

Governance Senior Lead

Role Profile

Salary:	Band 6
Working Hours:	Full Time
Contract:	Permanent
Reporting to:	Deputy Director (Operations & Governance)
Direct reports:	Deputy Governance Lead (MI and Timetabling) Quality Enhancement Manager International Compliance Manager

Overall purpose/accountabilities:

Provide senior leadership and management in the design and delivery of key quality, compliance and governance functions. Champion a student-centred approach, driving continuous improvement initiatives and ensuring compliance with all relevant institutional and local policies and regulations.

Cultivate operational excellence across academic quality management, management information, timetabling, casework and compliance. Support the Deputy Director (Operations & Governance) with institutional risk management.

Lead teams to provide exceptional service and support to other departments and teams, streamline processes, and to enhance the overall student experience whilst assuring quality and compliance for the whole campus

Prioritise student success by championing a culture of service excellence and creating a positive and supportive environment for all stakeholders at the University of Sunderland in London (UoSIL).

Main Duties

Lead the provision of organisational management information, academic quality assurance, academic business systems management, timetabling and international student compliance, to support business development and delivery whilst mitigating organisational risks and maintaining compliance.

Oversee management information, academic and business systems development, academic quality assurance and compliance functions, ensuring adherence to service and data management standards, timely delivery, and continuous improvement through regular monitoring and review. Ensure quality assurance processes are built into delivery models and are managed and monitored continually to ensure high standards.

Cultivate a high-performing, student-centred team culture driven by innovation, proactive service delivery, and robust, customer-focused processes.

Lead on the design and delivery of a UoSIL Data Strategy. Oversee the design and delivery of Management Information for UoSIL, ensuring timely and accurate information and analysis to inform decision making and drive positive change across the institution.

Support the Deputy Director (Operations and Governance) to create a safe and inclusive environment, upholding safeguarding and Prevent duties and OfS E6 condition. Ensuring all concerns are reported in line with organisational policies and statutory guidance in relation to Safeguarding and Prevent; participating in regular safeguarding and Prevent training; maintaining up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation, adhering to internal protocols and reporting procedures.

Lead academic quality assurance processes including new programme development and regular evaluations of Office for Student B1, B2 and B4 metrics, working closely with academic colleagues, to ensure regulatory standards and frameworks are adhered to. Oversee the delivery of academic boards.

Support the student experience regarding compliance requirements, working with International Student Support and wider student-facing functions.

With support from the Deputy Director (Operations & Governance), manage organisational risk in relation to UKVI compliance, ensuring UoSIL is UKVI compliant in relation to the international student body. Oversee reporting, ensure audit readiness, and implement changes to ensure continued compliance.

Ensure academic business systems are fit for purpose. Oversee UoSIL wide academic business systems developments, including user consultation, identifying business requirements and shaping systems development request.

Work within organisational planning frameworks (such as termly incremental planning) at Sunderland campus to ensure UoSIL academic business systems needs are met.

Manage and oversee the administration of student complaints and appeals, including assigning investigators, supporting administrative processes in relation to complaints and appeals, monitoring timelines, and ensuring appropriate quality standards are applied; monitor trends and outcomes to contribute towards continuous development.

Collaborate with the Deputy Director (Operations & Governance) to develop and deliver annual plans, incorporating local and institutional priorities, staffing, and budget management.

Proactively identify and mitigate risks across functions, focussing on regulatory responsibilities in relation to external bodies such as the Office for Students, UKVI, HESA, PSRB and other relevant authorities. Embedding risk management principles into all aspects of service delivery.

Develop and monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure compliance, efficiency, and a positive student experience. Champion data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement initiatives. Oversee high quality reporting.

Oversee provision of effective data and expert guidance in relation to the Governance function. Collaborating with academic and senior colleagues to provide effective data analysis and action planning.

Provide expert advice and guidance to university staff on academic quality assurance processes and compliance requirements.

Promote effective communication within the department and across the university and represent governance functions on committees and project groups, both internally and externally.

Lead and participate in project groups and institutional initiatives, contributing to university-wide goals. Build and maintain strong relationships with key colleagues at Sunderland campus.

Effectively manage staff and resources, ensuring adherence to all HR policies and procedures, including recruitment, performance management, and staff development.

Manage budgets effectively, ensuring value for money and adherence to procurement regulations.

Provide inspiring leadership, utilising strong interpersonal skills to navigate challenges.

Actively pursue continuous professional development and identify opportunities to enhance administrative processes.

Deputise for Deputy Director (Operations & Governance) as appropriate.

Promote the university's principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion in all interactions. Champion corporate values in every aspect of the role.

Demonstrate a steadfast commitment to delivering an exceptional student experience.

Perform other duties commensurate with the role, as determine by an appropriate senior manager.

Special factors: This role requires a flexible approach to work in accordance with the requirements of a professional contract there may be times when out of hours and weekend work is necessary. National travel, including to our campus in Sunderland, is required and appropriate business arrangements will be made to facilitate this.

Person Specification

Essential	Qualifications
	Educated to degree level or equivalent qualification.
	Evidence of continuing professional development relevant to governance, compliance, or higher education management.

Experience

Proven senior-level experience in a UK Higher Education environment or comparable complex, regulated organisation.

Substantial experience in one or more of the following governance-related areas:

- Academic quality assurance and enhancement
- Regulatory compliance (e.g. OfS conditions, UKVI, Prevent, Safeguarding)
- Risk management and institutional governance
- Student casework
- Timetabling or management information systems.

Demonstrated success in developing and implementing policies, procedures, and frameworks to ensure compliance and quality assurance.

Track record of leading multidisciplinary teams, managing performance, and fostering a culture of excellence and accountability.

Experience of using data and management information to inform strategic decision-making, planning, and service development.

Demonstrable experience of developing and maintaining strong cross-institutional relationships and partnerships with stakeholders.

Proven ability to lead change initiatives, delivering process improvement and efficiency while maintaining compliance.

Knowledge, Skills & Attributes

Student-centred and service-focused, with a strong commitment to enhancing the student experience through quality and compliance.

High degree of integrity, discretion, and professionalism, particularly in handling sensitive or confidential matters.

Proven ability to interpret, apply, and advise on legislative and regulatory frameworks relevant to the HE sector.

In-depth understanding of the UK Higher Education regulatory environment, including OfS Conditions of Registration (especially B1–B5 and E6), UKVI, Prevent and Safeguarding.

Strong knowledge of academic quality frameworks, including programme approval, review, and enhancement processes.

Understanding of institutional governance, assurance, and risk management frameworks.

Understanding of management information systems, data analytics, and their role in performance improvement.

Excellent strategic planning and operational leadership skills.

Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to influence and build trust and relationships across all levels of the institution and with all stakeholders.

	<p>Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, able to interpret complex data and present findings clearly.</p> <p>High level of attention to detail and accuracy in documentation, reporting, and decision-making.</p> <p>Proficiency in Microsoft Office, particularly Excel, and confidence with business and academic systems.</p> <p>Proven ability to drive quality and excellence in service delivery through continuous improvement.</p> <p>Commitment to excellence in a challenging higher education environment.</p>
Desirable	<p>Qualification</p> <p>Recognised qualification or training in UKVI compliance management, risk management, or data governance.</p> <p>Experience</p> <p>Previous experience of working with international students and the associated visa compliance requirements.</p> <p>Previous experience of managing student complaints within a Higher Education.</p> <p>Experience managing audits, inspections or reviews (internal or external, such as OfS, UKVI, PSRBs or QAA).</p> <p>Ability to bring strategic foresight and creativity to policy and governance development.</p>

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