



1 Advertisement

Post Title: Head of Employee Policy and Relations

School/department: Human Resources

Hours: Full Time hours up to a maximum of 1 FTE / 37.5 hours

Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

Contract: Permanent

Reference:9253

Salary: starting at £53,353 to £61,823 per annum.

Placed on: 29th July 2022

Closing date: 17th August 2022 Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

Expected interview date: To be confirmed

Expected start date: To be confirmed

We are entering an exciting period at the University of Sussex, with a new Vice Chancellor, Sasha Roseneil, and a revamped Human Resources Executive team. We are in the process of positioning ourselves to provide the very best employee experience for all our colleagues and we are seeking an experienced Employee Relations and Policy professional to join us on the HR Exec team. We are looking for an evidenced track record of:

- Driving successful Employment Policy change, establishment and implementation
- Acting as subject matter expert and trusted advisor to the senior leadership team, on best practice within the sector and employment legislation;
- Working with trade unions and other stakeholders, fostering relationships to enable timely, jointly agreed policy change
- Supporting the achievement of all organisational change priorities;
- Building methodologies and capability for conducting employment legislation impact assessments;
- Overseeing and providing structural integrity for performance management,
- Providing HR advice and guidance and formal casework management.

Please contact Melanie Bywell, m.bywell@sussex.ac.uk for informal enquiries.

For full details and how to apply see our [vacancies page](#)

The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

Please note: The University requires that work undertaken for the University is performed from the UK.

2. The School / Division

Please find further information regarding the school/division [at HR Pages](#)

3 Job description

Job Title:	Head of Employee Policy and Relations
Grade:	Grade 9
School/Division:	Human Resources
Location:	Sussex House/Hybrid
Responsible to:	Deputy Director of Human Resources (DDHR)
Direct reports:	HR Business Partner ER & Policy
Key contacts:	Heads of Schools; University Leadership Team, Professional Services Directors, Heads of Professional Services, Trade Union representatives, HR colleagues, staff and their representatives across the University.

Role description:

In line with the HR Strategy, this role will lead on the updating and creation of all employment policies. This will involve the project management and driving of policy change, and managing the process of writing across the wider HR team, quality assurance and getting formal approval through the appropriate governance routes.

The role will also prioritise with HR and university senior leadership, trade unions and other key stakeholders the timing of policy review and implementation; be a subject matter expert and lead and advise senior leadership on best practice within the sector to ensure The University of Sussex has best in sector employment policy and practices in place with a key focus on enabling the Inclusive Sussex Strategy. In addition to this the Head of Employee Policy and

Relations will also be involved in supporting the achievement of all organisational change priorities; building methodologies and capability for conducting employment legislation impact assessments; overseeing and providing structural integrity for performance management, HR advice and guidance and formal casework management.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Provide leadership across HR teams in areas of functional responsibility, engendering a culture of continuous improvement.
2. Responsible for setting the standards of delivery in areas of responsibility and ensuring appropriate resources are available with the DDHR.
3. Set direction and vision for Employment Policy and Relations ensuring resulting policies are in alignment with strategic objectives as set out in the university strategy and people strategy.
4. Work in partnership with other internal and external stakeholders to ensure strategic alignment of service and substantial interaction with senior stakeholders (VC and UEG) in order to ensure policy fulfils university strategic ambition – balancing sustainability and legislative compliance with ambitions.
5. Develop and deliver the operational plan for the functional accountabilities of HR Policy, Employee Relations and Industrial relations strategy.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Departmental Leadership

- 1.1 Provide leadership across a number of HR teams, setting standards of service, targets and objectives
- 1.2 Ensure the appropriate allocation of resources to achieve targets and objectives including the selection, induction, performance management and development of direct report
- 1.3 Set departmental the direction and vision ensuring service and departmental culture are in strategic alignment with the institution.
- 1.4 Support the development of others, both direct reports and wider HR team, providing leadership and coaching in area of expertise
- 1.5 Foster an ethos of continuous improvement

2. Service Delivery

- 2.1 Working within overall university policy and procedure, ensure the effective management of responsibilities in the area of expertise. Plan and allocate resources to support the achievement of departmental targets and objectives.
- 2.2 Development of departmental/functional strategic plans
- 2.3 Ensure effective service delivery within area of responsibility.
- 2.4 Provide reports and other communication media internally and externally as appropriate. To undertake analysis, interpretation and presentation of complex and conflicting information to inform decisions related to subject area
- 2.5 Identify critical issues when resolving problems particularly where there is complex or competing information and use university strategy and objectives to make decisions.

3. Strategy and Planning

- 3.1 Based on a broad and deep set of knowledge and experience, set strategic direction in areas of responsibility.
- 3.2 Shape policy development and provide guidance on strategic agenda
- 3.3 Ensure appropriate governance is in place for area of expertise.

4. Customers and Stakeholders

- 4.1 Proactively engage with internal and external stakeholders, colleagues or students to ensure the effective delivery of strategic objectives, initiate and develop relationships, providing analysis of data and information to inform decisions as necessary, showing appropriate sensitivity when needed.
- 4.2 Persuade, influence and negotiate as appropriate to further the objectives of the University

5. Policy

- 5.1 Undertake full review of and lead on consultation (with all relevant stakeholders) for changes to employee policies to ensure internal relevance and practicability, alignment with best practice in sector, and legislative compliance.
- 5.2 Monitor and review employment law changes and external best practice, particularly within the HE sector in order to initiate, recommend and advise on future opportunities and act as subject matter expert on employment relations.
- 5.3 Work with the Assistant Director of Culture, Equality and Inclusion to ensure policies are developed in order to reinforce and provide structure for the Inclusive Sussex strategy.
- 5.4 Provide guidance and interpretation to management on the application of policy and procedures to the HR Director, DDHR and wider HR team

6. Employee Relations

- 6.1 Work alongside Senior HR Business Partner and HR Business Partners to ensure consistency of advice, and be point of escalation for complex collective and individual disputes.
- 6.2 Coach and advise key HR Business Partners on employment relations issues.
- 6.3 Work alongside the Deputy Director of HR and Senior HR Business Partner to upskill and elevate advisory capability within the HR BP team to enable proactive partnering.
- 6.4 Training and upskilling OD and HR Business Partners to develop a learning and development management framework for effective employee relations in order to ensure full community engagement in the employee life cycle, including understanding

skills gaps and producing training frameworks/material to address these.

- 6.5 Act as point of escalation for provision of coaching to senior leaders within the university to upskill in order to achieve optimal employee relations.
- 6.6 Championing the use of the Case Management System and leading in identifying trends in order to make targeted interventions.
- 6.7 Work alongside Senior HR Business Partner to improve the process of recruiting and training University staff to conduct investigations and sit on panels.

7. Industrial Relations

- 7.1 In line with the HR Strategy and the University Strategic Plan; supporting the senior leadership team and Director of HR with employee relations initiatives and projects within the organisation to improve individual and collective performance and engagement.
- 7.2 Support on all negotiations, alongside the university executive group, Director and Deputy Director of HR, with recognised unions within the university, in order to develop and evolve sustainable relationships.

To carry out any other duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities whenever reasonably instructed.

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 level of responsibility entailed.

INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Leading and line managing one staff member.
- Responsible for the achievement of operational and strategic KPI(s) as agreed.
- The post holder reports to the Deputy Director of HR, but enjoys a defined level of autonomy and responsibility to enable the post holder to manage their own work and that of their reporting managers to achieve their agreed objectives. The role holder also supports the senior leadership team of their Division to achieve the strategic and operational goals of the University, Professional Services & their Division. The post holder is expected to work collaboratively across the University and with key stakeholders to deliver single team working that efficiently and effectively supports the achievement of those goals and objectives.
- Support achievement of the Division's/Unit's/School's compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory compliance obligations, including (but not limited to): UKVI, Health & Safety, the Prevent Duty, data protection, Competition and Markets Authority requirements and equal opportunities, as appropriate to the grade and role. Additionally, to promote good practice in relation to University policy, procedure and guidance in relation to those compliance matters in respect of students, staff and other relevant parties.

- Balance effectiveness and cost-efficiency in the management of the budgets accountable for, demonstrating compliance with Value for Money and Return on Investment principles to support the University's strategic aim to achieve a world-class standard of teaching and research by managing our resources effectively and efficiently

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Educated to degree level, or other equivalent qualification (CIPD Level 7), or relevant level of experience, as appropriate
2. Proficiency in Employment Policy, Legislation and Employee Relations, with broad and deep knowledge and understanding of current trends and legal requirements, particularly in the HE sector.
3. Experience of building the relationships with recognised trades unions and staff networks to facilitate change and positive industrial relations and partnership working. Leading and being involved in negotiating IR approaches for a large and complex organisation, engaging positively even during times of dispute or under challenging circumstances, working with resilience under pressure.
4. Proven experience of horizon scanning to develop, lead and implement successful employee relations strategies which compliment strategic imperatives and an ability to assess potential problems and risk to make sound judgements around issues that may have an adverse effect on the organisation from an ER perspective.
5. Highly effective leadership skills with the ability to motivate others to achieve.
6. Excellent oral and written communication skills with the ability to present concepts, vision and strategy in a way that can be understood by the audience.
7. Well-developed planning and organisational skills, including project management with the ability to delegate to team members.
8. Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to effectively influence, persuade and negotiate in area of expertise, with a high level of emotional intelligence, building personal credibility and effectively contributing to team working across the directorate to develop working relationships across the university.
9. Well-developed analytical skills with the ability to generate effective solutions from concepts and vision and make effective decisions to deliver vision
10. Effective IT skills on MS platform.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Knowledge of the Higher Education sector.
2. Experience and knowledge of Trade Union law and negotiation in a multi unionised environment