



Senior Digital Learning Lead

Candidate Information

March 2026

The Institute of Cancer Research

About our organisation

We are one of the world's most influential cancer research institutes with an outstanding record of achievement dating back more than 100 years. We are world leaders in identifying cancer genes, discovering cancer drugs and developing precision radiotherapy. Together with our hospital partner The Royal Marsden, we are rated in the top four centres for cancer research and treatment worldwide. As well as being a world-class institute, we are a college of the University of London.

We came second in the league table of university research quality compiled from the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021). We have charitable status and rely on support from partner organisations, charities, donors and the general public. We have more than 1000 staff and postgraduate students across three sites – in Chelsea and Sutton.

Education & Library Services directorate

The Education and Library Services directorate creates an efficient and effective environment to allow the ICR's students to flourish.

We administer the whole student lifecycle from recruitment to award and provide online resources for students and reports to regulatory bodies. The directorate also provides services to the broader organisation, including the library and information governance.

The Directorate team provides strategic oversight of educational governance, digital learning environment and library services. In addition to supporting core operational activity, the Directorate also leads institutional projects and strategic initiatives relating to the development of education at the ICR.

Our mission
is to make the
discoveries that
defeat cancer.

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Our values

The ICR has a highly skilled and committed workforce, with a wide variety of roles, each requiring different skills. But whether you work as a researcher, or work as part of our corporate team, your work and behaviour is underpinned by these six values. They are what bring us together as one team - as 'One ICR'.



Pursuing excellence

We aspire to excellence in everything we do, and aim to be leaders in our field.



Acting with Integrity

We promote an open and honest environment that gives credit and acknowledges mistakes, so that our actions stand up to scrutiny.



Valuing all our people

We value the contribution of all our people, help them reach their full potential, and treat everyone with kindness and respect.



Working together

We collaborate with colleagues and partners to bring together different skills, resources and perspectives.



Leading innovation

We do things differently in ways that no one else has done before, and share the expertise and learning we gain.



Making a difference

We all play our part, doing a little bit more, a little bit better, to help improve the lives of people with cancer.



Our values set out how each of us at the ICR, works together to meet our mission – to make the discoveries that defeat cancer. They summarise our desired behaviours, attitudes and culture – how we value one another and how we take pride in the work we do, to deliver impact for people with cancer and their loved ones.”

Professor Kristian Helin
Chief Executive

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Job description

Department / division: Education & Library Services > Directorate

Pay grade / staff group: Professional Services 3

Hours / duration: Full time (35 hours per week), Monday to Friday.
12-month fixed-term in the first instance, with the possibility of extension depending on the development of this work and the availability of funding.

Reports to: Academic Registrar

Main purpose of the job: The post-holder will provide senior specialist leadership in digital learning and online education development across the ICR.

Working closely with the Academic Registrar and academic colleagues, the role will design and evaluate models for high-quality online professional learning in oncology and cancer science. The post-holder will also support the effective use of the virtual learning environment and advise on emerging developments in digital pedagogy, including generative AI and assessment design.

Duties and responsibilities:

Strategic digital learning development

An early priority will be to develop a framework and prototype structures for high-quality online professional courses that build on the ICR's international reputation in cancer science.

Provide senior specialist advice on the development of digital learning and online education at the ICR.

Work with the Academic Registrar and academic colleagues to evaluate opportunities for the development of high-quality online professional learning aligned with the ICR's educational mission.

Develop a delivery model framework for online professional courses, including pedagogical approach, learning design principles, production models and quality standards.

Develop costed models for online course development and delivery, including consideration of academic input, production requirements and learner support.

Produce recommendations and briefing papers to support institutional decision-making about the development of online professional learning.

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Engage with colleagues across the sector to maintain awareness of emerging practice in digital education and professional online learning.

Share expertise through participation in institutional projects and working groups relating to education, digital learning and innovation.

Online professional learning development

This work will translate the new online learning framework into practical learning design approaches and prototype course structures.

Lead the development of prototype architectures for online professional courses using the ICR's virtual learning environment.

Develop course design templates and guidance for academic colleagues contributing to online professional learning.

Work with subject matter experts to explore approaches for structuring high-quality asynchronous online learning.

Develop example module structures and learning activities within Canvas to demonstrate potential delivery models.

Advise on appropriate levels of production quality, including audio-visual approaches, interactive learning activities and learner engagement.

Contribute to the development of business cases and funding proposals relating to online professional education where required.

Where appropriate, contribute to the early development of pilot learning materials to support testing and evaluation of proposed delivery models.

Virtual learning environment leadership

Provide senior oversight of the ICR's virtual learning environment (Canvas), including reviewing current practice and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Undertake a review of the ICR's current use of Canvas and identify opportunities for enhancement.

Develop guidance and recommendations for improved use of the VLE to support teaching, learning and assessment.

Act as an institutional contact with the VLE supplier and relevant sector networks to represent the ICR's needs and priorities.

Review integrations with external tools used within the VLE environment, including assessment and academic integrity tools.

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Support academic and professional services colleagues in making effective use of digital learning tools where appropriate.

Digital pedagogy and AI

The role will support the ICR in developing thoughtful and practical approaches to the use of generative AI in teaching, learning and assessment.

Provide expert advice on developments in digital pedagogy relevant to postgraduate research and taught education.

Work with academic colleagues to explore approaches to assessment design that are resilient to and make appropriate use of generative AI.

Contribute to institutional planning relating to the use of generative AI in education, including policy development and approaches to assessment.

Develop guidance and resources to support staff and students in the effective and responsible use of generative AI.

Identify opportunities where digital tools and AI may support student learning and academic practice.

Work with colleagues across the ICR to support the development of practical guidance and capability relating to the use of generative AI in education.

Support the development of digital capability within Education & Library Services and the wider institution through advice, training or guidance where appropriate.

Digital learning resources and research skills

This work will support the development of high-quality digital learning resources to strengthen postgraduate research skills and improve access to library training.

Work with Library colleagues to explore opportunities for developing high-quality online learning resources to support student research skills.

Support the development of digital learning materials related to literature searching, systematic reviews and research methods where appropriate.

Advise on approaches to structuring reusable online learning materials for postgraduate learners.

General

All staff must ensure that they familiarise themselves with and adhere to any ICR policies that are relevant to their work and that all personal and sensitive personal data is treated with the utmost confidentiality and in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

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Any other duties that are consistent with the nature and grade of the post that may be required.

To work in accordance with the ICR's Values.

To promote a safe, healthy and fair environment for people to work, where bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

This job description is a reflection of the present position and is subject to review and alteration in detail and emphasis in the light of future changes or development.

The role requires a minimum of two days per week on-site in either Chelsea or Sutton, with occasional work on both sites and additional in-person presence as needed for key events and operational requirements.

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Person specification

Education and Knowledge

Postgraduate degree or equivalent professional experience in a relevant field (such as education, digital learning, or a related discipline).	Essential
Knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in higher education, particularly within postgraduate or research-intensive environments.	Essential
Knowledge of digital pedagogy and approaches to online learning design.	Essential
Understanding of developments in digital education, including the opportunities and challenges associated with generative AI in teaching and assessment.	Essential
Understanding of approaches to designing and delivering high-quality online professional or continuing education.	Desirable

Skills

Excellent interpersonal, organisational and communication skills.	Essential
Ability to work collaboratively with academic and professional services colleagues at all levels of seniority.	Essential
Ability to influence and persuade colleagues and support the adoption of new approaches to teaching and learning.	Essential
Excellent standard of written and spoken English with strong attention to clarity, presentation and detail.	Essential
Ability to translate pedagogical ideas into clear and effective learning design structures and digital learning materials.	Essential
Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to evaluate emerging developments in digital education and advise on their relevance in an institutional context.	Essential
Ability to work proactively and independently while maintaining a collaborative approach to working.	Essential
Excellent IT skills including experience of digital learning environments and common software packages.	Essential
Ability to design and present complex ideas clearly through written briefings, frameworks and guidance.	Essential

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Experience

Experience of working in higher education in a role relating to teaching and learning, digital learning, or educational development.	Essential
Experience of designing or supporting online or digitally-enabled learning.	Essential
Experience of advising or working with academic staff on learning design, teaching or assessment.	Essential
Experience of influencing practice or introducing new approaches within academic environments.	Essential
Experience of working with virtual learning environments such as Canvas or similar platforms.	Essential
Experience of developing online professional education or continuing professional development programmes.	Desirable
Experience of working with digital learning tools or technologies relevant to online learning design.	Desirable

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Benefits

We offer a fantastic working environment, great opportunities for career development and the chance to make a real difference to defeat cancer. We aim to recruit and develop the best – the most outstanding scientists and clinicians, and the most talented professional and administrative staff.

The annual leave entitlement for full time employees is 28 days per annum on joining. This will increase by a further day after 2 years' and 5 years' service.

Staff membership to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) is available. The USS is a defined benefit scheme and provides a highly competitive pension scheme with robust benefits. The rate of contributions is determined by USS and details of the costs and benefits of this scheme can be found on their website. If staff are transferring from the NHS, they can opt to remain members of the NHS Pension Scheme.

We offer a range of family friendly benefits such as flexible working, a parents' group, and a maternity mentoring scheme. Other great benefits include interest free loans for discounted season tickets for travel and bicycle purchases, access to the NHS discounts website, a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme which offers a range of well-being, financial and legal advice services, two staff restaurants, and access to a gym and sporting facilities at our Sutton site.

Further information

You may contact Stuart Bell for further information by emailing stuart.bell@icr.ac.uk. This job description is a reflection of the current position and is subject to review and alteration in detail and emphasis in the light of future changes or development.