

# Appointment of **Communications Officer**

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# Welcome from the Director

Thank you for your interest in this post. The Council plays a key role in supporting the development of the postgraduate sector with a wide range of activities at both the national and international level.

We are especially well known among providers of postgraduate education for our workshops, conferences and seminars. Our events programme is renowned for providing opportunities for inter-institutional collaboration, sharing of effective practices, and creating a 'community of practice' ethos.

You would be joining the Council at an exciting time. Following a strategic review in 2019, the Council has had a renewed focus on providing collective leadership for the postgraduate sector. Our recent activities include:

- The launch, in May 2021, of the *UK Research Supervision Survey* (UKRSS). This research, supported by both the Wellcome Trust and UKRI, was the largest national survey of its kind and elicited 3,435 responses from those involved in research supervision up and down the country.
- The landmark publication of research into *Structures and Strategies in Doctoral Education in the UK and Ireland* in 2022, which showed, amongst other things, that 78% of responding institutions plan to grow their doctoral populations over the next five years.

- We are actively championing equity, diversity and inclusion activities in postgraduate education. For example, we are working closely with Research England / Office for Students funded projects aiming to improve participation in doctoral education among racialised groups.
- Our policy impact is growing - for example, through the work we did in response to a request from the *Economic and Social Research Council* to recommend ways in which funders can provide greater support to research supervisors.

There are major challenges ahead for the postgraduate sector, including how the crisis in the cost of living is affecting postgraduate students; and ensuring that the Government's 'New Deal for Postgraduate Researchers' delivers its ambition to create a fairer and more supportive environment for PGRs.

We are looking for a dedicated and enthusiastic colleague who will help us to take our ability to provide collective leadership to the next level. You might come from any sector, but you will be an accomplished communications professional with an ability to engage a wide variety of stakeholders across multiple platforms.

The Council is a small charity with a collegiate ethos. We have embraced hybrid working. If you like the sound of the role, then we look forward to hearing from you.

**Owen Gower**  
Director



# About the UK Council for Graduate Education

## Who we are

Established in 1994, the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) is the national representative body for postgraduate education and research. The UKCGE is the third largest representative body of its kind in the world, representing 92% of all postgraduate research provision and 85% of all postgraduate taught provision in the UK.

## What we do

We champion and enhance postgraduate education and research by enabling collective leadership on the development of postgraduate affairs across UK HEIs, research agencies and funding bodies. We do this by providing learning and professional development events, commissioning research, sharing best-practice developments, and by gathering information and evidence to support policies which promote a strong and sustainable postgraduate sector.

## Why we do it

The institutional autonomy of UK Higher Education providers creates a vibrant and diverse higher education sector which meets the needs of a wide range of students and researchers. In that context, we enable collective leadership and foster inter-institutional exchange, to ensure that the postgraduate sector as a whole can learn and benefit from the actions and innovations of individual institutions.

Understanding the importance of postgraduate education and research for individuals, for the economy and for society more broadly, we use our collective voice to ensure that postgraduate

education and research is properly resourced, structured and recognised within institutional and national policies. Among our charitable objectives, we have specific remits to promote the status, education and training of postgraduates and to advocate for equity and inclusiveness in postgraduate education and research.

## Who we work with

We work with, and represent, everyone involved with postgraduate education and research: Pro-Vice Chancellors and Deputy Vice Chancellors with responsibility for postgraduate education and research; Research Supervisors and Doctoral Candidates; Deans and Directors of Graduate Schools, Doctoral Training Partnerships, and Centres for Doctoral Training; Graduate School and Doctoral College Managers; PGT Course Directors and Masters students; and Academic Developers. We also work with research centres; regulators; funding bodies and other interest groups. By serving and representing the postgraduate sector across all levels, we are a trusted voice on all aspects of postgraduate affairs.

## How we do it

The Council is an independent educational charity which relies on voluntary contributions from individuals and institutions in the postgraduate sector. We are governed by elected representatives of the postgraduate sector, who serve for a 3-year term. We raise funds through membership subscriptions, event registration fees, and commercial sponsorship.

# Job description

This part-time (0.6 FTE) role is to develop and enhance the Council's communications to different types of stakeholders and across multiple platforms.

## Purpose of the role

- To develop marketing and communications materials, including newsletters, press releases, blog posts and social media content.
- To measure and report on the effectiveness of website performance and marketing campaigns.
- To ensure all communications align with the Council's standards and values.
- To develop and maintain the Council's contact management system.
- To respond to media and sponsorship enquiries, and to develop the Council's media presence and commercial attractiveness.

## Main duties and responsibilities

### 1. Marketing and communications

- To create and implement a marketing and communications plan
- To desk-top publish Council materials, edit the website, and manage social media outputs.
- To raise the profile of the Council's work and increase stakeholder engagement.
- To enhance the Council's effectiveness by maintaining and enlarging its network of contacts.

### 2. Relationship building

- To develop and manage blog contributions, news items, and collaborative research projects from volunteers across the Council's networks.
- To promote the aims and objectives of the Council's work to key contacts within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and other sector bodies.
- To be active in identifying upcoming issues in postgraduate education through stakeholder engagement activities.

### 3. Delivering the Council's business plan

- To support the marketing of Council events, ensuring full attendance and developing sponsorship opportunities.
- To support the Director in identifying joint initiatives and partnerships with HEIs and other national and international bodies.
- To contribute to the development of the Council's business plan by identifying opportunities to enhance engagement/income generation.
- To keep abreast of news and developments in the postgraduate sector, and to work with the Director to create appropriate responses.
- To ensure that the Council's communications strategy remains at the forefront of new technologies and trends.

*Any other reasonable duties as may requested from time to time.*

# Person specification

## The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Prior experience of working in a communications or marketing role
- A passion for stakeholder engagement
- Outstanding written communication skills, including copy-editing experience, and an impeccable eye for detail
- An understanding of and sympathy with postgraduate education
- Resourcefulness and the ability to show initiative
- Excellent time management skills, and the ability to manage several projects simultaneously
- The ability to think strategically and to identify ways to improve stakeholder engagement
- Communication, influencing and diplomatic skills, and an understanding of how to get the best out of partnerships, including with volunteers
- Agility to ensure that the Council can respond speedily and effectively to new opportunities
- Excellent proficiency with Microsoft Office tools
- An enthusiastic, proactive attitude

## Desirable:

- A postgraduate qualification
- Knowledge of and proficiency with Adobe PhotoShop, InDesign and Illustrator
- A track record of implementing and maintaining a contact management system
- Familiarity with the postgraduate sector, and influential sector bodies such as UKRI
- Experience of setting up and maintaining a contact management system
- Familiarity with website editing using a pre-built content management system (WordPress / Craft)
- Understanding of the latest strategies and techniques for delivering engaging social media content
- Experience in developing commercial sponsor relationships

# The UKCGE team

## **UKCGE staff**

There are currently 3 members of staff at the Council: the Director; the Events Officer and the Administrative Officer.

## **UKCGE Executive Committee**

The Council's activities are managed by a volunteer board of trustees called the Executive Committee and a small team of employees.

The Committee consists of 12 elected individuals from full member institutions of the Council, who are responsible for the overall management and control of UKCGE. To lead the work of the Council, the Executive Committee has four Honorary Officer posts — Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

All Executive Committee members are elected for a three year term and support the Council on a voluntary basis. The Committee meets at least four times a year to develop and agree all new initiatives, and to oversee the work and direction of the Council.

## **Deans and Directors of Graduate Schools Network**

This forum for senior leaders in postgraduate education is led by 2 appointed volunteers, and makes collective recommendations for the management of postgraduate provision in the UK.

## **Graduate Education Managers Network**

This network is led by 3 volunteers, and provides opportunities for sharing information and expertise in developing effective practices in the management of postgraduate education and research.

## **Research Supervisors Network**

This network provides a forum for discussion & learning, enabling supervisors to support each other in enhancing their own practice.

# Our values

## Vision

*An equitable and inclusive postgraduate sector which delivers academic excellence and offers high-quality supervision, effective leadership and outstanding professional services.*

## Mission

*To enable collective leadership on the development of postgraduate education and research and to provide an evidence-led and trusted voice for the postgraduate sector.*

## Values

*We are run 'by the sector, for the sector'. Our values are: mutuality, openness, collegiality, and joint enterprise.*

# How to apply

## Conditions

This post is offered on a permanent basis, working 22.2 hours per week (0.6 FTE).

The Council is an independent registered charity. It is hosted by Staffordshire University, which currently acts as the employing body.

The Council is located at the Lichfield Centre of Staffordshire University. Hot-desking is available at the Council office, but the expectation is that the role will involve hybrid and/or remote working, and applications are welcomed from any part of the UK.

This role may require travel in connection with UKCGE events and business, occasionally overseas.

There will be a need for the post holder to travel in a cost-effective manner, which may be through use of a car.

## Benefits

We are pleased to offer a generous annual leave of 32 days FTE (19.2 pro-rata), plus an allowance of 11 bank holidays and discretionary days FTE (6.6 pro-rata).

We offer an occupational pension with a 10% employer contribution, 6% employee contribution.

## Salary

We offer a competitive salary for this role, starting from £30,502 FTE (£18,301 pro-rata).

## How to apply

The Council is an independent charity, hosted by Staffordshire University for HR purposes.

To apply, please submit your covering letter and CV through the Staffordshire University recruitment portal, quoting UKCGE22-01 as your reference:

<https://jobs.staffs.ac.uk/Logon/?jobId=8815>

The closing date is Friday 6th January 2023.

Interviews are scheduled to take place on Friday 20th January 2023.

## Application process

Applications will be assessed and shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview.

Once shortlisted, candidates may be asked for a short presentation and/or to complete a pre-interview task.

UK Council for  
**Graduate Education**

UK REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1061495