

Position description

Greater together 

Position title:	Senior Strategy and Communications Adviser
Institute/School/Centre/ Directorate/VCO:	Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Campus:	Mt Helen Campus. Travel between campuses may be required.
Classification:	Within the HEW Level 8 range
Time fraction:	Full-time
Employment mode:	Fixed-term employment
Reason for fixed term:	Specific Task or Project
Probation period:	This appointment is offered subject to the successful completion of a probationary period.
Further information from:	Susan Crebbin, Director, Strategy, Vice-Chancellor's Office and Corporate Communications Telephone: (03) 5327 6392 Email: susan.crebbin2@federation.edu.au
Recruitment number:	JR101373

Position summary

The Senior Strategy and Communications Adviser provides high-quality strategic and communications advice and content development to the Vice-Chancellor's Office. Working closely with senior leaders and stakeholders across the University, the role supports the articulation and delivery of clear, timely and compelling messages that advance the University's strategic priorities.

The Senior Strategy and Communications Adviser uses sound judgement and is an experienced communications professional with strong writing capability, and an understanding of public policy, government and the higher education sector.

The role will report to the Director, Strategy, Vice-Chancellor's Office and Corporate Communications.

Portfolio

The Vice-Chancellor's Office (VCO) provides support to the Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff in their key leadership roles in the university. The VCO is responsible to the University Council for the academic and administrative affairs of the university and for maintaining, reviewing and promoting the effectiveness, efficiency and future direction of Federation University.

Background

At Federation University, we are driven to make a real difference to the lives of every student, and to the communities we serve.

We are one of Australia's oldest universities, known today for our modern approach to teaching and learning. For 150 years, we have been reaching out to new communities, steadily building a generation of independent thinkers united in the knowledge that they are greater together.

Across our University and TAFE campuses in Ballarat, Berwick, Gippsland, and the Wimmera, we deliver world-class education and facilities. With the largest network of campuses across Victoria, we are uniquely positioned to provide pathways from vocational education and skills training at Federation TAFE through to higher education.

To be successful at Federation University you must be willing to enthusiastically embrace the University's ambition as expressed in Federation University's 2040 Strategic Plan and share the University's values of:

INCLUSION, we champion access and equity for all, creating a welcoming, supportive environment for our diverse learners and staff.

INNOVATION, we innovate to transform, embracing new ideas in teaching, research and operations to continually improve and stay ahead.

EXCELLENCE, we strive for excellence in all that we do, holding ourselves to high standards of quality, integrity and impact.

EMPOWERMENT, we support and trust our people, empowering learners, staff and partners to contribute, lead and succeed.

COLLABORATION, we are stronger together; teamwork and strong partnerships are at the heart of how we operate.

Key responsibilities

1. Research, write and refine complex strategic documents, submissions, speeches and briefings, aligned to University strategy, priorities and tailored to audience, tone and purpose.
2. Provide expert translation of complex policy, strategy and operational issues into clear and persuasive narratives for internal and external audiences, including government and sector stakeholders.
3. Deliver media-ready written content, including statements Q&As, opinion pieces and other public-facing materials that align with the University's strategic direction, working closely with media and communications colleagues to ensure accuracy, timeliness and reputational integrity.
4. Provide tailored briefing materials and meeting papers for senior leaders, ensuring information is accurate, concise, fit for purpose and prepared to tight deadlines.
5. Ensure quality assurance and governance oversight for advice and written materials, ensuring compliance with University policies and approval processes, and exercising sound judgement when handling sensitive or confidential matters.
6. Support continuous improvement in executive and strategic writing practices, including the appropriate use of AI tools, and contributing to templates, style guidance and best-practice approaches across the University.
7. Maintain awareness of higher education policy and government priorities.
8. Ensure all communications and activities align with the university's values and strategic objectives.
9. Adhere to relevant policies, codes of conduct, and legislative requirements.
10. Undertaking the responsibilities of the position adhering to:
 - the Staff Code of Conduct, Child Safe Code of Conduct, and Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure;
 - Equal Opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation and requirements;
 - the requirements for the inclusion of people with disabilities in work and study;
 - Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation and requirements; and
 - Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) legislation.

Level of supervision and responsibility

Under the direction of the Director, Strategy, Vice-Chancellor's Office and Corporate Communications, the role operates with a degree of autonomy and is responsible for managing their own workload, setting priorities, and delivering high-quality written advice and materials to tight timeframes.

The role regularly engages with senior leaders across the University and is expected to exercise sound judgement, discretion and initiative when handling sensitive, complex or high-profile matters. While the role does not have formal line management responsibilities, it provides expert strategic advice and guidance to stakeholders.

Position and organisational relationships

The Senior Strategy and Communications Advisor works closely with senior levels of the Vice-Chancellor's Office and the Chief Learner Experience Office to create and communicate complex University positions for a variety of internal and external audiences. This requires developing and strengthening relationships with government and sector leaders to persuade, inform and create partnerships through alignment of strategic priorities and building support for key initiatives.

Key selection criteria

Applicants must demonstrate they are able to undertake the inherent responsibilities of the position as contained in the position description and are able to meet the following key selection criteria:

Training and qualifications

1. Completion of:
 - a postgraduate degree or progress towards postgraduate qualifications in journalism, communications, public policy, or other relevant area with subsequent extensive relevant experience; or
 - extensive experience and expertise in strategic writing, communications and engagement roles, with a proven ability to deliver high-quality written advice and materials in complex organisational environments; or
 - an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.
2. Hold a valid Employer Working with Children Check (WWCC) or hold a current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

Experience, knowledge and attributes

3. Proven ability to translate complex policy, strategy and operational issues, including the use of data, into clear, persuasive and accessible narratives for a range of internal and external audiences.
4. Demonstrated experience in strategic writing and communications, including research, drafting and editing of high-quality documents such as submissions, speeches, briefings, media materials and executive correspondence for senior audiences.
5. Knowledge of, or demonstrated understanding of, public policy, government and the higher education sector, with the ability to stay informed on emerging issues and priorities.
6. Strong understanding of governance, approval processes and reputational considerations, with demonstrated judgement and discretion when handling sensitive or confidential matters.
7. Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with a broad range of stakeholders, including senior leaders, academics, professional staff and external partners, to gather information, test messaging and ensure accuracy.
8. Highly developed organisational skills, including the ability to manage competing priorities, work to tight deadlines and maintain attention to detail in a fast-paced environment.
9. Familiarity with AI and automation, including supporting the considered use of these tools to streamline reporting and routine processes, and contributing to the development of new efficient workflows.
10. Exceptional written communication skills, including a strong command of plain English, structure, tone and clarity.
11. Demonstrated working knowledge and application of the Child Safety Standards.
12. Demonstrated knowledge and application of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children, including children with a disability and from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The University reserves the right to invite applications and to make no appointment.

It is not the intention of the position description to limit the scope or accountabilities of the position but to highlight the most important aspects of the position. The aspects mentioned above may be altered in accordance with the changing requirements of the role.