



Executive Assistant to the Director of Academic Services and Project Coordinator Candidate Information

July 2022

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 ranked second to top 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.

Academic Services Directorate

The role of the Academic Services directorate is to create an efficient and effective academic environment for the ICR's scientific community to flourish. Our services underpin both research and education across the ICR.

The directorate comprises ten teams working across three sites. It encompasses the teams that support the ICR's world-leading research, those that administer our degree programmes, and oversight of information governance.

**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 professional services 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:	Professional Services / Academic Services
Pay grade / staff group:	Professional Services 4 / £32,775 - £41,400 per annum
Hours / duration:	Full time (35 hours per week), Monday to Friday.
Reports to:	Registrar & Director of Academic Services
Main purpose of the job:	To understand, assist and coordinate the complex work of the Director of Academic Services; to provide proactive project support and efficient administration across the Directorate; and to act as the point of contact for whole-directorate activity.

Duties and responsibilities:

Executive assistance for the Director

Organise the Director's workload, ensuring that they are appraised of upcoming deadlines in adequate time to ensure work is completed and reviewed. Use discretion to identify priorities and issues and proactively prepare or seek briefings and further information on these as required.

Full and effective management of the Director's busy inbox as directed and any designated team inbox(es), regularly reviewing commitments with the Director and proactively prioritising these to enable forward planning.

Act as first point of contact and ambassador for the Director and proactively manage and filter correspondence and enquiries to prioritise or redirect to others as appropriate.

Use discretion to respond to colleagues / stakeholders on behalf of the Director where appropriate.

Respond to correspondence within delegated areas of responsibility or draft correspondence for the Director where their review and/or approval are necessary.

Support the Director to monitor progress on their current work and activities through reviewing action points from meetings and regular reports, using this to prepare briefing notes and track actions for committee and 1-2-1 meetings, triangulating information as necessary. When necessary, use persuasion and influence to negotiate outcomes and deadlines so that projects are completed in a timely fashion. Where necessary, take appropriate steps to progress actions assigned to their manager, on the manager's behalf.

Proactive management of the Director's complex diary so that their time is used effectively, aligns with confirmed priorities and incorporates new urgent issues. This includes the collation of papers for appointments, providing these and briefing notes in a timely fashion. Balancing time for working and meetings appropriately.

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Full budget and expenditure oversight/ management and approval of designated budgets, process compliance, attend finance review meetings.

Project Coordination

Work on and support key projects that are high priority for ICR including the preparations for the research assessment exercises, the major funding submissions that the Director leads on, and compliance with the Human Tissue Act. Maintaining project documentation, supporting the flow of information and managing your time and tasks effectively.

Work with the relevant lead for projects led by Academic Services including:

- Provide high quality project and administrative support including information / data analysis where appropriate
- Coordinate and support meetings, including preparing agendas, minutes, reports and action logs and proactively following up on completion of actions
- Implement mechanisms to track project progress drawing to the attention of the project lead where there is an issue or dependency
- Support project communications and stakeholder engagement confidently liaising between parties to ensure a clear understanding of project objectives and milestones.

To lead on small, ad hoc projects assigned by the Director to further his or her priorities, or to help the wider directorate to become more efficient.

Maintain an overview of directorate priorities and current projects, providing support in the maintenance and updating of the Academic Services operational plans (learning and teaching, research, and governance), seeking input from across the teams.

Work with Academic Services team leaders to coordinate requests for information for internal reporting, such as updates to KPIs etc.,

To join working groups for projects around the organisation as required, providing a user voice for other Professional Services directorates seeking to introduce new processes, policies or systems.

Support for the wider directorate

Lead responsibility for Directorate administration including

- Finance: budget planning, processing invoices and directorate expenses claims;
- HR reporting: annual leave and sickness absence monitoring.
- Recruitment: funding authorisation, finalising JD/person spec, adverts, use of the recruitment system, liaising with the HR Recruitment team;
- Induction of new starters across the directorate;
- Health and Safety: ensuring regulations are adhered to and documentation completed in a timely manner; coordinating periodic reviews and reporting as required
- Records retention: maintaining electronic filing systems, archiving documents and destroying in line with retention policies as appropriate, and ensuring this is done across the directorate coordinating with the Information Governance team;

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- Organising Directorate meetings / away days, participation in meetings and other office duties as required

Design, implement, maintain, and improve administrative systems & practices and to ensure the smooth running of the Academic Services directorate. This includes maintain both electronic and hard copy filing systems, maintaining the IT administrative structure for the academic services teams and playing a lead role in the maintenance of the Academic Services intranet pages, and in particular update the top-level pages (including updates of the organisation chart) and provide support and advice on collaboration sites.

Share best practice with other administrators by regular attendance at AdminNet meetings.

Assist with the drafting and updating of strategic documents on behalf of Academic Services.

Cascade information to Academic Services team leaders or the broader directorate as appropriate with regard organisation-wide developments, training opportunities, changes to systems or processes.

Process and track honorary appointments for the joint Clinical R&D team, who are Royal Marsden employees, and liaise with teams where relevant to ensure they have the systems access required.

Liaise with Clinical R&D on behalf of the Director re Clinical Trials authorisations.

Provide assistance to the Academic Services business continuity team as needed.

Represent the directorate's needs in 123 Old Brompton Road in conversations with Site Management.

Servicing Meetings

Proactively plan and prepare for meetings, including pre-empting meeting needs such as travel, paperwork, briefings, room bookings, video conferencing and catering, making arrangements for visitors, booking venues, arranging equipment.

Take meeting notes and minutes when required, circulating these in a timely manner and ensuring proactive follow up on key actions, milestones and priorities.

Collate, review and prepare a range of reports, papers and other documentation.

Stakeholder Management

Support communication with internal and external stakeholders as required.

Develop and maintain effective working relationships at all levels within the ICR, acting as the interface, communication link and primary conduit between Director's office and external and internal contacts and stakeholders. In particular, to liaise closely with the Secretariat Team and the EA to the CEO to coordinate the ICR's representation at meetings with external partners, namely Imperial College, Breast Cancer Now, the Royal Marsden Hospital, the University of London and London Higher.

Develop a sound working knowledge of the sector to assist in the effective performance of the role.

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General

Take responsibility for own continuing professional development so that knowledge of developments and best practice is current and informs professional delivery.

Familiarise 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 Regulations.

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

To work in accordance with the ICR's Values.

To promote a safe, healthy and fair environment for people to work, where discrimination, 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.

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Person specification

Education and Knowledge

Educated to degree level or equivalent/relevant experience	Essential
Educational background in a science subject	Desirable

Skills

Professional and non-judgemental manner and discreet approach to dealing with confidential matters.	Essential
Excellent organisational skills with the ability to deal with a high workload	Essential
Advanced literacy, numeracy and analytical ability	Essential
Advanced verbal and written communication skills	Essential
Sound level of computer literacy and knowledge of office technology and systems with excellent skills in Microsoft Office	Essential
Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to work collaboratively with people from all backgrounds and organisational levels, communicating and building relationships effectively	Essential
Diplomatic and tactful with excellent dispute resolution and influencing skills	Essential
Advanced organisational and problem-solving skills	Essential
Strong attention to detail and ability to produce accurate and detailed work with minimum supervision	Essential
Proactive with the ability to prioritise multiple tasks and work to competing, changing deadlines	Essential
Ability to work under high pressure and remain calm with the diary rapidly changing on a regular basis	Essential
Budget monitoring experience	Desirable
Experience of MS SharePoint or other content management systems	Desirable

Experience

Experience of working in the Scientific/Research and/or Higher Education sector	Essential
Experience of providing proactive EA or PA support to senior level staff (director or equivalent)	Essential
Experience of working under pressure with strict deadlines and dealing with complex issues with competing priorities	Essential

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Experience of developing, implementing and maintaining offices systems (electronic and manual)	Essential
Experience of committee servicing/minute taking	Essential
Project Management experience	Desirable

General

Committed to the ICR's mission, values, aims and objectives	Essential
Proactive and able to anticipate the needs of your manager	Essential
Resilient, self-motivated and driven	Essential
Calm, professional presence and gravitas	Essential
Flexible and dynamic approach	Essential
Ability to work flexibly, across both ICR locations (Chelsea and Sutton), and from home as required	Essential
Interest in cancer research and education	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 Emma Pendleton for further information by emailing emma.pendleton@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.