Universities UK

NOVEMBER 2026

Policy Adviser

12-month fixed-term post

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 around 160 staff across the UUK Group. In our 2025 staff survey, we scored highly for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect. We also have active staff networks, an equality, diversity and inclusion champions group, and mental health first aiders, who all play an important role in making UUK a friendly, safe and inclusive place to work.

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 Adviser

Responsible to: Head of Analysis

Salary: £45,405 – £51,825 (dependant on experience)

Post type: Full-time, 12 month fixed term post

Location: London

The Team: Policy Group

Job summary: You will have strong skills in quantitative and qualitative analysis and research, and will work in our analysis team across a range of areas, to ensure UUK's work is grounded in robust evidence, sharp insights, and accessible analysis that resonates with decision-makers. Working with the Head of Analysis, you will take responsibility for driving forward UUK work on measuring the value of Higher Education.

You will be enthusiastic about developing new ideas to influence key stakeholders and decision makers and be creative in approaching policy challenges. You will enjoy working in a fast-paced environment and responding to political developments, with an ability to work on multiple projects at any one time.

Working arrangements: Universities UK operates a hybrid working framework involving the opportunity to work from home and in the office. Typically most employees will be able to work remotely on average 60% of their working week. This is a UK based role and all employees are welcome to use their contractual office for their whole working week if that is their preference. The role is offered on a full-time basis of 35 hours per week, but we are very happy to consider candidates looking for a pro rata 0.8 FTE (four day week) or other working patterns.

Main responsibilities:

- You will work alongside members of our analysis team and policy group across a range of policy areas, to ensure UUK's work is grounded in robust evidence, sharp insights, and accessible analysis that resonates with decision-makers.

- Working with the Head of Analysis, you will also take responsibility for driving forward UUK work on measuring the value of higher education. This will involve qualitative and quantitative work on understanding and enhancing the evidence base on the value of higher education.

- You will be enthusiastic about developing new ideas and be creative in approaching evidence and policy challenges. You will enjoy working in a fast-paced environment and responding to political developments, with an ability to work on multiple projects at any one time.

- You will be working on more than one evidence and policy problem at a time and so will juggle your workload across a variety of issues.

- You will be creating content to communicate your ideas through writing blogs and briefings to key stakeholders and decision-makers, responding to media enquiries and questions from Policy colleagues.

- You will be presenting to and networking with key players in higher education and beyond across government, academia, industry and think tanks.

- No day is a typical day – you may be called upon to deal with a new development as instructed by a senior member of the policy team.

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: *November 2026*

Person specification

Essential skills:

Essential skills	Assessment
Education to degree level, or equivalent	Application form
Critical analysis skills You will have strong skills in quantitative and qualitative analysis and the ability to undertake analysis, and review research, to enhance the evidence base for UUK policy work.	Application form, Interview, Test
Policy skills Ability to understand the wider policy environment, identify the motivations and needs of different stakeholders, and the policy issues.	Application form, Interview, Test
Communication skills Excellent written and oral communication skills, with the ability to tailor communication and explain research findings to a wide range of audiences.	Application form, Interview, Test
Collaboration skills Ability to build positive and constructive relationships with individuals across a range of skills and seniority, both within and outside of the organisation.	Application form, Interview

Managing projects and workload Ability to manage a workload across multiple projects, prioritise, and deliver to deadlines that can change.	Application form, Interview
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	Assessment
An interest in and/or experience of higher education.	Application form, Interview
An interest in and/or experience of measuring and communicating the value of higher education and research	Application form, Interview

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.

"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 (England and Wales).
- 26 days annual leave rising to 29 days after 3 years' service and 31 days after 5 years' service plus bank holidays (Scotland).
- 4 closure days between Christmas and New year.
- 2 days paid leave each year for volunteering activities.
- Up to 5 days paid carers leave in a year.

Wellbeing

- 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 and physio.
- 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 sacrifice Electric Car Scheme.
- 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 and furniture/equipment loan for the life of your employment with us.

External schemes

- As employees of a registered charity you will be able to access:
  - Charity worker discounts
  - The Company Shop
  - Tickets for Good.
- Access to Able Futures for mental wellbeing support.
- Apple hardware discount scheme.

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 2025 staff survey, we scored highly for caring about our employees and treating them with fairness and respect. We also have active staff networks, an equality, diversity and inclusion champions group, and mental health first aiders, who all play an important role in making UUK a friendly, safe and inclusive place to work.

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

Universities UK

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