

**STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Post: Engineering Officer**

**Department: Finance and Business Services -  
Estates and Capital Development**

**Reference Number: R110307**

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## **ASTON UNIVERSITY**

([www.aston.ac.uk](http://www.aston.ac.uk))

Founded in 1895, Aston is a long-established research-led University known for its world-class teaching quality and strong links to industry, government and commerce. At Aston we focus on academic excellence, delivering high quality teaching and research in an inspiring and creative environment.

Aston University gained its charter in 1966, and has come a long way in broadening its educational excellence and student appeal across Schools in Business, Engineering and Applied Science, Life and Health Sciences, and Languages and Social Sciences. Professor Julia King became Vice-Chancellor of the University in 2006, and presided in 2007 over the definition and implementation of the [Aston 2012 Strategy](#) which has helped define Aston's positioning, and the advantages which will help sustain its further development and 'edge' in an increasingly international competitive context.

The existing [Aston 2012 Strategy](#) aimed at establishing Aston as a top 10 University whilst retaining the core value: delivering accessible academic excellence. The development of the Aston 2020 Strategy is now well underway, and we intend to be ambitious and global in our aspirations. We will be focusing our Research Strategy on world-leading and internationally excellent areas, and will be using Learning & Teaching to build on our research strengths, whilst continuing to capitalise on our strengths in access, employability, and professional relevance of our programmes of study. Business and community engagement will exploit our research strengths, whilst acknowledging our role within the local community more broadly.

Implementation of Aston 2012, and recent significant investment in developing our staff, has also highlighted core values which make Aston an outstanding place to work. These values are encapsulated in Aston First, a culture transformation programme, and we expect clear direction and inspiration from leaders; better teamwork and inter-departmental communication; excellent customer service with a 'can-do' attitude; fairness, equality, respect and well-being for all; and everyone taking responsibility for innovation, cost saving and income generation. Aston is an exciting and vibrant place to work and study.

### **Students and programmes of study**

Aston University justifiably prides itself in the diversity of its population of 10,500 students, of whom approximately 8,000 are undergraduates, about 2,100 are taught postgraduate students, and 400 are postgraduate research students. Over 35% of students come from outside the UK, and over 50% of those are from outside the European Union.

Our range of undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes are designed to be vocationally relevant, and Aston has an outstanding graduate employment record with 82% finding graduate-level employment within six months of graduation, compared to a national average of less than 70% (relating to 2008-2010 graduates). We work with employers to design programmes that fit the needs of industry, commerce and the public sector, and to ensure that our graduates have the skills future employers require.

## **Research**

Aston has world-class strengths in research in every School of Study, and academics and research staff joining Aston will become part of a dynamic and successful research community. Many academics work on research in partnership with business, through such schemes as Knowledge transfer partnerships (KTPs), CASE awards and other industrial collaborations. Aston's Business Partnership unit (BPU) operates at the commercial edge of university research and teaching, linking businesses to the university's academic expertise.

## **Location and environment**

Aston University is based in the centre of Birmingham, one of Europe's liveliest and most welcoming cities, with superb cultural, retail and recreational facilities within walking distance of the campus. The 40-acre sustainable green campus houses all of the University's academic, social and accommodation facilities; the campus was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the People and Planet survey. The £215m Aston Student Village project is currently transforming the student accommodation on campus, providing 2400 new en suite rooms. A stunning state-of-the art Library was completed in 2010, with the ground floor configured as social learning space. A multi-million pound redevelopment of the Woodcock Sports Centre, due for completion in September 2011, will offer state-of-the art sports facilities including a beautiful grade 11 listed swimming pool. These high quality facilities and amenities make Aston a great place to work and study.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE, FINANCES**

Aston's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Julia King, is the principal Academic and Executive Officer of the University, with overall responsibility for Aston's strategic direction, executive management and day-to-day operation. The Vice-Chancellor is supported by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Helen Higson, and three Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Dr Phil Extance, Professor Martin Griffin, and Professor Alison Halstead.

Alastair Hewgill, Chief Financial Officer, Adèle MacKinlay, Chief Operating Officer and University secretary, and David Farrow, Director of Marketing Strategy and Communications, head up the support functions of the University. Sheila O'Neal is the Director of Development and Alumni Relations, and Alan Charters is Director of Capital Development.

## **Schools of Study**

As indicated above, Aston's academic activity is divided into four Schools of Study, each of which is managed by an Executive Dean:

Executive Dean, Aston Business School:	Professor John Edwards
Executive Dean, Engineering and Applied Science:	Professor Robert Berry
Executive Dean, Life and Health Sciences:	Professor Helen Griffiths
Executive Dean, Languages and Social Sciences:	Professor Pam Moores

## **Honorary positions and governance**

Aston's governing body, the University Council, comprises 10 staff members from within the Executive and Schools leadership, 2 student members, and 14 appointed lay members who are business and community leaders from the Midlands and beyond – 20% are Aston alumni. The University Senate is Aston's supreme academic authority. Aston's Chancellor, Sir John Sunderland, is the honorary and ceremonial head of the University.

## **Financial Performance**

Total income for the last full year 2010 was £110.5m, representing a 5% increase over the previous year, with 33% of income from the Funding Council, teaching fees and support grants accounting for 43%, research grants accounting for 8%, and other operating income of 16% arising from residential and rental revenues and intellectual property rights.

## **Supporting Information**

### **Estates & Capital Development**

#### *Our mission*

To deliver a world class physical infrastructure for the Aston's estate which will provide outstanding facilities, not just for learning and research, but for other areas of activity including; residences; social spaces; sports and conferences. Across all these developments, we will ensure that the campus is an inspiring environment that enhances the student experience and provides high quality accommodation and space that is accessible, efficient, flexible and responsive to the needs of all our users. We will continue the rolling programme of improvement of learning, teaching and research facilities creating a 'green' campus in an exciting city and a healthy and safe place to live and work.

#### *Our objectives*

- Create and maintain a high quality physical environment
- Make minimum environmental impact a major consideration in all we do
- Ensure best practice in health and safety
- Optimise investment in facilities and equipment, keeping capital spending on target

#### *Our structure*

There are 40 staff members within the Estates & Capital Development department organised into 9 teams; Capital Projects, Minor Projects, Space Planning, Environment & Sustainability, Engineering, Maintenance, Resources, Teaching Facilities and Administration.

