

Personal Assistant to the Academic Director Job Description

The Personal Assistant to the Academic Director provides high-level, proactive and confidential administrative support to enable the Academic Director to discharge his academic, strategic and leadership responsibilities effectively within the College and the wider University.

This is a pivotal role requiring sound judgement, discretion, initiative and exceptional organisational skills. The post-holder will manage a complex and demanding workload, acting as the first point of contact for the Academic Director and ensuring the smooth coordination of meetings, communications, events and committee business.

The role would suit a Personal Assistant or senior administrator who thrives in a fast-paced academic environment and is confident working with senior academics, students, and external stakeholders.

The post-holder reports to the Academic Director and works closely with colleagues across the College.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. Diary and Event Management

- Manage the Academic Director's complex and dynamic diary, making informed and independent decisions to ensure the effective prioritisation of commitments and optimal use of time.
- Exercise judgement in balancing competing demands, anticipating scheduling conflicts, and proactively resolving issues.
- Coordinate internal and external meetings, including high-profile engagements involving Fellows, students, senior University colleagues and external partners.
- Arrange all travel and accommodation bookings (UK and international), including preparation of itineraries, visas where required, and processing associated expenses in accordance with College procedures.
- Ensure the Academic Director is fully prepared for meetings and events by collating and organising agendas, papers, background briefings and summaries in advance.
- Coordinate logistical arrangements for meetings and events, including room bookings, catering, AV requirements and visitor access.
- Support or lead on the delivery of high-profile academic and public events in collaboration with teams across the College.
- Oversee the organisation of the Judicial Forum, coordinating inputs from relevant colleagues and additional staffing resources during peak periods.
- Provide on-site support at events where required. Occasional work outside normal office hours may be necessary, for which Time Off In Lieu will be granted.

2. Communications and Correspondence

- Serve as the first point of contact for enquiries to the Academic Director from College members and external stakeholders.
- Exercise discretion and professionalism in triaging communications, filtering and prioritising correspondence, and determining matters requiring personal attention by the Academic Director.



- Manage the Academic Director's email inbox, proactively monitoring, drafting responses where appropriate, and ensuring timely follow-up of actions.
- Draft high-quality correspondence, briefing notes, invitations and formal communications on behalf of the Academic Director, often relating to confidential or sensitive matters.
- Manage telephone and postal enquiries with tact, diplomacy and efficiency.
- Coordinate visitor appointments, ensuring a professional and welcoming experience for guests.
- Build and maintain effective working relationships across the College and develop informal networks within the wider University to facilitate effective communication and collaboration.

3. Committee and Governance Support

- Prepare and print papers, briefings and reports for College committees and working groups as directed by the Academic Director.
- Collate documentation from multiple contributors, ensuring accuracy, consistency and timely circulation of committee papers.
- Draft agendas in consultation with the Academic Director and relevant colleagues.
- Ensure action points from meetings are recorded and followed up appropriately.
- Maintain accurate electronic and hard-copy filing systems for committee documentation and governance records.

4. Projects, Research and Administrative Systems

- Develop and maintain efficient administrative systems to support the Academic Director's various College and external roles.
- Conduct basic research and compile background information to support strategic discussions, speeches, reports and decision-making.
- Coordinate information from multiple sources and present it clearly in briefing papers or summary documents.
- Monitor deadlines, track key academic and governance timetables, and ensure timely completion of critical tasks.
- Assist with ad hoc projects as directed by the Academic Director.
- Carry out other administrative duties as required to support the academic and strategic leadership of the College.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience as a Personal Assistant or in a senior administrative role supporting senior leadership.
- Proven experience of complex diary management and independent decision-making.
- Experience of email triage and drafting professional correspondence on behalf of senior colleagues.
- Experience preparing committee papers, agendas and supporting governance processes.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities and work calmly under pressure.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- High level of discretion, tact and diplomacy, particularly when handling confidential information.
- Strong IT skills, including MS Office (Word, Excel, Outlook) and cloud-based document management systems.



- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision while contributing positively to a team environment.
- Strong attention to detail and commitment to accuracy.

Desirable

- Experience working in higher education or a similar complex institutional environment.
- Experience supporting high-profile academic or public events.
- Familiarity with committee servicing and governance structures within a collegiate or university setting.

Personal Attributes

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Professionalism and sound judgement.
- Initiative and problem-solving ability.
- A calm and adaptable approach in a busy environment.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build effective working relationships at all levels.
- Commitment to supporting the academic mission and values of the College.