

# Head of Media

Recruitment pack

# Contents

---

A message from our CEO, Vivienne Stern	2
Who are we?	3
Role description	4
Person specification	7
Working at UUK: Benefits	10
Equality, diversity and inclusion	12
Staff engagement and wellbeing at work	13

---



## 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:** Head of Media

**Responsible to:** Deputy Director of Communications and Campaigns

**Salary:** £60,533 – £67,256 per annum (D Regional) (dependant on experience)

**Location:** London

**The team:** Communications

**Job summary:** UUK is the collective voice for 142 universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. As world leaders in research, teaching and innovation, our members are vital to the government's growth and opportunity missions.

This is a pivotal moment for universities, working with its members, Universities UK is undertaking a major programme of work to shift the dial on perceptions of higher education over the next four years. The post-holder will spearhead proactive media outreach for our **Future Universities** programme, communicating the value that universities deliver across the country. Our **Head of Media** is a senior role within our Communications Directorate, overseeing a busy and impactful media team, leading our presence across print, broadcast, podcast and digital media outlets.

## Main responsibilities:

- Lead a proactive media strategy for the **Future Universities** programme, developing and executing a rolling news and features agenda that secures high-impact national coverage in print, broadcast, digital and podcast media, with clear success metrics aligned to UUK's strategic goals.
- Own UUK's rapid response function - monitoring the news environment in real time, anticipating reputational risks and providing fast, authoritative lines across all channels including social media, ensuring UUK's voice is heard quickly on breaking higher education stories.
- Be the main link with university communications teams on reactive issues, coordinating the sharing of messaging and approaches.
- Cultivate and maintain a strong network of journalists, editors, broadcast and podcast producers across national news, education, politics and consumer media. Ensuring UUK is a go-to source for authoritative comment and exclusive stories.
- Work with colleagues to identify and train spokespeople on key issues, providing high quality briefings.
- Develop strong partnerships with external stakeholders for media campaigning, building coalitions on important issues of common interest.
- Work closely with the Campaigns & Content team to integrate media outreach with owned content - identifying moments to amplify coverage, developing shareable assets, and ensuring the Future Universities narrative lands consistently across all channels.
- Lead, develop and inspire the media team, fostering a culture of creativity, pace and continuous learning. Be a strong and supportive manager to the Media Manager.
- Manage press office suppliers and budgets, making sure services provided represent value for money, and are delivered on time and to budget.
- Work with the Director and Deputy Director of Communications and Campaigns to set and regularly review media KPIs, evaluate campaign and programme performance, and continuously improve ways of working.

## **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: *June 2026*

# Person specification

## Essential skills:

Essential skills	Assessment
<p><b>A. WORK BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p>Extensive experience working in a senior national media or press office role, with a demonstrable track record of landing high profile proactive coverage across national outlets.</p>	Application form
<p><b>A. WORK BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p>Proven ability leading media for a major campaign or policy agenda, delivering high-quality media relations that shift public perception and engage diverse audiences.</p>	Application form/ interview
<p><b>A. WORK BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p>Educated to degree level.</p>	Application form
<p><b>B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Excellent written and oral communication skills with the ability to write high-quality copy for a range of different audiences and media outlets.</p>	Application form/ interview
<p><b>B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Experience of coordinating rapid and effective responses on high-profile issues, co-ordinating responses in a multiple stakeholder environment.</p>	Application form/ interview

<p><b>B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Ability to mobilise resources - including external partners and media - to support organisational priorities and to deliver results.</p>	Interview
<p><b>B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Experience of using creativity to solve problems and innovating to increase the impact of communications outputs.</p>	Interview
<p><b>B. SKILLS AND APTITUDES REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Budget management experience and ability to secure good value for money and high quality work from agencies and other suppliers.</p>	Application form
<p><b>C. SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Deep understanding of the modern media landscape, including the role of podcasts, newsletters, audio and video content alongside traditional print and broadcast.</p>	Interview
<p><b>C. SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED</b></p> <p>An extensive and active network of media contacts across national news, features, education and politics desks, podcast producers and digital platforms, with evidence of building and maintaining productive relationships with journalists at all levels.</p>	Application form/ interview
<p><b>D. PERSONAL QUALITIES</b></p> <p>An inspirational manager and evidence of coaching to raise performance levels at an individual and team level.</p>	Application form/ interview

<p><b>D. PERSONAL QUALITIES</b></p> <p>Resilience and ability to secure results and willingly tackle demanding tasks.</p>	<p>Interview</p>
<p><b>D. PERSONAL QUALITIES</b></p> <p>Ability to build relationships and trust with a range of internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Application form/ interview</p>
<p><b>D. PERSONAL QUALITIES</b></p> <p>Determination to achieve excellent results, evidence of perseverance despite significant obstacles and desire for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Interview</p>
<p>Demonstratable experience of embedding inclusivity into your work.</p>	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>

### **Desirable skills:**

<b>Desirable skills</b>	<b>Assessed by</b>
<p><b>C. SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED</b></p> <p>Knowledge of the higher education sector or demonstrable ability to get up to speed quickly in a complex policy environment.</p>	<p>Application form/ interview</p>

# 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



Woburn House  
20 Tavistock Square  
London, WC1H 9HQ

☎ +44 (0)20 7419 4111

✉ [info@universitiesuk.ac.uk](mailto:info@universitiesuk.ac.uk)

🖱 [universitiesuk.ac.uk](http://universitiesuk.ac.uk)

🐦 📘 📷 @UniversitiesUK

