

## Candidate Information

<b>Position:</b>	Head of Digital Communications, Strategic Communications
<b>School/Department:</b>	Strategic Communications
<b>Reference:</b>	24/111998
<b>Closing Date:</b>	Monday 1 July 2024
<b>Salary:</b>	£58,850 - £68,194 per annum.
<b>Anticipated Interview Date:</b>	Tuesday 30 July 2024
<b>Duration:</b>	Permanent

As technology advances at a rapid pace, digital communication is increasingly a core strategic function in its own right and is essential for protecting and enhancing the image and reputation of major organisations. While traditional forms of media, such as print and broadcast, have long been the mainstay in relation to communications success, they are in decline and digital communication now plays a critical role in modern information dissemination.

This exciting new role of Head of Digital Communications is vital to ensure that Queen's University is responsive to the fast-moving developments and remains at the forefront of digital innovation, reflecting our commitment to cutting edge communications and marketing practices.

We are looking for a digital expert who understands the requirements of both the communications and marketing disciplines in this sphere. An individual who can handle the complexities of digital reputation management and understands the importance of telling engaging and compelling stories that demonstrate the university's global academic and research excellence. The successful candidate will understand the increasing need to engage with prospective and existing students, alumni, and a range of other external and internal stakeholders through a range of existing and emerging channels.

The role of Head of Digital Communications is crucial to building the external reputation of Queen's University Belfast in the UK, Ireland and internationally. It is suited to an experienced candidate with ambition and dynamism who is excited by the prospect of working at a senior level.

The role will help shape perceptions of the university across all audiences, including higher education and regulatory authorities, with alumni and potential donors, students, researchers, and staff, with a particular focus on social media channels. The postholder will build positive relationships across the University and work closely with the senior team within the Office of the Vice-President of Strategic Engagement and External Affairs.

They will provide timely and insightful advice to the University's leadership, including the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Vice-Presidents, Heads of Schools and Professional Service Directors on big themes and daily issues. Assisting the Director of Strategic Communications, the postholder will play a central role in strategic planning, shaping digital communications strategy on a range of issues, and raising opportunities and risks.

The successful candidate will also work closely with teams working on media relations, research and reputation, student recruitment, internal communications, and insight. They will have experience in planned communications, campaigns, and a range of proactive activity as well as crisis communications and working to tight deadlines on often sensitive issues.

Accuracy and integrity are paramount. Strong interpersonal skills are required. This person will lead and motivate the digital team, driving proactivity and providing encouragement and direction. They will lead by example. As well as high quality digital skills and a comprehensive understanding of digital tools, providing direction for social media content and substantial experience of evaluation,

the successful candidate must display an understanding of the full range of communications disciplines and how they are integrated to produce high level and co-ordinated output.

**Job Purpose:**

To ensure that Queen's University is responsive to the fast-moving developments and remains at the forefront of digital innovation, reflecting our commitment to cutting edge communications and marketing practices.

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The postholder will provide timely and insightful advice to the University's leadership, including the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Vice-Presidents, Heads of Schools and Professional Service Directors on big themes and daily issues. Assisting the Director of Strategic Communications, the postholder will play a central role in strategic planning, shaping digital communications strategy on a range of issues, and raising opportunities and risks.

**Major Duties:**

1. Responsible for leading, developing and implementing the university's strategic approach to digital communications and marketing to ensure Queen's is constantly ready to identify and adopt the latest social media developments.
2. Key member of the Vice-President's Management Group, contributing to the overall institutional strategic engagement and external affairs strategy.
3. Review, evaluate and, when deemed appropriate, implement the latest trends and technologies on an ongoing basis to ensure Queen's is at the leading edge of digital communications advancements.
4. Create and lead a digital centre of excellence for the university that supports the overall Strategic Communications Directorate and Queen's Global Directorate in delivering high quality communications and marketing output.
5. Provide creative and technological direction for the university in relation to all Queen's University digital communications and marketing output.
6. Lead and manage the University's central digital communications team and foster a highly skilled, collaborative, and leading-edge environment.
7. Responsible for ensuring a university-wide approach to digital communications and marketing developing corporate policies in this area and ensuring adherence across all communications and marketing outputs.
8. Work closely with the Director of Strategic Communications and Director of Queen's Global to develop and implement a digital strategy and deliver the university's communications, recruitment, and marketing objectives.
9. Develop and implement digital strategies for international markets and tactics for strategic projects and major events.
10. Oversee and lead digital crisis management alongside the overall crisis communications plan and safeguard the University's reputation.
11. Responsible for the creative direction of all digital communications activity and managing the University's brand presence, in conjunction with the Directors of Strategic Communications and Marketing (MIPSR), International Partnerships and Student Recruitment (MIPSR), through a clear, consistent, and creative approach to all digital content, including video, graphics and tone of voice.
12. Build and maintain effective, trust-based working relationships across the university and Colleges, particularly with internal stakeholders, including academics, senior leadership, and other departments, to gather and promote digital stories across a range of disciplines.
13. Provide high quality digital consultancy and training across the University, to help all departments achieve their objectives and ensure up to date with digital developments.
14. Manage the Digital Communications' budget in an effective and efficient manner and manage supplier relationships.
15. Support and stand in for the Director of Strategic Communications and Director of Marketing (MIPSR) when required.
16. Other duties as determined by the Director of Strategic Communications in conjunction with the Director of Marketing (MIPSR) and the Vice President.

**Essential Criteria:**

\* Large complex organisation is defined as one that has: • Annual Turnover greater than £25.9 million • Average number of employees of more than 250

1. Primary degree (or equivalent qualification) in a relevant subject (e.g. Communications, Public Relations and Advertising, Marketing and English). OR, evidence of substantial relevant experience in Digital Communications including extensive strategic management and leadership experience.
2. Proven track record of:
  - implementing large scale digital communications and marketing infrastructure projects across a complex organisation.
  - Digital communications and marketing innovation, creativity and developing and implementing successful paid and organic digital strategies to meet the objectives of a large and complex organisation\*, across multiple markets with bespoke needs.
  - Creating and implementing digital policies, leading audits, and managing governance.
  - Creating and implementing successful digital strategies for major events of international importance.
  - Leading and managing social listening and crisis management experience, including locating, analysing, and responding to crises via digital channels and using technology to safeguard organisational reputation.
  - Leading a centralised function supporting devolved activity across a large and complex organisation.
  - Managing and developing a range of digital communications and marketing accounts, including Chinese platforms.
  - Analysing social media data, creating reports which are accessible for all levels of seniority/experience to locate opportunities and aid decision making.
3. Strong leadership and management experience - managing and developing a digital team that is responsive to emerging trends and technologies and managing content creators and influencers.
4. Relevant experience of develop and delivering digital communications and marketing training designed to support strategic objectives.
5. Experience managing a significant budget in an efficient and effective way, including managing tenders.
6. Excellent interpersonal skills.
7. Proven excellent communication and presentation skills both orally and in writing with the ability to relate to others at all levels.
8. Ability to work under pressure and to deliver to deadlines.
9. Available to work out of hours as required in accordance with needs of the post.

**Desirable Criteria:**

1. Experience of working within the higher education sector.
2. Demonstrable Award-winning portfolio of digital campaigns.
3. Experience of leading digital market research in challenging international markets.
4. Experience of creative campaign conceiving.
5. Project and Programme Leadership experience of leading and delivering large-scale communications projects and programmes. Managing project cycle on time and on budget, resulting in measurable impact.