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| **Job Description** |

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| **Role:** | Communications and Public Affairs Officer |
| **Reports To:** | Director, College Employers Scotland |
| **Direct Reports:** | N/A |

**Role Objectives**

The postholder will play a key role in ensuring:

* College Employers Scotland’s views and interests are effectively represented with key stakeholders, policy makers and opinion formers.
* Members receive timely and engaging communications on proactive and reactive issues.
* External media relations and external engagement is effective.
* The College Employers Scotland’s website and social media channels are kept up to date and utilised to best effect.
* A close relationship with Colleges Scotland to ensure communications and engagement activities are mutually re-enforcing.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities**

*Communications and Media Relations*

* Support all incoming media enquires; ensuring journalists receive a prompt and efficient response.
* Brief the Director and team members on relevant media communications and topics.
* Support team members to ensure all internal and external communications are effective, engaging, forward thinking, and aligned to the operational plan.
* Take ownership of the development and delivery of communication plans and strategies, agreed with the Director to raise the profile of College Employers Scotland.
* Write press releases, media statements and briefing papers.
* Monitor and analyse print, broadcast, online and social media on a regular basis.
* Track media activity and produce reports, briefing papers and presentations as required.
* Proactively place and write feature articles for a variety of media.
* Update social media channels and website content of College Employers Scotland and the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) to strengthen the digital presence.

*Public Affairs*

* Take ownership of the development and delivery of communication plans and strategies, agreed with the Director.
* Act as a source of in-house information and expertise on public affairs and communications.
* Work with team members to ensure effective engagement with key policy makers, decision-makers, members and stakeholders.
* Responding to enquiries from politicians and providing proactive briefings.
* In conjunction with team members:
  + monitor the political environment and identify opportunities to influence policy development and political decision-making, including relevant consultations, parliamentary debates, events and conferences.
  + maintain a contact programme of parliamentarians, civil servants, opinion formers and key stakeholders, ensuring College Employers Scotland has good relationships with key decision makers.
* Draft parliamentary questions, debates, amendments to legislation and motions and disseminate briefings for parliamentarians.
* Analysing information and data to inform College Employers Scotland’s public position on agreed topics
* Establish and maintain good relationships with communications and public affairs colleagues in Colleges Scotland, providing assistance when required.
* Undertake projects and attend external meetings.

In addition to the duties and responsibilities noted above, the postholder will have other duties and responsibilities which will enable College Employers Scotland to fulfil its vision and achieve its mission.

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| **Person Specification** |

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| **Role:** | Communications and Public Affairs Officer |

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| **Qualifications** | * Educated to SCQF level 9 (e.g. degree level) or equivalent experience. |
| **Experience** | * Experience in a communications, public affairs or media role. * Working effectively with a range of stakeholders/media contacts and building meaningful/lasting relationships. * Exposure to policy development and parliamentary processes. * Briefing a range of staff and stakeholders on media/public affairs issues, using a range of tools/methods. * Successfully planning activity, including commissioned work and projects. * Successfully planning activity, campaigns and communications. * Working effectively with a diverse range of members and stakeholder. * Supporting and advising staff on public affairs and media related activity |
| **Knowledge** | * Scottish media organisations and contacts (education media is desirable). * Effective media communication processes. * The political framework impacting on the sector. * College sector structure, policy, contacts and ethos (desirable). * The industrial relations landscape in the U.K. and Scotland (desirable) * Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council (SFC), NUS Scotland and stakeholder priorities (desirable). * Awareness of media and political issues (relevant to Scotland’s college sector/education is desirable). * Awareness of media and political issues affecting the sector. |
| **Key Skills** | * Excellent communication and influencing skills. * Strong writing skills and the ability to turn technical or complex content into compelling stories. * Working under pressure to tight deadlines. * Ability to effectively use social media tools and websites to communicate and engage. * Ability to build and sustain effective relationships. * Able to work to demanding timescales while ensuring quality * Strong research and investigative skills. * Competent in use of Microsoft Office suite. * Organisation and time management. * Research and investigative skills. |
| **Qualities** | * Able to work autonomously. * Resilient and self-reliant. * Team player who can build and sustain relationships with colleagues and contacts at all levels. * Solutions-focused, self-motivated and determined to succeed * Flexible in approach and able to respond creatively to new developments and to adjust priorities accordingly. |