



OPPORTUNITY

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gets real.



Reference: 0507-24

Grade: 9

Salary: £46,485-£55,295 per annum, depending on experience

Contract Type: Permanent

Basis: Full Time

Job description

Job Purpose:

The role holder is responsible for enhancing the University's reputation and profile with both a wide range of external stakeholders, locally, nationally and globally. Leading our media relations strategy, the post holder will develop and implement a proactive PR strategy, expertly handle reactive issues and develop relationships with journalists and influencers to maximise press coverage. The role involves working with our academic community to maximise the number of colleagues involved in media relations and content generation.

Devise and deliver a staff communications strategy and a student communications strategy to support key objectives in our 2030 strategy, including driving staff and student satisfaction and achieving Best Places to Work accreditation. Develop content which furthers our reputation across teaching, research, enterprise and community, ensuring content is high quality and the format is optimised for the channel and audience.

Reports to: Deputy Director (Content)

Line manages: 3 x Press & Comms Managers, Internal Communications Manager, Student Communications Manager.

Main Duties/Responsibilities:

- ▶ Develop and implement an internal and external stakeholder communications strategy to meet the objectives of the Aston 2030 strategy, setting out the priority levels of different audiences and developing an effective and efficient plan to communicate with each audience appropriately.
- ▶ Responsible for devising and implementing effective media relations strategies with expert knowledge of national, specialist, regional and social media, to deliver maximum coverage. Set ambitious targets and optimise our approach.
- ▶ Develop and implement an internal (staff) communications strategy to support the delivery of the People Strategy, maximise staff pride and satisfaction in working for Aston. Use multiple channels and sector-leading content and campaigns to achieve maximum impact.
- ▶ Develop and implement an (enrolled) student communications strategy which ensure students are well informed and that a variety of activities and channels are effectively used to drive student engagement.
- ▶ Effectively lead the team, motivating staff to achieve their best, setting clear targets and objectives, creating an excellent continuous improvement culture. Act as a role model to others within the team and the wider department.
- ▶ Ensure quality across the output of the team and tackle poor performance effectively as appropriate.
- ▶ Work closely with the Vice Chancellor and Executive Team on proactive and reactive press and communication issues and provide support to the senior team as required.
- ▶ Provide expert crisis management advice and support as required; this will occasionally involve work outside of office house.
- ▶ Be responsible for monitoring our reputation across media and social media, identifying any issues, alerting senior executives and provide expert advice and take action as required.
- ▶ Expertly using social media platforms and multiple communication channels to maximise the reach of news stories and content which supports our brand and reputation.
- ▶ Develop excellent relationships across the university to generate engagement in our work, seek out and develop stories and expert comment by working with a wide range of our academic staff.
- ▶ Ensure our academic colleges are supported appropriately by their Press & Comms Manager, ensuring plans and evaluations of activity are communicated, develop strong relationships and tackle challenges that may arise.

- ▶ Develop/organise media training and provide briefing notes and guidance to colleagues as necessary.
- ▶ Develop content across a range of channels, including press releases, opinion pieces and video ensuring they align with our Brand Strategy.
- ▶ Collaborate extensively with colleagues across the wider department to support the delivery of the department plan.
- ▶ To identify cost and resource efficiencies to maximise return on investment.
- ▶ Other activities as appropriate in line with the role. Please note that you will be expected to work at our Graduation ceremonies in July, our Clearing operation in mid August, at enrolment in September, and at our university open days. This is likely to include around 3 Saturdays.

Additional responsibilities

- ▶ Engage in continuous personal and professional development in line with the demands of the role, including undertaking relevant training and development activities to develop themselves and support the development of others.
- ▶ Ensure and promote the personal health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- ▶ Carry out duties in a way which promotes fairness in all matters and which engenders trust.
- ▶ Promote equality of opportunity and support diversity and inclusion as well as working to support the University's environmental sustainability agenda and practices.

Person specification

	Essential	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Related undergraduate degree or equivalent experience 	Application form.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Extensive experience in managing proactive and reactive media relations within/on behalf of a large organisation, track record of enhancing an organisation's profile ▶ Experience developing news stories and content which achieve significant media coverage. ▶ Experience of crisis management and managing an organisation's reputation. ▶ Significant experience of managing staff, setting clear standards and ensuring staff are motivated and achieving their best. Experience of managing direct and line managed reports. ▶ Experience of leading and delivering communications activity across multiple channels, including, web, social, video and copy ▶ Experience of proactively placing stories in the media and developing tactics to maximise coverage and web traffic. 	Application form and interview.
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In-depth knowledge of key social media platforms and how to utilise to further our reputation, including engaging online influencers. ▶ Knowledge of communications principles and how to develop and deliver an effective communication strategy. 	

	Essential	Method of assessment
Aptitude and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Commitment to equality & diversity. ▶ Excellent copywriting and proofreading skills, able to write for multiple audiences effectively. ▶ High levels of personal resilience, able to withstand significant pressure and keep calm in challenging situations. ▶ Ability to lead and motivate a team, set a clear vision and KPIs, and obtain a sector-leading performance from the team. ▶ Ability to tackle poor performance, have difficult conversations and improve quality of output. ▶ Excellent communicator, able to persuade and influence others. 	Application form and interview.

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Related postgraduate or professional qualification 	Application form and interview.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Strong journalist contacts on national news media and/or online influencers ▶ Experience of coaching, staff development and managing poor performance. ▶ Experience of leading internal communications within a large, complex organisation. 	Application form and interview.
Aptitude & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Able to take complex research projects/findings and write into simple and compelling press releases and copy. ▶ Track record of negotiating and persuading academic staff in a university setting. 	Application form and interview.

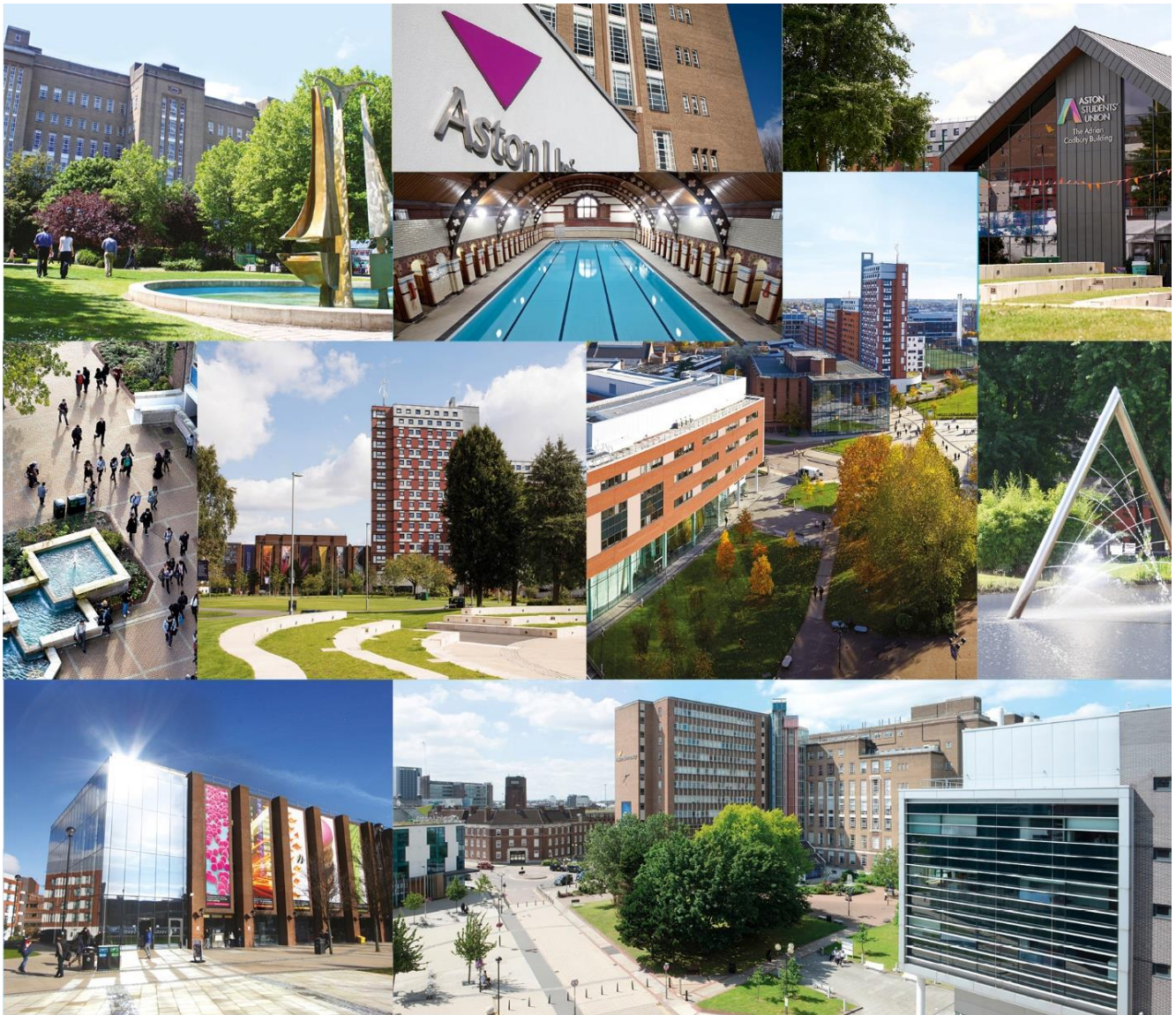
How to apply

You can apply for this role online via our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs>.

Applications should be submitted by 23:59 on the advertised closing date.
All applicants must complete an application form, along with your CV.

Any CV sent directly to the Recruitment Team and Recruiting Manager will not be accepted.

If you require a manual application form then please contact the Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk.



Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:

Name: Lauren Gale

Job Title: Deputy Director (Content)

Email: l.gale@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:

Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

Visit our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr> for full details of our salary scales and benefits Aston University staff enjoy

Salary scales: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/payroll-and-pensions/salary-scales/index>

Benefits: [Benefits and Rewards | Aston University](#)

Working in Birmingham: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/birmingham>

Employment of Ex-Offenders: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the positions they applying for is listed an exception under the act.

Eligibility to work in the UK: You should ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements, including meeting the [English language standards](#). If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful. Please see UKVI guidance for further information on eligibility, knowledge of English requirements and approved test centres <https://www.gov.uk/tier-2-general>

With the end of free movement for EU/EEA/Swiss nationals from 1 January 2021, the UK's new immigration system applies to all non-UK/Irish nationals who require a visa.

Where an individual is subject to UK immigration control, they will require a visa to work in the UK.

The following individuals do not need a visa for the UK, but do still have to prove their right to work before employment can commence:

- **British Citizens or Irish Nationals**
- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals with Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme**
- **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK.**

The main routes available for those who need a visa to work in the UK are **Skilled Worker**, **Global Talent** and the **Graduate Route**.

You can find further information about each of these visa routes on our [candidate immigration page](#).

If you will conduct research in your role, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application. Please see below for further details.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS): If you will conduct research in your role and you apply for a Skilled Worker or Temporary Worker GAE visa, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application.

This process can take at least 6 weeks to process, and Aston will consider this when confirming your expected start date. Processing times will increase between April and September and can longer to complete.

There is no fast-track option available. ATAS certificates will be processed in order of receipt.

You can find more information about ATAS on our [candidate immigration page](#).

Before you start and Right to Work

90-day entry vignette

If you have applied for your visa outside of the UK, you will receive a vignette in your passport which is usually valid for 90 days. Please make sure to travel to the UK within the 'valid from' and 'valid to' dates on this visa. If you entered the UK before or after these dates, you would not 'activate' the visa and you would need to leave and re-enter the country.

You will also receive a decision letter confirming details about your immigration permission and where to collect your Biometric Residence Permit.

Cost of Living - Estate and Letting Agents

There are numerous Estate and Letting Agents in and around Birmingham that can help you find suitable accommodation. The [Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme](#) provides a list of professional agencies and landlords who have applied with them for accreditation. Whilst accreditation is not a guarantee of quality, it provides some reassurance about the standard of the service they provide.

You can also use property search websites such as [Rightmove](#) or [Zoopla](#).

Equal Opportunities: Aston University promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure, through our admissions policies for students, and our staff recruitment and selection processes that we encourage applications from all groups represented in the wider community at a local, national and international level.

The University will endeavour not to discriminate unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, against student or potential students, staff or potential staff. This commitment applies to all functions of the University and to any stage of an individual's career.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is included within the application form. Data you provide on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be included in a general database, for statistical monitoring purposes, enabling the University to monitor the effectiveness of its Policy, Codes of Practice and Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in Employment. Individuals will not be identified by name.

Data Protection: Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) ("GDPR"). The University's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, including the Job Applicant Privacy Notice can be found at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/data-protection>. Your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with the University which will be stored in manual and/or electronic files. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies.

Full details of our terms and conditions of service and associated policies and procedures are available online at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/policies>

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www.aston.ac.uk



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