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| **Post Details** | **Last Updated:** 21/02/2023 | | | | | | | |
| **Faculty/Administrative/Service Department** | | Communications, Events and Public Affairs | | | | | | |
| **Job Title** | | Communications Assistant | | | | | | |
| **Job Family** | | Professional Services | **Job Level** | 2b | | | | |
| **Responsible to** | | Student Engagement and Communications Officer | | | | | | |
| **Responsible for (Staff)** | | N/A | | | | | | |
| **Job Purpose Statement**  You will be part of the University’s Internal Communications team which is responsible for delivering engaging staff and student communication to our diverse campus community.  Working closely with the Student Engagement and Communications Officer and wider communications team, the Communications Assistant is responsible for telling great stories from across the University of Surrey – with an emphasis on sharing the information our students and colleagues need to know, inspiring news from our faculties, and information and opportunities of interest to our community. The Communications Assistant will collaborate with colleagues and key stakeholders from across the University to deliver great content, campaigns and communications activity across a range of on and offline channels. They will also be responsible for maintaining and updating the student website and intranet, producing newsletters, social media content, undertaking administrative tasks and managing internal communications projects as needed.  The Communications Assistant will also be tasked with ensuring that the necessary processes, equipment and resources are in place to allow our team to deliver creative content on a daily basis. You will have the opportunity to flex your own creative skills by briefing, producing and publishing content with the support and collaboration of your colleagues. The role sits within a wider Communications, Events and Public Affairs department, which prides itself in creating an inclusive, open and supportive environment. We are a central and vital cog in the day-to-day operations of the University and provide important strategic advice and support for teams across the University.  You will be surrounded by skilled communications professionals with varied backgrounds and levels of experience, providing you with a great opportunity to learn and develop new skills. | | | | | | | | |
| **Key Responsibilities** | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Under the guidance of the Student Engagement and Communications Officer and department management, assist with the organisation, delivery, administration and evaluation of the University’s staff and student internal communications. 2. Work with the Internal Communications and Social Media teams to ensure the successful delivery of weekly staff and student internal communications by producing high quality, omni-channel content for digital and print communications as required, including regular email newsletters and campaigns, and web, video and social media content. 3. Produce creative briefs for a range of campaigns and projects, including supporting the team with organisation of photo and video shoots, and working with internal and external creative resources and agencies to develop engaging digital and print content. 4. Use tools such as Canva, Adobe Creative Cloud, Wochit and Shorthand to produce simple pieces of digital content. 5. Update the University’s digital, posters and physical signage with corporate and crisis messages as required. 6. Support colleagues with content planning, scheduling and release across a range of digital channels, including websites, email and social media, using tools such as Drupal and Hootsuite to produce and release content. 7. Take ownership of shared email inboxes within the Internal Communications team, providing a professional and accurate service in all responses. 8. Manage data, reporting and analytics for the Internal Communications team with training, support and guidance from senior colleagues and platform-specific coaching resources. 9. Provide additional support to the Communications, Events and Public Affairs department and the wider University when required, including open days, welcome week and large-scale events.   **N.B. The above list is not exhaustive**. | | | | | | | | |
| All staff are expected to:  * Positively support equality of opportunity and equity of treatment to colleagues and students in accordance with the University of Surrey Equal Opportunities Policy. * Work to achieve the aims of our Environmental Policy and promote awareness to colleagues and students. * Follow University/departmental policies and working practices in ensuring that no breaches of information security result from their actions. * Ensure they are aware of and abide by all relevant University Regulations and Policies relevant to the role. * Undertake such other duties within the scope of the post as may be requested by your Manager. * Work supportively with colleagues, operating in a collegiate manner at all times.   **Help maintain a safe working environment by:**   * Attending training in Health and Safety requirements as necessary, both on appointment and as changes in duties and techniques demand. * Following local codes of safe working practices and the University of Surrey Health and Safety Policy. | | | | | | | | |
| **Elements of the Role** | | | | | | | | |
| **Planning and Organising**   * The post holder will work closely with the Student Engagement and Communications Officer to organise and prioritise their work, and ensure that key deadlines and objectives are met, including successfully understanding the internal communications needs of the University and respond accordingly, managing any conflicting demands, possessing a basic awareness of the options available and being able to make effective and appropriate decisions, referring to their line manager only where appropriate. * The post holder will need to demonstrate good communication, organisation and customer service skills to develop positive working relationships with individuals and departments within the University. * The post holder will be expected to follow the department’s flexible working guidance, which involves being present in the office as a minimum on Tuesdays and one other day during the week. There may be times when more days are required depending on business needs (e.g. welcome week, graduation and similar). * The post holder will be required to support the planning and scheduling of content across a range of channels, including providing support to the Social Media team. | | | | | | | | |
| **Problem Solving and Decision Making**   * The post holder will need to work on a range of projects concurrently, requiring flexibility and a positive approach to changing circumstances and requirements. * The post holder will work on a variety of projects, some as part of a team and others independently. They will be supported by the team and have some supervision but will be expected use their own initiative and judgement to complete tasks and deal with routine enquiries and issues, reaching out for support when required. * The Communications Assistant will be in regular liaison with the Internal Communications team and work together to ensure that tasks are being dealt with in a timely way and any issues are resolved quickly. | | | | | | | | |
| **Continuous Improvement**   * The post holder is encouraged to continually review the impact of their activities and to make suggestions to their line manager for changes and improvements to ensure the best service. * The post holder is expected to edit content from various sources and use their experience and judgement to create the most effective and easily understood communication. * The post holder is expected to take a proactive approach to evaluate and identify improvements in the delivery of internal staff and student events. * With budgets in mind, they will also be expected to consider ways of ensuring value for money is achieved without compromising on quality. | | | | | | | | |
| **Accountability**   * The Communications Assistant will work within established University processes and procedures to ensure that high standards are maintained. They will also become familiar with the University’s brand guidelines and values and ensure that they are adhered to in a staff and student communications context. * There is scope within this role for the post holder to apply judgement and initiative when managing their workload, although they will be expected to defer to the line manager if they are unsure of the best course of action. * They will be expected to report on their progress in regular one to ones with their line manager, at which point there will be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss challenges, which they haven’t already raised through their daily communications with their line manager. * They will be expected to produce accurate and high-quality content and following appropriate proofing and approval processes as guided. | | | | | | | | |
| **Dimensions of the role**   * The Communications Assistant does not have any direct reports but they will be expected to build positive working relationships and develop a professional and positive rapport with members of staff, students and the Students’ Union. * The Communications Assistant is responsible for the maintenance of key channels such as staff and student emails, digital screens, web pages and social media. | | | | | | | | |
| **Person Specification** | | | | | | | | |
| **Qualifications and Professional Memberships** | | | | | | **Essential/** **Desirable** | |
| Vocational qualifications plus several years relevant work experience.  Or:  Learning gained through work experience of a number of years. Will include short courses and other formal training. | | | | | | E | |
| Qualification in communications, marketing or similar disciplines | | | | | | D | |
| **Technical Competencies (Experience and Knowledge)** | | | | | **Essential/** **Desirable** | **Level**  **1-3** | |
| Experience in day-to-day administrative tasks, either specific to a communications (or related) role or gained from other office-focused roles | | | | | E | 2 | |
| An understanding of what is required to successfully run communications from concept to completion | | | | | E | 2 | |
| Experience in a stakeholder facing role and/or an understanding of what good stakeholder service looks like | | | | | E | 2 | |
| Excellent IT skills with a good working knowledge of Microsoft Office, Email, the Internet and Databases | | | | | E | 2 | |
| Experience of content production for web, social, email and other channels | | | | | E | 2 | |
| Accuracy and attention to detail | | | | | E | n/a | |
| Experience of using tools such as Canva, Wochit, DotDigital, Drupal, Creative Cloud and similar | | | | | D | 2 | |
| Experience of creative content production including video, photo and design | | | | | D | 2 | |
| Experience of planning, scheduling and releasing content using tools such as Hootsuite | | | | | D | 2 | |
| Experience/ understanding of the Higher Education Sector | | | | | D | n/a | |
|  | | | | |  |  | |
| Experience of briefing and working with internal and external creative designers and agencies | | | | | D | n/a | |
| **Special Requirements:** | | | | | **Essential/** **Desirable** |  | |
| The Communications Assistant will be expected to attend events outside of normal working hours as a core part of their remit. They will be expected to attend all University Open Days and other large-scale events unless there are exceptional circumstances preventing them from doing so. Annual leave should therefore not normally be taken during these times. | | | | | E | n/a | |
| **Core Competencies** This section contains the level of competency required to carry out this role. (Please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed). n/a (not applicable) should be placed, where the competency is not a requirement of the grade. | | | | | **Level**  **1-3** |  | |
| Communication  Adaptability / Flexibility  Customer/Client service and support  Planning and Organising  Continuous Improvement  Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills  Leadership / Management  Creative and Analytical Thinking  Influencing, Persuasion and Negotiation Skills  Strategic Thinking | | | | | | | 2  2  2  2  1  1  n/a  1  1  n/a |
| **Organisational/Departmental Information & Key Relationships** | | | | | | |  |
| Background Information  The Communications, Public Affairs and Events Team is a key corporate function within the External Engagement Department, pivotal in the delivery of communications activity and expertise to support the University’s overall strategic purpose: To be a leading global university renowned for the outstanding quality and impact of its graduates, research and innovation, together making great contributions to society.  The team incorporates the University level functions for staff and student communications, social media, media relations, public affairs, public engagement, and events management.  This post will be part of the internal communications team but will work closely with other members of the wider team.  They will be encouraged to provide support as required by their line manager for University initiatives or events, some of which may fall outside of core working hours (e.g. speaking engagements, University Open Days, which normally take place on a Friday and Saturday twice a year, and Graduation).  We are operating a blended working approach, meaning that we expect staff to work two days per week in the office, and the rest of the week where they feel they are most productive. We are committed to the University values of inclusion, inspiring our staff and delivering inspiring communications, we are open to innovation and testing ideas, and we work with integrity. | | | | | | | |
| Department Structure Chart | | | | | | | |
| Relationships **Internal**   * Colleagues within the Communications, Events and Public Affairs department * Departments across the University campus, including student-facing support and central services * Students’ Union and current students   **External** Creative and print suppliers | | | | | | | |