

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	People and Skills Commissioning Manager
MANAGED BY:	Head of People and Skills
GRADE:	Grade 12

BACKGROUND

The West of England Combined Authority is seeking to appoint a senior People and Skills manager to join the People and Skills service management team.

This is an exciting time to join the West of England Combined Authority. In the last year nearly three quarters of a billion pounds of new investment has been secured for the region. New plans are in place to deliver on Mayoral priorities to improve transport, skills and housing for our residents, take decisive action to tackle the climate emergency, and to support communities facing the cost-of-living crisis. There is a relentless focus on delivery to put the West of England on the map for regional, national and global success.

Led by the regional Metro Mayor, the West of England Combined Authority brings together three local councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership and works with communities, other public services, and industry to deliver for the region.

You will be a key player in making the West of England the best it can be for jobs, training and business. We are delivering on bringing secure and fairly-paid jobs to the region, supporting people to gain new skills, and businesses facing economic uncertainty. We are building on our reputation as a region of innovation and creativity.

Come and help shape the future of the West of England, a place so many people are proud to call home.

THE ROLE

The People & Skills Commissioning Manager will lead the development of creative solutions to address the region's emerging skills challenges as the economy shifts and recalibrates. This will directly inform the delivery of c. £50m of regional skills support over the coming years, ensuring close alignment with our Metro Mayor's priorities, with direction and solutions firmly based on analysis of our technical and strategic evidence and knowledge base. The skills and training interventions planned and delivered as a result of this work will deliver to our new regional Employment and Skills Plan and the postholder will lead on reporting against this plan. You will form part of the People &

Skills Service's senior team and report directly to the Head of Service.

The postholder will:

- Lead the development and shaping of future skills interventions to deliver our West of England Metro Mayor's Skills priorities
- Craft and maintain plans to ensure that the employment and skills objectives of the Local Industrial Strategy and Employment and Skills plan are delivered
- Provide technical expertise to forecast future strategic skills and training needs across the region to ensure provision funded by and/or directly delivered by the Combined Authority will deliver to our regional aims and objectives
- Liaise directly with a complex range of external stakeholders to gather insight into future skills needs, including on a sectoral basis

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The key responsibilities of the role are as follows:

- Work in collaboration with technical experts to identify patterns, emerging trends and changing employer demand for skills to meet current and future regional skills needs, across all areas of our work, all sectors and job levels.
- Lead the adaptation and/or creation of new solutions to meet existing or future need, based on a thorough technical understanding of funding and delivery constraints (including, for example, government funding eligibility rules and restrictions) across the entire range of People & Skills funded activity.
- Create and monitor the Employment & Skills Plan annual delivery plan to ensure that provision meets demand and remains aligned to, and delivers on, the Metro Mayor's priorities, the Combined Authority business plan and the regional Local Industrial Strategy.
- Lead the monitoring and updating of the regional Employment & Skills Plan, ensuring that progress is reviewed, objectively and using key metrics, at least annually and liaising with Unitary Authorities to report and build continued commitment to delivering this plan.
- Work with colleagues across the Combined Authority to build an understanding of the scale and type of skills demand required by businesses and employers to meet new and emerging need, including that arising from any major new investment granted to the Combined Authority, for instance, the £3bn CRSTS settlement.
- Facilitate the alignment of our c£50m portfolio to the Employment & Skills Plan and Business Plan annual objectives, ensuring a clear roadmap is in place based on forecasting work undertaken by Policy and Strategy colleagues.

- Oversee and empower People & Skills Managers leading operational delivery to equip them with the data, research best practice and expertise to align their ongoing delivery to meet needs identified, using excellent interpersonal and judgement skills to enable each staff member to own their own area of delivery through matrix management approaches.
- Identify and manage, in conjunction with the People and Skills managers and wider team, cross cutting themes for delivery and ensure these are clear and understood by each part of the service. Work with managers leading each area to translate these themes into delivery (e.g. green skills, digital skills, leadership and management skills, careers advice and guidance etc.).
- Identify and build a body of best practice, from all areas of the service as well as external sources, to ensure learning from evaluations is accumulated such that the service builds in a continual improvement cycle as new initiatives are launched and run.
- Work at senior levels, with the Head of Service, in a very complex environment to further strengthen relationships with a wide range of external stakeholders and partners, negotiating and influencing at all levels from officer up to elected members, to ensure that all stakeholders feel they have collaborated on solutions to future skills needs and can deliver effectively to shared ambition.
- Review and provide insight into the optimum adult teaching and FE estate in order to help the Combined Authority lobby for additional capital investment in areas of growth, and to bring clarity and understanding on how to direct future investment in the estate.
- Horizon scan and research new government initiatives affecting any area of skills or training, affecting individuals, communities, small and larger employers with a view to ensuring greater alignment between the national, regional and local offer and in particular seek to bring influence to government to better serve the regional agenda.
- Support and deputise for the Head of Service in internal and external meetings where required, including at short notice and at all levels.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Education to degree level or able to demonstrate equivalent professional experience in a relevant sector

- Excellent knowledge of the regional employment and skills landscape (at all levels) and the associated challenges and opportunities for the region
- Excellent knowledge of Education and Skills Commissioning approaches
- Excellent technical knowledge of Education and Skills Funding systems, with particular knowledge of Skills Bootcamps, Multiply, and AEB

Experience

- Experience of turning strategic plans into delivery including a creative approach to programme design, delivery and performance monitoring
- Experience of identifying, shaping and determining the makeup of employment and skills interventions to meet regional and national needs/demands
- Experience of drawing together, leading and motivating cross-organisational project teams to achieve success
- Experience of working in a complex stakeholder environment up to CEO or elected member level and can demonstrate ability to build and maintain effective internal and external working relationships based on strong trust
- Experience of ensuring that interventions are of a high quality and deliver value for money
- Experience of collating, preparing and presenting complex information to a range of key stakeholders to secure engagement and buy-in
- Broad experience of working in employment and skills environments such as: FE, HE, Local Authority, awarding bodies and/or Government institutions

Skills and Competencies

- Excellent engagement and influencing skills, with the ability to network and negotiate up to most senior levels
- Confident communicator with the ability to set out complex initiatives or ideas to a range of audiences
- Able to plan own workload and take proactive and independent action to ensure plans stay on track
- Excellent problem solving and analytical skills, including ability to work with statistics and detailed technical LMI
- Ability to translate national and international priorities into a regional and local context and vice versa
- Demonstrate an ability to make a positive contribution to the achievement of

corporate and service strategic objectives

- Excellent self-starter, able to draw on own resilience to manage own workload and work with little supervision
- Holds oneself and others to account for high standards of delivery
- Able to motivate and lead others, where not the direct line manager and to build consensus
- A demonstrable commitment to West of England Combined Authority values

DESIRABLE

Qualifications and Knowledge

- A programme or portfolio management qualification e.g. MSP or MoP
- Experience of working in a political environment, including with senior local authority members and officers.

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

Alongside a competitive salary, we offer an excellent benefits package including:

- 25 days Annual Leave plus bank holidays
- Generous Employer-Contribution Pension Scheme through the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Discounted monthly bus tickets
- Hybrid working to split your week between the office and home to help you achieve the best work/life balance and career goals.

We have just moved into a new bright, airy, modern office space, equipped with latest technology, under a 10 minute walk from Bristol Temple Meads Train Station. We offer flexible and hybrid working options.

As an equal opportunities employer, we invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

WE PAY THE LIVING WAGE

We're proud to have been accredited as a Living Wage Employer

Living Wage accreditation means that everyone working at The West of England and Combined Authority receives a minimum hourly wage of £9.90 - higher than the government minimum for over 23s, currently £9.50 per hour.

It also means that anyone who provides services to, or has



contracts with us, must pay the Living Wage, setting the bar for good employer practices in the region. This includes those who provide services to The West of England and Combined Authority, such cleaning and facilities management contracts, as well as those who have contracts with us - such as IT providers.