office for their whole working week if that is their preference.

*"I joined Universities UK three months after leaving university, and I immediately felt so welcomed and supported. I've been given opportunities to develop new skills, get involved in such a variety of interesting projects and work with colleagues across the organisation. It's a really friendly place to work and I feel trusted and valued to put my own views and ideas into practice."*

Sofia Henderson, Senior Content Producer

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT STAFF BENEFITS AND WELLBEING, VISIT OUR [WORKING AT UUK PAGE](#)**

# Staff benefits

## Leave



- 27 days annual leave rising to 30 days after 3 years' service and 32 days after 5 years' service plus bank holidays.
- 4 closure days between Christmas and New year.
- 2 days paid leave each year for volunteering activities

## Well being



- Access to 24 hour 7 day a week Employee Assistant Programme which extends access to close family.
- Virtual Medical Care – 24 hour access to GP consultations.
- Mental Health First Aiders.
- Staff network groups.

## Financial wellbeing



- Interest free season ticket loans after 6 months.
- Staff benefit fund loan scheme
- 'learn for you' – claim **£100 each** year tax free towards hobbies and activities outside of work.
- Funding support for continuing development, up to 2/3 of course costs paid with the remaining funded through an interest free loan recovered through monthly pay.
- Generous pension scheme (USS or SAUL depending on role).
- Salary sacrifice Cyclescheme.
- Salary progression plans.
- a £45 contribution every two years towards eye tests and the purchase of glasses where required.

## Home working



- Hybrid Working policy – 40% of time averaged over a month to be spent in the office or meeting face to face with stakeholders, allowing 60% of time to be worked from home.
- Support for homeworking set up.

## External schemes



- Charity worker discounts.
- Apple hardware discount scheme.
- Access to Able Futures for mental wellbeing support.

## Our office facilities



- Tea/coffee/milk provided for refreshments.
- Kitchens available in all offices with access to fridges and microwaves.
- Shower facilities available (London and Cardiff).
- Cycle storage facilities.



# Equality, diversity and inclusion

We want every member of staff to feel that they belong, can be themselves and that their opinion counts.

We can only reach our ambitious goals with multi-skilled, multi-experienced teams. Different perspectives make our work better.

What unites us is a passion for higher education and the enthusiasm to spread the message about the positive impacts UK universities have on our society.

We are committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and do not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership. We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join UUK.

## An equal, inclusive and diverse place to work

Equality, diversity and inclusion help create new ideas and approaches to teaching, learning and research. With that in mind, we're building a culture where difference is valued. We're constantly evolving the programmes and tools that help all employees grow and manage rewarding careers.

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT UNIVERSITIES UK, READ OUR [INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN](#)**

# Staff engagement and wellbeing at work

## Staff engagement

In our 2023 staff survey, we scored higher than similar organisations for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect, and that 86 per cent felt proud to work for UUK.

## Wellbeing at work

We care about the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff. Having open and honest conversations about mental health is important to us. Our commitment to staff wellbeing includes:

- Training some members of staff to become mental health first aiders so they are there for colleagues who need support and advice.
- Raising awareness by recognising Mental Health Awareness Week with external speakers, opportunities to come together and talk and take part in activities
- Training for managers and all staff on mental health awareness
- Employee Assistance support helpline.



Universities UK is the collective voice of 142 universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our mission is to create the conditions for

UK universities to be the best in the world; maximising their positive impact locally, nationally and globally.

Universities UK acts on behalf of universities, represented by their heads of institution



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