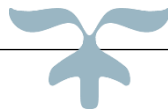




COMPONENT 1: PRACTICAL: ACADEMIC INTERVIEW FOR HR PROCESSES

LCBB5012: Principles of Human Resource Management

Innovation Support Officer for
the UWTSD Student Union



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Introduction

This assessment is designed to identify the most suitable candidate for the position of Innovation Support Officer at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. It clearly outlines the nature of the role, the salary, and the responsibilities that the future Innovation Support Officer will be expected to undertake. It also specifies a series of required characteristics, divided into *essential* and *desirable* criteria, which allow for a structured evaluation of each applicant and determine whether they are suitably qualified for the position.

Job description and person specifications

According to Castanheira (2024), a job description is a formal written document that defines the purpose of a specific role within an organisation. It outlines the responsibilities that employees are expected to perform, as well as what the organisation offers in return, including working conditions, performance expectations, salary, and benefits.

In the words of the University of Strathclyde (2024), person specifications describe the attributes a candidate must possess in order to successfully carry out the tasks listed in the job description. These attributes typically include qualifications—both academic and technical—experience in similar roles, and a range of skills. Such skills may be soft skills, such as adaptability and effective communication, or technical skills, such as proficiency in relevant tools or systems.

The importance of person specifications lies in clearly identifying the criteria for evaluating candidates, thereby making the selection process more efficient and ensuring equal opportunities by reducing bias and inequality. However, excessively demanding requirements may create unrealistic expectations, leading to rigidity in recruitment processes. This can result in longer hiring timelines and the need for more extensive analysis during candidate searches.

Innovation support officer

A role of this nature is specialised in managing resources and promoting technological projects that involve innovation processes within an organisation. It is particularly relevant in universities, research centres, and public administrations. The main functions include supporting innovation projects to ensure their successful implementation, coordinating internal

and external teams involved in project development, and managing the financial resources required for these initiatives.

The importance of this role lies in guaranteeing that research outcomes reach the market or society, as well as identifying opportunities to obtain funding from investors, grants, or public programmes, and optimising the use of financial resources. However, the position also entails significant administrative pressure, a high level of dependence on team performance, and the need for continuous awareness of market developments. Additionally, results often materialise in the long term, which may lead to frustration for professionals in this role. (Cheng and Love (2022)).

Job Advertisement: Innovation Support Officer

Organisation:	UWTSD Students Union
Position:	Innovation Support Officer
Location:	University of Wales Saint David (UWTSD) Students Union
Employment type:	Full-Time, Permanent
Salary Range:	£32.000-£37.000 per annum

Job Description

In University of Wales Trinity Sant David (UWTSD). Require a The Innovation Support Officer plays a key role in supporting the university's innovation ecosystem, contributing to the development, coordination, and delivery of initiatives that enhance creativity, digital transformation, research impact, and student/staff engagement.

The role ensures smooth operational support for innovation projects, facilitates communication between stakeholders, and assists in the implementation of new processes, tools, and collaborative activities across the institution.

Key Responsibilities

- Assist in the planning, coordination, and delivery of innovation-related projects, pilots, and strategic initiatives.
- Support academic and professional services teams in adopting new technologies, methodologies, and innovation practices.
- Monitor project progress, prepare status updates, and ensure documentation is accurate and up to date.
- Collect, analyse, and interpret data to evaluate innovation activities, user engagement, and project outcomes.
- Support the development of metrics and KPIs for innovation performance.
- Support procurement, budgeting, and administrative processes related to innovation activities.
- Promote an inclusive, collaborative, and forward-thinking culture across innovation initiatives.

Person Specifications

Characteristics	Essential	Desirable
Communication	Demonstrates clear, effective, and professional communication. Able to convey information accurately to staff, students, and project stakeholders.	Ability to tailor communication style to diverse audiences, including academic researchers, administrative teams, and external partners
Teamwork	Strong collaborative skills. Works effectively within cross-functional teams to support innovation initiatives and ensure efficient project delivery.	Experience working in multidisciplinary or multicultural teams, particularly in academic or research environments.
Organized		Strong organizational abilities, including prioritizing tasks, managing deadlines, and maintaining structured workflows to support innovation projects.
Speaker		Confidence in presenting ideas, project updates, or innovation proposals to internal committees or staff groups. Not required to be a professional speaker but must communicate clearly.
Statistical Analysis	Essential for understanding user needs, evaluating project impact, and supporting evidence-based decision-making. Ability to interpret data related to student engagement, staff feedback, or innovation outcomes.	Experience with advanced statistical tools (e.g., SPSS, R, Python, Power BI) or data-visualization platforms.
Flexible		Flexibility to adapt to evolving priorities, new technologies, and emerging innovation opportunities within the university.
Inclusive	Essential. Must foster an inclusive environment that respects diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives among students, staff, and external collaborators.	Training or experience in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, or participation in intercultural projects.

Conclusion

In summary, job descriptions and person specifications play a fundamental role in structuring recruitment processes within higher education institutions. Job descriptions establish the purpose, scope, and expectations of a role, while person specifications define the qualifications, experience, and skills required to perform it effectively. Together, they provide a transparent framework that supports fair evaluation, reduces bias, and enhances organisational efficiency.

The position of Innovation Support Officer exemplifies the importance of these documents. As a role centred on managing innovation projects, coordinating diverse stakeholders, and securing financial resources, it requires a combination of administrative precision, strategic awareness, and interpersonal competence. Although the role contributes significantly to the successful transfer of knowledge and the advancement of institutional innovation, it also presents challenges such as administrative pressure, dependency on team performance, and the long-term nature of project outcomes.

Therefore, clearly defined job descriptions and person specifications are essential to identifying candidates who can meet these demands and contribute meaningfully to the organisation's innovation ecosystem.

Appendix

- How would you describe your adaptability when facing new opportunities or unexpected situations?
- How would you adapt to and lead a multicultural team?
- How do you communicate when you need to inform or update your team?
- How would you resolve a conflict situation? For example, a cultural clash between two team members, one Indian and one European.
- How would you apply your knowledge to develop a project involving external stakeholders? For example, a project focused on analysing student attendance and the reasons behind it.

References

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