**Job Description, Person Specification and Application Instructions**

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| **Job Title**  Head of Communications  Fixed Term Contract (Maternity Cover) | **Department**  Communications |
| **Reports to**  General Secretary/National Officer - Staffing | **Location**  Head Office |
| **Effective Date** |  |
| **Job Description** | |

**General Scope and Purpose of Role**

This is a busy and demanding role which requires the job holder to possess excellent communication and organisational skills. Managing the workload and performance of a small team, you will ensure that the Communications of the FBU are effective and appropriate. You will be expected to be a subject matter expert in the field of Communications, and particularly have good knowledge of trade unions, and develop best practice and offer guidance to all personnel within the Union.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

1. To act professionally as an employee of the FBU at all times, maintaining appropriate public visibility, and internally be an effective communicator and disseminator of relevant subject matter and process.
2. Under the direction of the General Secretary, and working with National Officers ensure that the Communications Department develops and implements a strategy that helps the Union communicate effectively with our members, stakeholders and the general public via the media, the web, using social media, publications, information and marketing events, advertising and any other available channels.
3. Provide full and effective leadership and line management of the Communications team, currently comprising the Communication Officer, Campaigns Organiser and Communications Administrator. In addition to managing and allocating workloads and tasks within the team, this includes the recruitment, induction, training, delegation, performance management, monitoring and review of team members, ensuring they are supported and developed so as to maximise the team’s outputs and results.
4. Work closely with the Head of Research and Policy to ensure that areas of responsibility are clear, to promote a smooth working relationship and effective team approach.
5. Under the direction of the General Secretary alongside the Head of Finance help create and manage a budget for the Communications Department and identify and manage key supplier relationships. Ensure best practice, and best value for money is maintained at all times ensuring the organisation is updated when appropriate.
6. Under the direction of the General Secretary, and working with National Officers ensure that the Union undertakes successful campaign work to represent the interests of members, and public safety.
7. Work across the Union to develop digital channels. Oversee the entire content of the Union’s website, develop best practice web content guidelines, and facilitate the implementation of appropriate new technical initiatives and functionality to maximise website traffic.
8. Ensure the Communications Department develops the public profile and secures media coverage for the union, the General Secretary and National Officials, in both the local and national media through proactively identifying and pursuing media opportunities, writing and distributing press releases, writing and placing comment pieces, answering media enquiries, scheduling interviews, preparing briefs and developing relationships with journalists, publications and other news desks.
9. Ensure that the Communications Department produces accurate information and marketing materials such as newsletters, press releases, bulletins, circulars, etc., and ensure they are collated and produced in a timely and professional manner with a corporate image.
10. Ensure that the Communications Department produces appropriate, accurate and well-presented publications such as reports, briefings and magazines.
11. Ensure that the Communications Department organises professional, well attended and useful events for members, stakeholders and others ensuring the correct materials and publicity is produced.
12. Ensure that the Communications Department develops the union’s brand and image and that the Union’s communications are produced in line with appropriate guidelines.
13. Network effectively with external bodies and other stakeholders including central and devolved government, other trade unions, and others in the fire and rescue service to uncover opportunities to maximise publicity for the organisation and enhance the Union’s political work.
14. Write and edit circulars, messages, etc., relating to Union campaigns, and activities for Officials as and when required. Liaise with the General Secretary and with the origination as requested.
15. Demonstrate consistently excellent presentation skills by creating and delivering professional presentations which address relevant and appropriate information to the target audience.
16. Contribute to ad-hoc projects that the General Secretary and Communications Department may be involved in by undertaking these as required and liaising with appropriate personnel as necessary.
17. In the absence of colleagues, contribute to the general work of the Union as required.
18. Remain committed to self-improvement by conducting self-appraisals after all relevant external meetings, and assess strengths and weaknesses and address these accordingly. Demonstrate a commitment to improvement by maintaining and developing skills in line with emerging organisational needs.

**Specialist Skills**

1. Graduate with a relevant degree (desirable)
2. High level of literacy and numeracy, and proven written skills
3. Proven all round communications experience gained within a political environment
4. Experienced in line managing people
5. Management development training/education (desirable)
6. Demonstrable knowledge and experience of the Trade Union movement
7. Demonstrable experience and understanding of the Fire and Rescue service
8. Excellent Communication skills both oral and written, and an ability to deal with a variety of internal and external stakeholders
9. Microsoft Office trained in Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel

**General**

1. To provide support to the Union during its campaigns and/or conferences as may be determined by the Line Manager or above.
2. To work co-operatively with Union personnel, including providing cover relating to the role and team/Department during absence, as may be requested by your Line Manager.
3. Fulfil the requirements of the Union’s Equal Opportunities Policy and procedures and implement good principles and practices within the context of the day to day job, daily.
4. To undertake any training, and/or other duties as appropriate within the Communications team or the Union as a whole that are commensurate with the post as may be determined from time to time by the HR Department, the National Officer (Staffing) or the General Secretary.
5. It should be understood that this job description may change as the Union develops following discussion and agreement with the post holder. The post holder will have full opportunity to discuss this and to be active in any changes and developments.

**Person Specification**

*The person specification below outlines the essential and desirable experience, knowledge and skills required for this role. Evidence for behaviours, knowledge and skills will be looked for throughout the selection process.*

***E*** *– Essential requirements are those without which the job could not be done.*

***D*** *– Desirable criteria are those that may enable better or more immediate performance in a job.*

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|  | **Essential or**  **Desirable**  **(E or D)** |
| **Previous experience** |  |
| 1. Proven all round communications experience, including campaigns, proactive image management, consultation and media strategies, gained within a political environment. | E |
| 1. Demonstrable track record of identifying, developing and expanding suitable opportunities for raising the union’s profile through management of media, press relations, publicity, publications, external events, social and other media. | E |
| 1. Experience of line managing a team. | E |
| 1. Experienced in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing communication, consultation and media strategies. | E |
| 1. Experienced in developing and managing constructive and effective relationships with the media and relevant journalists. | E |
| **Skills, knowledge and abilities** |  |
| 1. Excellent communication skills, written and oral, and an ability to deal effectively with a range of stakeholders, both internal and external. | E |
| 1. Well-honed journalistic skills, for example in carrying out media spokesperson duties and writing press releases. | E |
| 1. Ability to work on own initiative, taking responsibility for finding own solutions. | E |
| 1. Knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity principles and the ability to work to them in practice. | E |
| 1. Well-developed ICT skills, including ability to use a range of Microsoft Office tools (Work, Excel, Outlook) at intermediate level. | E |
| 1. Having a systematic and logical approach with good organisational skills. | E |
| 1. Management development training or education; training in people management skills. | D |
| **Other requirements** |  |
| 1. Graduate with a relevant degree. | D |
| 1. Knowledge, experience and commitment to the trade union movement. | E |
| 1. Demonstrable experience and understanding of the Fire and Rescue Service | E |
| 1. Commitment to self-directed learning and taking responsibility for own professional development. | E |
| 1. Ability to work effectively as part of a team and work flexibly across teams, building trust through honesty, reliability and consistency. | E |

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

This is a 12 month fixed term appointment to cover maternity leave. Salary package is up to £59,960 inclusive of London Allowance, starting salary will be from £52,157 dependent on experience. FBU is a progressive employer with a broad range of flexible and family friendly working practices in place. These include generous holiday allowances for annual leave, bank holidays, additional concessionary days following bank holidays, flexible working arrangements and pension scheme.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

Please send your CV and covering letter, outlining how you meet the job and person specification requirements, to:

Sue Lafferty, HR Assistant, by email to [suel@fbu.org.uk](mailto:suel@fbu.org.uk)

Shortlisting will be based on an assessment of applications against the person specification criteria so it is important that you demonstrate in your application how you meet those criteria.

For any further queries please contact Sue on the email above or by telephone on 0208 541 1765.

**Closing date for applications: 1 December 2019**

**Interviews to be held on 10 December 2019**

Candidates may be required to attend for longlist and shortlist interviews. Times will be notified to those selected. As well as a formal interview, candidates will be asked to make a presentation and complete a Press Release exercise.

Whilst we anticipate the cover to start in early March 2020, a handover period during the last week of February might be required.