



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Head of Staff & Culture
Reporting to	Chief Financial & Operations Officer
Grade	Tactical Leadership
Unit	HR
Location	Head Office (Oxford)

About Oxford Business College

Since 1985, Oxford Business College (OBC) has spearheaded transformative education, carving a unique path for overlooked individuals, especially mature students facing barriers in traditional education. Operating seven days a week for our students, OBC's pioneering approach adapts to the diverse lifestyles & commitments of non-traditional learners. Across campuses in West London, Oxford, & Nottingham, OBC's ultra-flexible scheduling ensures inclusivity, reinforced by a robust digital infrastructure. Actively fostering a sense of belonging for students from all backgrounds, we provide comprehensive support services. Emphasising practical skills for employability through industry placements, OBC stands as a dynamic catalyst for change, reshaping higher education with an unwavering commitment to accessibility, flexibility, & inclusivity. With over 7500 students & 300 colleagues, join OBC in shaping the future of education & unlocking opportunities for a diverse range of students.

The role

The Head of Staff & Culture plays a key role in enhancing staff performance & development by implementing comprehensive organisational & people capability building strategies. This includes leading longer-term resource planning aligned with strategic goals, developing a new HR framework, & overseeing the fair & effective appraisal system. The role extends to championing diversity & inclusion, enhancing OBC's employer brand, & implementing well-being initiatives. Leveraging data analytics, the position informs decision-making for continuous improvement. The Head of Staff & Culture fosters a positive workplace culture, collaborates with external partners & key stakeholders, & ensures HR policies align with best practices & regulatory requirements. In addition, they lead the development & implementation of institutional policies, report to the academic board, & undertake other duties as required.

Stationed at our Oxford Head Office & reporting to the Chief Financial & Operations Officer, the Head of Staff & Culture holds a pivotal role in steering the administrative intricacies defining the student journey at OBC. The position holder is entrusted with a strategic mandate to shape the college's organisational & people capability. With a focus on fostering staff performance & development, they lead resource planning initiatives in alignment with the college's strategic goals. Leading the HR unit within the college, the role involves crafting a new HR framework, steering appraisal systems, & developing policies to create a fair & supportive work environment. Spearheading succession management & providing expert guidance on organisational change, the position holder collaborates closely with college leadership, ensuring HR strategies align with overall objectives. Their responsibilities extend to fostering an inclusive culture, compliance with standards, & enhancing the college's reputation through collaboration with external partners. Additionally, the role encompasses leading policy development, overseeing regulatory data returns, & contributing to key committees & reports to the academic board. The position will play a pivotal role in the college's strategic planning & operational delivery.



Strategic Responsibilities

- Develop & implement organisational & people capability building strategies for enhanced staff performance & development.
- Lead longer-term resource planning initiatives aligned with the college's strategic goals & growth plans.
- Spearhead the development of a new HR framework to meet evolving college needs & support strategic objectives. Develop a culture of personal accountability & responsibility, recognising excellence & addressing underperformance.
- Develop, monitor, & lead the appraisal system for fair & effective performance management.
- Champion diversity & inclusion initiatives (Athena SWAN initiative), ensuring that OBC maintains an inclusive culture that embraces individuals from diverse backgrounds. Develop & implement strategies to promote equity & diversity at all levels of the organisation.
- Work on enhancing OBC's employer brand both internally & externally. Develop & implement strategies to attract, retain, & motivate high-quality staff aligned with the college's values & objectives.
- Support tactical leaders/ managers in managing change within their units, drafting new procedures & handling individual employee relations cases, ensuring compliance with the college policy.
- Introduce & implement strategies & programmes focused on employee well-being, including mental health support, work-life balance initiatives, & health & wellness programmes.
- Utilise data analytics to gather insights into workforce trends, employee performance, & other relevant HR metrics. Use these insights to inform decision-making & drive continuous improvement in HR practices.
- Oversee the design & implementation of comprehensive talent development programmes, including training & continuous learning opportunities. Ensure staff have access to resources that support their professional growth & contribute to the overall success of the college.
- Develop & implement employee engagement initiatives to enhance morale, job satisfaction, & overall staff well-being.
- Offer guidance, coaching, & support to less experienced colleagues, fostering a culture of continuous learning & development.
- Effectively comprehend & address unique challenges & opportunities within the college in a timely manner, adapting HR strategies accordingly.
- Ensure compliance with employment laws, codes of practice, & ethical standards.
- Foster a positive & inclusive workplace culture, championing diversity & promoting employee well-being.
- Collaborate with external partners & other key stakeholders to enhance the college's reputation & employer brand.
- Continuously evaluate & enhance HR policies & procedures, aligning them with best practices & college mission/values.
- Lead the development & implementation of institutional policies & regulatory frameworks.
- Facilitate regulatory data returns, including to key regulatory/ official bodies, supporting strategic planning & operational delivery.
- Attend & chair relevant committee(s) & report regularly to the relevant board.
- Keep up-to-date with changes in HR legislation & ensure confidentiality & integrity of all HR information in accordance with the Data Protection Act & other relevant legislation.
- Undertake any other duties reasonably required by the chief financial & operations officer, executive principal, or managing director.

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

TRAINING & EDUCATIONS

Essential

- An undergraduate degree in human resource management or equivalent.

Desirable

- CIPD membership at Associate or Chartered Member Level (or equivalent).

EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Experience of working as an HR lead or equivalent role, with experience of leading change, workforce planning, & strategic resource planning.
- Extensive experience of advising, coaching &/ or mentoring senior managers & line managers on a variety of employee relations matters including performance management.
- Demonstrable sound judgement in HR matters with detailed knowledge & experience of the application of UK employment law & UKVI regulations with an ability to evaluate risk.
- Experience in leading & delivering strategic & operational change.
- Experience in a leadership position, managing cross-organisational functions.
- Strong understanding of the Higher Education (HE) landscape in the UK, including comprehensive knowledge of HR policies, regulations & compliance standards.

Desirable

- Hands-on experience of emerging technical & digital innovation (e.g. AI).
- Experience of working in a similar role for another private HE establishment.

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Essential

- Strong relationship management skills, including the ability to engage, communicate & collaborate with academic & professional staff, students & external partners & regulators.
- Excellent planning skills, combined with proven analytical & problem-solving skills.
- Strong verbal & written communication skills, including the ability to present complex information clearly & effectively.
- Familiarity with external regulatory bodies such as the Office for Students (OfS), OIA, HESA (Jisc), etc.
- Proficiency in software applications & technology for HR administration purposes.
- Mediation &/ or facilitation skills & the ability to gain mutually acceptable outcomes.

BEHAVOURAL SKILLS

Essential

- Strong leadership qualities to effectively manage a team of professionals, including the ability to inspire & motivate.
- Capacity to adapt to changing circumstances & priorities in a fast-paced academic environment.
- High ethical standards & a commitment to maintaining the integrity of academic records & processes.
- Resilience & adaptability to manage the demands of a busy & challenging role.
- A role model for college's core values, which underpin our vision, mission & strategy.