Job Description & Competency Requirement

Job Title Head of Policy, Education and Skills

Reports to: Chief Science Policy Officer
Location: Carlton House Terrace
Line manages: team of 8
Hours: 35 hours per week, with some flexibility about working hours given the nature of the role (The Royal Society also has flexible start/finish times around a core working day 10am to 4pm)
Pay Band: F (£61,506 to £76,882)

Job scope

The Royal Society
The Royal Society is the independent scientific academy of the UK and the Commonwealth, dedicated to promoting excellence in science. It is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world's most distinguished scientists drawn from all areas of science, engineering and medicine. The Society's fundamental purpose, as reflected in its founding charters of the 1660s, is to recognise, promote and support excellence in science and to encourage the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity.

Providing scientific advice to shape policy is one of our strategic priorities. The Society's reputation for excellence in science policy is founded on the expertise of its Fellows, its wider convening power, and the quality, rigour and timeliness of all its work.

The Society has played a part in some of the most fundamental, significant and life-changing discoveries in scientific history and Royal Society scientists continue to make outstanding contributions to science in many research areas. In recent years these include graphene, organic LEDs, the World Wide Web, quantum matter and information, magnetic resonance imaging, IVF, DNA sequencing, genetic fingerprinting and understanding the cell cycle. The Society is also engaged in global challenges such as climate change, energy, food and water security as well as emerging areas of science and technology such as data and AI and genetic technologies.

Background
The Society's work on education and skills policy covers for formal education from early years to age 18. The work is guided by the principles set out in our report a Vision for Science and Mathematics Education. Our current priority is to secure a broad and balanced curriculum for all young people. The Society believes the curriculum should supply the knowledge, skills and experiences young people will need to thrive in a changing world of work. We have recently delivered major, influential policy programmes on computing education, education research and research culture.

The Society works in partnership with businesses, National Academies, learned societies, charities and government; deploys a wide range of channels and approaches, from the delivery of major reports to rapid shorter statements; the creation of influential networks; skilful use of the Society's digital and media channels; and well-founded programmes of events. The Society continues to develop and look for innovative approaches that will increase its influence in national and international policy debates.

The Science Policy Directorate works closely with the Media Relations, Public Affairs, Public Engagement, International Affairs and Diversity & Industry Programme teams. A team of around 30 Senior Policy Advisers, Policy Advisers, Programme and Project Coordinators works across a range of themes and policy issues, according to priorities and their own expertise.

The role of Head of Policy, Education and Skills

This is an exciting opportunity for anyone who has the drive and expertise to help take the Society's education policy impact to the next level and who would enjoy the chance to work with many of the world's leading scientists and educators. You will be an experienced leader in science, maths or computing education policy and direct the Society's education policy portfolio which encompasses science, mathematics and computing education. You will enjoy exceptional visibility and variety and must have the experience and credibility to represent the Society externally and to network with influencers and decision makers at senior levels.

You will make a visible and sustained contribution to the Society's broader policy goals. The Society's primary objective in education is to secure a broad and balanced curriculum for all young people. This curriculum should supply the knowledge, skills and experiences young people will need to thrive in a changing world of work. The Head of Policy, Education and Skills will also play an important leadership role across the Society, ensuring that education-related programmes align with its policy objectives.

You will be a highly capable manager, able to juggle and prioritise a demanding mix of projects and tasks. You will have a detailed understanding and direct experience of policy processes in the UK, and ensure that the Society's work is informed by robust evidence. You will have project and line management responsibility for a number of policy and project staff, and will play an active role in many aspects of the science policy directorate.

Key responsibilities and tasks

Leading a team of eight, you will be responsible for the strategic oversight of the Society's education policy work programmes, which currently include:

- **Broad and balanced curriculum** - creating the conditions for a broad and balanced curriculum in the UK;
- **Education research** – harnessing education research to improve outcomes for young people;
- **Maths and computing education** – ensuring that mathematics and computing education provide the quantitative and digital skills young people need to thrive.

You will also:

- Revise and implement the Society's education strategic plan.
- Devising ways of tackling each area of activity, setting objectives and targets and agreeing them with the Chief Science Policy Officer, Education Committee, Science Policy Expert Advisory Committee and, where appropriate, Officers and Council.
- Identify synergies between policy objectives and the objectives of other parts of the Society to help deliver the Society's wider strategy.
- Advise the Society's leadership including its Council.
- Build and maintain a wide variety of external contacts across Westminster, Whitehall, UK and international policy organisations, at his/her own and at a higher level of seniority.
- Ensure the effective governance and operation of the Society's education advisory committees and working groups, include Education Committee and the Royal Society's Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education.
- Ensure the team delivers individual projects, working closely with colleagues and project teams and, where necessary, delivering project on time, on budget and to the agreed scope.
- Manage the budget and reporting requirements for the education policy portfolio, and work closely with the Development Team to secure funding for new projects.
- Line manage staff including the Senior Policy Advisors, supporting their personal development, undertake performance management and encourage wider participation in directorate and organisational activities.

- With the Chief Science Policy Officer and other Heads of Policy, play an active and visible role in the management of the Society's policy work and team.

Key knowledge and skills required

Education

A degree (or equivalent)	Essential

Knowledge/skills/abilities

A good understanding of national education policy	Essential
Able to convey complex scientific, technical and policy-related ideas effectively	Essential
Expertise and experience in one or more areas of science and/or education policy	Essential
Skilled oral and written communication with a range of audiences	Essential
Effective interaction with people at all levels of seniority	Essential
Assessment and reporting of technical information in a clear and concise manner	Essential
Self-organisation and management of several tasks simultaneously	Essential
Highly motivated and an ability to elicit similar motivation in others	Essential
An enthusiastic team player, with experience of collaborative working	Essential

Experience

Influencing policy	Essential
Managing complex projects	Essential
Writing, editing and disseminating reports	Essential
Establishing and maintaining a network of contacts	Essential
Managing staff	Essential
Science, computing or mathematics education	Essential
Working with committees	Desirable

Circumstances

Able to be flexible about working hours on occasions	Desirable
Able to undertake national and / or international travel on occasions	Desirable

Self-management	• Identifies difficult situations
	• Recognises stress in others and takes steps to reduce it
	• Controls pressurised situations
	• Effectively enthuses those in the team
	• Proactively sets goals and targets for own work
	• Embraces new opportunities, responds to new risks and takes on new responsibilities
	• Encourages others to seize opportunities
	• Recognises when it is appropriate to resist the objections of others and remain committed to a sound course of action
Working with others	• Actively seeks ideas and criticisms from within the team
	• Resolves conflicts within and between teams
	• Embeds feedback processes within the team
	• Seeks out new networks that will create opportunity for the Society
	• Able to present complex issues simply
	• Uses discretion, tact and empathy when negotiating with and/or seeking to influence others
	• Understands the need to manage expectations and to only promise what is deliverable
	• Demonstrates compassion in delivering hard messages
	• Leads and facilitates group discussions, surfaces and clarifies issues and keeps conversations focused, productive and constructive
	• Enlists champions to keep key messages alive and make them real
	• Acts as a role model, continuously demonstrating communication excellence and regard for the value of building shared vision and direction
	• Remains calm in front of challenging audiences, never diminishing others
	• Looks for opportunities to assemble a diverse group to discuss respective views
	• Keeps people at the table by articulating an outcome or goal that engages and encourages active participation
	• Shares resources across organisational boundaries to meet Society needs
	• Uses negotiation skills and adaptability to encourage recognition of joint concerns, collaboration, and to influence the success of outcomes
Resource management	• Determines strategy and deployment of resources, balancing cost and benefit; risk and potential for maximum impact across significant business areas
	• Manages complex cross-cutting projects to time, budget and specification
	• Ensures others accept responsibility towards results or quality
	• Sets the quality standards for own business areas in accordance with strategy and contributes to the formulation of quality standards across the Society

	• Sets and monitors priorities • Identifies and manages risk effectively • Analyses potential for surplus or loss, risks and/or return-on-investment of various courses of action • Demonstrates a solid understanding of the culture and recognises limitations in order to ensure that plans, actions and timelines will be effective. • Directs the creation of forums and discussion opportunities to generate innovative and breakthrough ideas, exposing others to experts and ideas to stimulate new thinking • Translates vision/knowledge to others to enable shared understanding and rapid execution • Facilitates the team to assess the viability of ideas based on a number of likely scenarios • Has patience and allows time for appropriate planning and engagement to take place in projects and day-to-day deliverables
Critical thinking	• Uses questioning, analytical and probing skills to 'dig deeper' • Knows when enough information has been obtained and adapts presentation of information to the needs of the audience • Evaluates the benefits, practicalities and value for money of ideas and obtains feedback • Makes sound decisions in a complex or ambiguous environment and is able to gain support and manage challenges confidently • Directs the creation of forums and discussion opportunities to generate innovative and breakthrough ideas, stimulates new thinking • Sees issues and mitigates as necessary the implications of a proposal. • Justifies key results and procedures, explains assumptions and reasons. • Correctly evaluates the credibility of sources and correctly judges the strength of an argument • Fair-mindedly follows where evidence and reasons lead
Adaptability	• Actively seeks the input and opinions of others, often outside his/her section and accommodates and incorporates this thinking into any output. • Actively seeks new challenges and projects; leads discussions surrounding new ideas, approaches and projects • Anticipates need for innovation and seeks new ideas, approaches and solutions • Demonstrates courage by deciding and acting in the face of uncertainty • Works in a balanced fashion, managing tough calls by being adaptable and flexible to ensure needs of competing stakeholders are fairly and equitably met • Acts with foresight to anticipate and analyse many different scenarios • Acknowledges ambiguity and works with team to identify understand and manage polarities and other complex situations

Managing people and relationships	- Sets expectations of others and ensures they deliver - Demonstrates a positive attitude towards work, celebrating success and instilling confidence, which encourages the same from others - Encourages others to share ideas and participate in the discussion and decisions of the team - Assesses needs of clients/stakeholders/staff and makes plans to meet these needs - Avoids micromanagement by delegating fully and giving latitude to others to do tasks in own way, including opportunity to make and learn from mistakes - Acts as a talent builder by challenging people with questions and assignments that will grow their capabilities - Coaches and mentors' others, providing career guidance and perspective - Demonstrates compassion in delivering hard messages - Establishes personal relationships with customers, building an understanding of broader needs, issues, and aspirations beyond those solely applicable to the Society products or services - Uses knowledge to develop appropriate longer-term relationship management strategies - Assesses the long-term value of various types of external customers and manages each type appropriately - Ensures 'one-customer' mindset and offers customer exposure to the full breadth of products and services, as appropriate