

Candidate Information

Position: Public Affairs Manager
School/Department: Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility
Reference: 24/111838
Closing Date: Monday 13 May 2024
Salary: £46,497 - £57,141 per annum.
Anticipated Interview Date: Monday 27 May 2024

JOB PURPOSE:

To lead the Public Affairs team within the University's Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility Directorate (CESR) team in line with Strategy 2030.

To support the University's senior management in the development and maintenance of positive relationships with key political stakeholders including national, regional and local government, civil servants, politicians and opinion formers and develop new advocates for the University.

To influence aforementioned stakeholders to support and understand the University's goals and impact, where appropriate, affecting change so that the University meets its business and corporate goals.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Coordinate the University's outreach activity with elected political representatives and government to highlight and promote the relevance of the University and its research throughout government structures at Belfast City Council, the NI Executive, Westminster and the Oireachtas.
2. Establish, coordinate and implement a programme to develop and maintain strong relationships with ministers, special advisors, elected representatives and public officials, acting as a key point of contact and developing a network of advocates for the University across Belfast City Council, the NI Executive, Westminster and the Oireachtas.
3. Provide strategic advice and support to senior managers to maximise the effectiveness of their engagement with key government stakeholders. Prepare strategy papers, carry out one-to-one briefings and manage the political monitoring, information and review service to staff and senior management.
4. Coordinate issue-specific lobbying activities in support of University goals.
5. Monitor relevant legislative, political and policy matters and provide written and verbal briefings for the Vice-Chancellor, Vice President for Strategic Engagement and External Affairs, Pro Vice Chancellor Global Engagement, Director Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility and other senior University leaders.
6. Represent the University at external meetings with politicians, statutory and non-statutory bodies and at all major Party-Political Conferences including exhibitors' conferences and Political Party events.
7. Contribute to the process of positioning Queen's research in the public policy environment, both in terms of increasing public awareness and influencing emerging public policy.
8. Coordinate activity to showcase the University to policy makers and government decision makers, including management of the public engagement website and organisation of local, national and international showcase events.
9. Act as the point of contact for, and coordinate responses to, Assembly Questions and all other requests for information from government departments, politicians and political parties.
10. Monitor, review and make proposals to update the public affairs programme and communication, to ensure the University is adapting its approach for changing circumstances and trends. Advise the University leadership on the development of policies which impact on the relationship between Queen's and elected political representatives in Belfast City Council, the NI Executive, Westminster and the Oireachtas.

11. Draft correspondence on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Vice President for Strategic Engagement and External Affairs and other senior staff, acting as a hub of expertise on political and policy issues.
12. Contribute effectively to relevant internal and external committees, groups and meetings, representing and promoting Queen's position on engaging with government. Deputise for the Head of Public Engagement where required.
13. Contribute to the wider work of the CESR Directorate undertaking other duties as required by the Head of Public Engagement and Director of CESR.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Honours degree (or equivalent qualification) plus significant recent relevant experience in public affairs or a related role OR, in the absence of a degree, substantial recent relevant experience in directly relevant professional role(s).
2. Relevant experience of lobbying opinion formers, with a view to influencing and affecting change.
3. Demonstrable experience of managing a successful outcome as part of a lobbying campaign.
4. Relevant experience working with government and legislative processes.
5. Experience of drafting documents, papers and briefing notes for a senior level audience.
6. Experience in working with multi-disciplinary teams to deliver complex projects.
7. Relevant experience of successfully leading a team in a dynamic and changing environment, with evidence of formal line-management responsibilities.
8. A comprehensive knowledge and understanding of local, regional and national politics, political figures and policy-makers.
9. Demonstrable event management experience, with demonstrable outcomes.
10. Excellent report writing and presentation skills with a well-developed critical and analytical approach to reviewing documentation.
11. Proficiency in using Microsoft Office, including Excel and PowerPoint.
12. Excellent communication skills.
13. Ability to develop effective relationships with key stakeholders both internally and externally.
14. Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team.
15. Ability to act as a role model and lead by example in accordance with the Core values of the University – Integrity, Connected, Ambition, Respect, Excellence.
16. Willingness to work evenings, at weekends and public holidays.
17. Ability to meet the business travel requirements of the post (i.e. full, valid driving licence and access to a car for business purposes or other means of meeting this requirement).

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Professional qualification/membership in a relevant area.
2. Postgraduate qualification in a relevant subject.
3. Experience in working in the private or public sector, ideally in an organisation with a staff of more than 100.
4. Experience of working on Public Affairs projects within the Higher Education sector.
5. Understanding of higher education within a local and national context.
6. A personal rapport with politicians and policy-makers.