

UHR Communications Officer

Job Description

0.5 FTE

We are...

Professional HE Services (PHES) is an umbrella company for membership organisations in the UK Higher Education sector. PHES is the corporate “parent” to seven Special Interest Organisations (SIOs), and between them, these organisations support UK university staff who work in the areas of HR, estates, facilities management, legal, internal audit, commercial and campus services, finance, procurement and strategic planning. We currently employ 38 staff across the UK.

We are looking for...

A part-time (0.5) **Communications Officer** to join our team and lead on communications for UHR, which is the [professional association for HR and related staff](#) in UK universities. The role is part-time and will need to be carried out across most weekdays, although some flexibility will be possible, and e.g. concentrating most working hours during school or university term time may be an option.

You will write innovative and informative communications to members and external stakeholders and partners via digital platforms and social media. You may also take the lead or work with other staff on external consultations or internal surveys, collating members’ views and draft responses on behalf of UHR.

The successful candidate will also proactively position UHR in appropriate media, looking for opportunities to showcase good news stories and celebrate sector success. You will act as public relations manager between UHR, its stakeholders, national press and trade publications.

The post-holder reports to the UHR Executive Director. This role has no line management responsibilities, but you will need to give some guidance to other colleagues who are working on projects with you. The role is home-based and could be performed anywhere in the UK, with occasional travel and overnight stays required, e.g. for PHES or UHR team meetings which are usually held in Loughborough.

You need to be...

A **member-focused**, well organised, **communications expert**. Someone who can produce **engaging online and written content**, targeting a variety of audiences.

Because you will need to...

- Create online content in the form of news articles, blogs and resource pages.
- Plan UHR's social media activity, posting and responding where appropriate.
- Collate and write content for electronic (and occasionally print) newsletters, reports and other communications.
- Produce graphic design and artwork for websites, social media and other communication channels as required.
- Have strong marketing skills across all communication channels, including but not limited to LinkedIn and Twitter/X, UHR's accounts on which you will manage, so that you can increase member and external partner engagement.
- Have a writing style which is clear, engaging, accurate and highly professional, producing copy to tight deadlines and which you can adapt to the 'voice' of different publications, or the style of different audiences.
- Have overall responsibility for UHR's website content and 'brand', including regularly and proactively reviewing the content for accuracy and timeliness, liaising with other staff as necessary.
- Manage the communications and promotion of our awards, including with entrants, sponsors and encouraging participation and dissemination of learning.
- Display excellent organisational skills, to lead on your projects and be a partner in others.
- Manage several projects at the same time.
- Be highly accurate and pay attention to detail.
- Store all work systematically on our intranet so that colleagues can access and share this in your absence.
- Work with colleagues to analyse usage data, engagement scores and other information.
- Provide general communication support and work with any communications working groups within UHR and PHES.

Experienced at dealing with press, briefing journalists and ensure the **correct messages** are communicated.

Because in conjunction with colleagues you will need to...

- Deal with media enquiries, briefing journalists and creating narrative for release. You will liaise with colleagues and senior HR staff in our member universities to ensure messages resonate with the audience and convey the correct messages.
- Be able to spot warning signs from challenging enquiries and be able to manage them effectively to protect and build the reputation of both UHR and people management within HE.
- Demonstrate experience of building effective working relationships with journalists, colleagues and other stakeholders.
- Develop media handling plans.
- Deal promptly with media enquiries, alerting colleagues and, where appropriate, formulating responses and logging them centrally.
- Display good interpersonal and relationship management skills.

Someone who can **maximise the impact of our events** through targeted, time specific communications.

Because you will need to...

- Support learning and development and other events (e.g. award ceremonies) ensuring that the appropriate marketing and communications channels are used to maximise participation and attendance.
- Ensure every conference and event or activity has a communications plan and a press/pr plan where appropriate.
- Be proactive and innovative in use of social media and other platforms and methods to ensure members and external audiences are aware of our activities and engage with them.

A great **team player** who is happy working in a **small team** and willing to share ideas. But you will also need to be a **self-starter** to get the job done.

Because you will need to...

- Be educated to degree level or equivalent.
- Have previous experience in a Communications role including writing press releases and reports for publication and managing social media channels.
- Have a flexible approach to team working - on occasions, there will be a need to work outside normal office hours, for example when organising or attending conferences/events.
- Be able to work without close supervision, and able to accept input from others.
- Have extensive working knowledge of standard office IT products including some graphic design software and ideally, some experience of using generative AI for writing and image design.
- Have a positive, persuasive and diplomatic manner. Although an inclusive and conciliatory manner is needed to work in a diverse membership organisation and a small team, the post-holder must have the strength of character and skill to confront under-performance of any project participant at an early stage and in a constructive manner.
- Undertake any other duties as directed by the UHR Executive Director.
- Support and collaborate with colleagues in all PHES organisations as required.
- Commit always to observing the organisation's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

You might also have...

- Experience of working in the higher educational sector
- Experience of working in a membership organisation
- Experience of stakeholder engagement with national press

We will offer...

- A 0.5 FTE post, working from home.
- A competitive annual salary at **Grade 6 £29,605 - £37,099 pro rata** dependent on qualifications and experience.
- A defined contribution pension scheme with **7.5% employee and 16% employer** contribution rates, together with life insurance.
- **30 days' holiday pro rata** plus bank holidays and discretionary days' office closure.
- Support for **CPD** and appropriate training.
- This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.