Director of Student Life and Wellbeing
Student and Academic Services

Closing Date: 7 December 2021
Interview Date: 11 & 12 January 2022 (see final page for further details)
Ref: 10049
INTRODUCTION

The student community is of key importance to our institution. We aim to provide an engaging and supportive environment for the future generation of leaders. The student experience and journey lay at the heart of our decision-making and influences all aspects of our thinking.

The Director of Student Life and Wellbeing provides leadership to the services that support all aspects of student life and wellbeing. The student experience and journey at university is increasingly complex. In order to ensure we provide a supportive and nurturing environment for our students at York, we need to ensure coordination between the various services.

The Director of Student Life and Wellbeing will play a pivotal role in leading our student support, welfare and wellbeing services. Providing the bridge between academic departments, Faculties, Colleges and central support services.

At York we want to offer all our students an outstanding and valuable experience. We aim to ensure that they have an environment in which they can fulfil their academic and personal potential. Our structures and services should enhance the students’ experience and support their academic endeavour, but most of all we want our students to engage in student life and enjoy their time at York.

Dr Wayne Campbell
Department Head and Academic Registrar
Main purpose of the role

- Lead and manage the student life and wellbeing department, providing strategic leadership for the teams that are directly engaged with student life and student pastoral support. This includes students at all levels of study who are on campus, off campus or studying at a distance including online.
- Ensure that teams and services operate seamlessly and holistically in support of the student experience, whilst also working collaboratively with external partners to engage with and influence the provision of local statutory services accessed by students.
- Provide strategic support to improve student wellbeing through the implementation of the university student mental health and wellbeing strategy, leading the student mental health forum, bringing together key stakeholders academic, professional services, student unions etc.
- Ensure York’s approach to student life, pastoral support and wellbeing continue to be a key institutional strength, at the forefront of service provision and informed by student experience, agile, responsive and cost effective.
- Provide strategic support to develop and deliver the university response to tackling sexual violence part of which is providing a safe environment to work, live and study.
- Increase student engagement by providing services, processes and procedures that are accessible and enable students to engage fully in full range of university life and experience.

Key Responsibilities

Planning & Organising

- Develop and lead the implementation of strategies for Student Life and Wellbeing which support and take forward the Student and Academic Service directorate and where appropriate university strategy and plans.
- Planning activities of senior/managerial colleagues to support departmental and institutional objectives.
- As part of the Student and Academic Services leadership team, participate in the annual department operational planning process, to support the department’s strategic direction.
- Oversee a number of institutional projects, which will typically have lasting impact, to ensure each project is managed and delivered to time and budget.

Finance/Resource Management

- Ensure directorate financial plans are developed and that services operate effectively within budget.
- Explore ways of improving efficiency and effectiveness and promote improvements in value for money at the directorate, and potentially institutional level.

Service Provision and Stakeholder Engagement

- Ensure stakeholder and customer needs are met now and in the future and ensure services are shaped to meet them.
- Ensure stakeholder and customer feedback and quality processes are in place for the area of responsibility.
- Ensure plans are implemented for the ongoing review of quality and of external benchmarks to promote the best possible service.
- Work with senior colleagues from all areas of the university, with committees and external bodies, providing high level advice to inform Executive decision-making.
- Represent the university externally, for example in regional and national sector groups.

At a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Competitive Package</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours of work</td>
<td>37 per week (flexibility available)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract type</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Based at</td>
<td>University of York</td>
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JOB DESCRIPTION
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Leadership and People Management

- Lead and manage staff in Student Life and Wellbeing, developing them and ensuring high levels of individual and team performance
- Develop, role model and maintain a culture of respect, inclusivity and mutual responsibility that puts equality, diversity and inclusivity at its heart, and enables staff to achieve excellence and supports continuous improvement
- Develop a culture of innovation and creativity, bringing together diverse staff from different teams to achieve a unity of purpose and ambition in strategic delivery
- Foster a positive, confident and enthusiastic working environment with good staff engagement, and a flexible approach to working

Risk and Compliance Management, Analysis and Reporting

- Review performance over time across Student Life and Wellbeing and compare it to best practice in the sector, identifying areas of improvement in structure, practices, policies and technology
- Ensure practices and policies within the directorate demonstrate full adherence with all compliance-related requirements (e.g. regulatory; statutory)
- Oversee the delivery of institutional level projects or activities to meet the requirements of the university’s Council, Committees and Executive functions

Further Details

- This role reports directly to the Academic Registrar and is a member of the Student Life Committee and Chairs the Student Mental Health Forum and Student Life Operations Group
- This role works closely with external partners in City of York Council - Public Health, NHS - GP, Health Care commissioners and other Statutory services as required.
- The role directly oversees the work of the following:
  - Colleges
  - Conduct and Respect
  - Open Door and Disability
  - Security
  - Student mental health and wellbeing
  - Student Support
# PERSON SPECIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree level qualification or equivalent experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant professional qualification or evidence of recent professional development from, for example, social work or other cognate services</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of the current issues related to student wellbeing, with a particular focus on higher education</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>A comprehensive understanding of the relevant legislative frameworks surrounding Mental Health, Safeguarding, and other statutory duties, for example, Prevent</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Knowledge of the opportunities and challenges in on-campus student residential services</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<th>Skills, abilities and competencies</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<td>An ability to engage colleagues from other areas of the University in the pursuit of the University's strategies in relation to the student experience and wellbeing</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Proven record in effectively leading and managing a large and diverse team</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Significant experience of managing and developing a broad range of pastoral services, in a large and complex organisation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Demonstrable experience of policy development and subsequent delivery of a change in service provision across a complex institution</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>The ability to represent the University externally at the highest level</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<td>Extensive experience of successful leadership at an appropriately senior level within higher education or a similarly complex organisation, including the management of staff and resources, and the ability to bring about change</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Extensive experience of developing and implementing strategies to support, residential, or campus life, and wellbeing communities</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Extensive experience of identifying, managing and mitigating risks</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience within a senior role in a Higher Education Institution or similar</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<tr>
<th>Personal attributes</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Highly developed skills in influencing, negotiating, and communicating across a large and complex organisation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Proactive, with a ‘can do’ attitude and enabling approach to change, and have the gravitas to operate successfully at all levels of the university and externally</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>The capacity to establish and maintain positive relationships with a wide range of people and to be a constructive team player</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Personal credibility and the ability to establish trust with members of the University community</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Able to work out of hours in response to service needs</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Calm in crisis with the ability to make good decisions under pressure, High degree of personal resilience, with proven coping strategies</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Demonstrates integrity, openness and honesty with a strong commitment to equality, diversity and demonstrable ability to lead on this creating a culture of cohesion and respect</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Student and Academic Services

Student and Academic Services provide administrative, academic and advisory services and opportunities for development to support the student experience. Working collaboratively with students, colleagues and external partners we facilitate learning, development and success.

As a highly focused professional service directorate we make a significant impact on the University’s ability to achieve its ambition of offering an outstanding and valuable experience, and to support our colleagues in achieving excellence in research, teaching and the student experience.

We provide a collection of professional services which contribute to the quality of the student and staff experience; these services are organised into the following sections:

- Student Administration and Academic Affairs
- Student Careers and Systems
- Library, Archives and Learning Services
- Student Life and Wellbeing
- York Online Support Team
- Academic Registrar’s Office
At York, we want students to have an unrivalled experience, to make friends for life, discover new passions and learn invaluable skills that will set you up for a bright future.

**College life**
York is one of a handful of UK universities with a college system. When students join us they become a member of a small, distinct community, which becomes their home from home whether they live on or off campus. Colleges also provide a network of support and a calendar of events and activities to help students settle in, develop skills and explore interests. Our students have the opportunity to meet people of all ages, nationalities and disciplines and most likely make friends for life.

**Students’ Union (YUSU)**
The University of York Students’ Union, better known as YUSU, is here to help students make the most of their time at university. YUSU represents student views and plays a huge part in the vibrant student experience at York both on and off campus. YUSU’s run for, with and by students. They represent students’ interests at all levels, from the University Council to individual departments. It’s led by a team of elected full-time sabbatical officers, who are all York students or recent graduates. For further information please see [https://www.yusu.org/](https://www.yusu.org/).

**Graduate Students’ Association (GSA)**
York is one of only a few universities in the UK to have an independent student-led association specifically for postgraduate students. The GSA is led by a team of elected officers who are all York students or recent graduates. They represent postgraduate students’ interests at all levels, from the University Council to individual departments. They work in conjunction with the Students’ Union (YUSU), colleges and the University to ensure postgraduate students are well supported during their time at York.

**Student Life and Wellbeing**
The Student Life and Wellbeing team works to enhance all aspects of student life and experience at the University of York. It is part of the Student and Academic Services Directorate. The Team delivers a range of proactive and responsive services to students and staff including:

- student-led activities delivered through the creation of cohesive college communities
- pastoral support, resources and advice
- promoting wellbeing to students through a range of interventions
- the delivery of psychological and mental health support
- advice and support to students who have a disability
- a central point of contact for student support delivered by the ‘student hub’ providing
- a range of specialist advice and support such as finance, money management, housing queries, international student support (visa and immigration
- promoting diversity, inclusivity and intercultural sensitivity and respect responding to emergency and crisis situations providing a 24/7/365 first response for staff and students through security services
- coordination and support for student conduct, discipline and support to study matters
- specialist support for students who have experienced sexual misconduct
- providing resources and advice for staff supporting students.
OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Founded on the principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University is proud to create an environment that attracts staff and students from all over the world. What we gain from diversity is immeasurable.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which was developed in partnership with our staff and student communities, describes our commitment to create a culture where everyone can contribute to university life, knowledge and growth.

We want to create a working, learning, social and living environment that will enable all staff and students to achieve their full potential. Our strategy sets out an ambitious set of objectives to succeed in our commitment, but we have a challenging journey ahead. We recognise that we are not truly representative of our communities locally, nationally and internationally. We would like to pay particular focus to gender parity across all levels, particularly in senior roles; the recruitment, retention and success of a more ethnically diverse staff and student community; an accessible and inclusive campus and ensuring that the values and behaviours we expect from everyone embrace inclusive responsibility and leadership.

Opportunity for all
Our outreach programmes and widening participation work have made us one of the most socially diverse universities among our peers. The York Students in Schools (YSIS) programme has been providing a helping hand in the city's classrooms for 25 years, placing around 700 students with local schools every year. It recently introduced a new English and Mathematics tutoring scheme.

A report by The Reform Research Trust in September 2017 ranked York second out of 29 high-tariff institutions for our track record in increasing access for disadvantaged students from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Wellbeing and support
Students are encouraged to balance their studies with activities and interests to give them a healthier and more rounded student experience. We have invested heavily in support of physical health with new and improved sports facilities, and in mental health through our Open Door counselling and crisis team which now opens in the evenings during term time. We have also developed a support network of staff trained in Mental Health First Aid. University staff have access to wellbeing help and support, and can access advice through our site. Further information on our health and wellbeing support can be found at https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/support/.
We are a world-class institution, focused on creating an environment of excellence in which all our students, staff and researchers can thrive. Our Research Strategy encompasses our vision that York should provide a home for some of the best research in the world. (https://www.york.ac.uk/research/)

We are a high-performing member of the Russell Group, ranked 16th in the Guardian’s Best University UK Universities 2021 League Table, and 30th in the Complete University Guide 2020. We have been awarded TEF Gold for our research-led teaching which provides "consistently outstanding outcomes for students from all backgrounds".

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy speaks to the core of our values. We hold 16 awards from Athena SWAN, recognising the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

This year we have been shortlisted for Times Higher Education's University of the Year Award in recognition to the University’s response to the Covid pandemic. Further details on the nomination and how the University responded to one of the most unprecedented events in our history can be view on The Year We Came Together - Our Covid-19 response.

At the heart of the region

The University is deeply embedded in the local community of North Yorkshire. Our values and commitment to the public good have never been more important. We are a hub for sharing knowledge, inspiring collaboration and enriching lives.

Across the University, we are mobilising our knowledge, our people and our resources to tackle the immediate and long-term challenges created by the coronavirus crisis.

https://features.york.ac.uk/who-we-are/
Attractive workplace

Centred around the picturesque village of Heslington on the edge of the city of York, our colleges are set in an attractive landscaped campus. York enjoys a safe, friendly atmosphere with facilities including bars, shops, theatres and concert halls all within easy walking distance.

The University has undergone an unprecedented period of expansion and renewal since 2000. We have invested in twenty new buildings on the original campus and have completed the first and second phases of a £750m campus expansion. Our investment in new colleges, teaching and learning spaces, laboratories, research facilities and a new sports village mean there has never been a better time to join us.

During this period of change we’ve worked hard to retain our friendly, informal and collegiate atmosphere, which is important to our core values of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity.

We have a thriving international community and are committed to providing staff moving to York with as much support as possible through our Relocation Package and Welcome Officers.

The University is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community - a place where we can all be ourselves and succeed on merit. We offer a range of family friendly, inclusive employment policies, flexible working arrangements, staff engagement forums, campus facilities and services to support staff from different backgrounds.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages.
THE CITY AND THE REGION

The City of York

Internationally acclaimed for its rich heritage and historic architecture, York’s bustling streets are filled with visitors from all over the world. Within its medieval walls you will find the iconic gothic Minster, Clifford’s Tower and the Shambles - just a few of the many attractions.

But York isn’t just a great place to visit - it’s also a great place to live and work. While nourishing a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, York still maintains the friendly sense of community unique to a small city.

Visit www.visityork.org for more information on the city of York

Shopping, culture and entertainment

York boasts specialist and unique boutiques but also all the high street stores on its busy shopping streets. Alongside them you will find cinemas, theatres, an opera house, art galleries, a vast range of restaurants, live music venues and clubs. York is particularly renowned for its multitude of pubs and bars, from the modern to the medieval.

Housing and schools

Whether you choose to live close to the city, in one of the surrounding villages or further afield, you will find a wide range of housing within comfortable distance of York and the University. For families, the area has a range of excellent schools both in the state and independent sector.

Great location

York is one of Britain’s best-connected cities. Halfway between London and Edinburgh on the East Coast mainline, on intercity trains you can reach London King’s Cross in less than two hours and Edinburgh in two and a half hours. York is also well served by road links, and it is easily accessible from the A1, M1 and the M62.

For those travelling from overseas, Manchester Airport is two hours away and Heathrow Airport just three and a half. Flights from nearby Leeds Bradford Airport provide easy access to mainland Europe. By Eurostar from London St Pancras, Paris is just over six hours away.

Yorkshire

The Lonely Planet guide recently declared Yorkshire the third best region in the world to visit. There is something to cater to every taste, whether it be the rugged landscapes of the Moors or the Dales, the picturesque seaside towns of Scarborough and Robin Hoods Bay, the gothic architecture of Whitby or the vibrancy of cosmopolitan Leeds.
Apply online

- Go to https://jobs.york.ac.uk
- Find this job using reference 10049.
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 7 December 2021.

Our selection process is scheduled to take place on the mornings of 11 & 12 January 2022. Candidates will be required to (virtually) attend on both days.

What will I need?

- Your CV
- A cover letter outlining your motivation for application and how you meet the criteria for the role

You will also need details of 2 referees.

Help and assistance

Direct any informal queries to Paul Ellison (HR Recruitment Adviser) paul.ellison@york.ac.uk

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:

recruitment@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324835