University of Edinburgh

Job Description

1. Job Details

Job title: Head of Web Development
School/Support Department: Communications and Marketing
Unit (if applicable): 
Line manager: Director of Communications and External Affairs

2. Job Purpose

To establish, lead and deliver the University’s major website redevelopment programme whilst managing the current in-house web development programme and resource. To implement a new University-wide Content Management System and to manage publishing teams through their transition from the current University legacy site to a new Content Managed site.

This is a key strategic goal for the institution and its attainment establishes this project as being of critical importance, and which must be delivered to time and to budget.

The long term aim of the proposed web development is to –
- Create a world-leading higher education website that reinforces the University’s leading ranking in the world and in the UK
- Develop the website to be the primary communication vehicle for internal and external audiences.
- Design the website’s transaction capability in priority areas such as online applications for postgraduate and international students and to look at how other University business processes could be integrated with the University website.
- To ensure a compliant website.

The Head of Web Development will take a leadership role in the project, whilst managing the full CPA web team and ensuring adequate online publishing and web support for the University on the current site.

Main Responsibilities

1. To inspire and provide the leadership necessary to advance this major change management project which is of vital importance to the University’s future information, communications and marketing strategy.

2. To exercise a considerable degree of autonomy and discretion in developing and implementing the plans necessary to successfully complete the project.
3. To recruit, establish and lead a cross functional development team capable of achieving the University’s vision for the redevelopment of the website as laid down in the Web Development Strategy.

4. To develop this strategy further as the project evolves, working with the team, and key stakeholders, and advising senior University management on web publishing policies and developing new procedures where necessary.

5. To achieve the full support of the key stakeholders in the project – Web Steering Group, EUCS, MIS, Colleges and support groups and to win the buy-in of the University community to ensure successful delivery of the project. To manage the demands and expectations of stakeholders by setting priorities and service levels, pre-empting customer needs and identifying opportunities to change.

6. To devise and implement a communications strategy to ensure the understanding and engagement of the wider University community in the redevelopment of the website.

7. Using professional judgement and experience to formulate policies and procedures relating to the University’s web based operations to establish and perpetuate good practice and to deliver improvements in business performance.

8. To secure the sustainability of the University’s website at the end of the project, having resolved any issues which may have arisen and for which there may not have been a precedent, using an innovative and creative approach to develop appropriate options.

9. To identify the skills required within the team as the project develops and to recruit, build and develop the team accordingly whilst advising on training and support requirements for effective, devolved and cost-efficient web workflows across the University.

10. To manage the web redevelopment budget allocated to Communications and Marketing up to £700,000 over the two year period. This figure includes staff costs.

4. Planning and Organising

A key senior manager in the Communications and Marketing team, the post holder will

- Report to the Director of Communications and External Affairs.
- Manage all web development budgets allocated to Communications and Marketing, including the redevelopment budget (up to £350,000 per year).
- Develop plans and strategies two years ahead.
- Develop and improve the capability of all staff, motivating and mentoring them to ensure that they meet current and future requirements.
- Provide expert advice and guidance across a number of teams across the University as a whole with regard to web publishing, coordinating the work of others (where there are no line management responsibilities) to achieve service delivery and programme objectives.
- On a weekly basis, agree with the team updated action plans and objectives and monitor/feedback on their progress.
- Prepare monthly reports and updates for the Director of Communications and External Affairs and the Web Steering Group and Advisory Board.

5. Problem Solving

The post holder will be expected to evaluate existing service provision, keeping abreast of feedback and broader developments in technology and in the competitive external arena to ensure that appropriate developments and innovative solutions inform all internal developments and change implementation, in order to consistently enhance and maximise service provision across the University.

6. Decision Making

The post holder will manage and guide the evolution of the existing strategy that has been approved by the University, for the redevelopment of the website. The post holder will also make best practice decisions on running the current site cost-effectively and efficiently, managing expectations and pre-empting expression of need along the way. The post holder will be expected to act with a considerable degree of autonomy, referring to the Director of Communications and External Affairs only on major decisions when the implications, university wide, go substantially beyond the existing strategy. The post holder will be expected to anticipate difficulties, take timely action to overcome obstacles and manage risk.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

Stakeholder management is key in the project and will require the post-holder to work effectively with the most senior managers of the University. Building relationships with business users, who may have differing and complex priorities, and inspiring them to buy into this service will also be central to the role.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

This post holder requires considerable experience of the management of a large scale website and its underlying technologies, preferably in the context of a large public sector organisation. Strong leadership, and negotiating, influencing skills as well as a proven track record in change management are required. The University is a large, complex, diverse and devolved organisation and experience gained in a similar organisation of driving through a clear, strategic vision, whilst effectively managing relationships with stakeholders, is desirable. Experience of leading and managing cross functional teams and leading business process improvement to deliver higher levels of performance is desirable. Outstanding communications skills and budget management experience are essential.

9. Dimensions

The post holder will initially manage a team of seven, with dotted line management of several more colleagues. This is likely to rise over the two years. The cost for the overall project is estimated to be in the region of £600-700k. The project will ultimately affect all of the University’s 7,000 staff and 23,000 students. The Web Redevelopment Programme has a high profile within and high impact on the University for the following reasons:
A redevelopment of the University’s website is required to underpin all the University’s internal and external communications and to enable the University to market itself effectively. The redevelopment will also present one of the main opportunities to build and support the University brand over the next two years.

There are a number of key strategic priorities as set out in the University’s Strategic Plan 2004-2008 to which the redeveloped website will make a critical contribution.

The existing University website comprises around 4 million web pages spread across 300 websites and currently has around 1 million users a year.

The change management aspect of this programme and its impact on workflow processes throughout the University cannot be underestimated.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information

11. Verification

I agree that this job description conveys an accurate description of this job.

Manager:

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