

KINGSTON UNIVERSITY

APPOINTMENT OF UNIVERSITY
SECRETARY

APPOINTMENT BRIEF
JULY 2023

Kingston
University
London



AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Welcome to Kingston University. Thank you for your interest in the role of University Secretary. This is a pivotal role for us – working directly to the Chair and the Vice-Chancellor, the University Secretary will be a key part of the senior leadership team.

Our world is becoming more interconnected through advances in technology. Society is changing at pace and employers need graduates who bring innovation, enterprise and digital and creative problem-solving skills into the workplace.

Through our Town House Strategy, Kingston University will meet these challenges by delivering a progressive new model of education. We will partner with businesses and other external bodies to support innovation and generate and disseminate knowledge. Collaboration and innovation will underpin everything we do.

We will enable our students to develop the future skills and personal attributes to prosper in their careers and focus our research, knowledge exchange, and professional practice where it can have impact and drive innovation.

As a senior leadership team, we believe in working together within our areas of responsibility to achieve this mission. As you will be aware, higher education across the UK continues to face uncertainty. Yet, even in this challenging time, Kingston continues to achieve impressive results in its academic and financial performance, and student experience.

We recognised the changing environment in higher education some time ago at Kingston and are now in the final stages of reshaping our University to deliver for our staff and students in a more dynamic and demanding sector. With such a significant improvement to our performance, we are now in prime position to capitalise on our strengths and invest in long-term growth.

Our enhanced academic performance is reflected in our growing position in the market. We have transformed behaviours and ways of working to instil the high-performing culture that will allow us the capacity and creativity to thrive.

We are now seeking a University Secretary who will lead the strategic and operational development and delivery of the University's corporate services activities, who will ensure University governance operates effectively and optimally, as well as lead on a well-defined internal and external communications strategy. Kingston will rely on the University Secretary's expertise in fully understanding the strategic and operational landscape, both within and outside of the sector, to ensure Kingston University can respond proactively and competitively to emerging opportunities and requirements.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Steven Spier, Vice-Chancellor



ABOUT KINGSTON UNIVERSITY

Kingston University's heritage dates back to 1889 when the Kingston Technical Institute opened. Over the years the Institution has evolved and was granted University status in 1992. It is currently host to a student population of over 18,000 (of whom over 4,000 are from outside of the United Kingdom), a staff body of nearly 2,000 and annual income in excess of £219 million.

Professor Steven Spier has been the University's Vice-Chancellor since 2017 and prior to that led the Institution's globally prominent Kingston School of Art. Under Professor Spier's leadership, Kingston University has embarked upon an ambitious programme of capital investment that has seen the development of the Town House which is an architecturally notable building that offers a step-change in learning facilities for students as well as being a notable foothold in the local community.

Kingston University was ranked among the best in the country in several subject areas and as one of the top 60 institutions overall in the latest Guardian University Guide league tables. The University topped the national tables for interior design and was named second in the country for fashion and textiles and mental health nursing – as well as being the top ranked London institution for both subject areas.

One of the most inclusive institutions in the country, Kingston University was recently ranked in the top 10 universities in the UK for social mobility in a report produced by the Institute of Fiscal Studies in partnership with the Sutton Trust and Department for Education. Kingston University is passionate about enhancing students' life chances by helping them make the most of their learning opportunity and is committed to opening up higher education to the whole community.

We are diverse

The University has an international outlook and commitment to cultural diversity. Our 18,000+ students learn a broad range of subjects in a community from more than 140 countries. Our students study and our staff work on our multi-disciplined campuses. Artists and designers study alongside engineers, scientists, healthcare professionals and business minds to blend the student experience across subjects and solve the problems faced by today's diverse society.

We transform lives

We are recognised for our outstanding work in supporting all our students - in reducing the BAME attainment gap, in our Head Start programme to introduce students to university life, and in providing a constant support network for those who have experienced a care background or are estranged from their families. Our graduates have an unrivalled reputation for starting their own businesses – among the top in the country – and we encourage all students to take an enterprising approach to their future career.

We have impact

We continue to expand our research reputation through fostering a collaborative, outward-looking research culture across the Institution. Seventy percent of Kingston's research was rated as world-leading or internationally excellent in the Government's Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021. The University rose 13 places to 71st in the research power tables published by Times Higher Education which considers quality of research as well as number of research-active staff, placing 75th in the leading sector's publication's overall ranking on institutions.

We are building a sustainable Future

These are challenging times in higher education. Despite a turbulent environment for English higher education, we are confident that Kingston University will continue its upward trajectory. We have been both bold and careful so that we can invest in Kingston University's future.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Kingston University is ranked a top 5 university in London in 21 subjects in the 2023 Guardian University Guide
- Top in London for interior design
- Top in London and second in the UK for fashion and textiles and mental health nursing
- Top in London and fifth in the UK for children's nursing
- Top in London for graphic design and midwifery
- Second in London for architecture, forensic science, general nursing, media and film studies
- Kingston is ranked No.9 in the UK overall for Forensic Science, with the second-highest graduate outcomes nationally (Complete University Guide 2023)
- Kingston School of Art's fashion degree among best in the world in Business of Fashion listings
- We have 13,105 home/European students, and 3,680 overseas students from more than 140 countries
- 95% of our graduates are in work or further study six months after graduating
- 70% of the University's research submission was rated as world-leading or internationally excellent in REF 2022



Michael Shakil, BSc (Hons) Computer graphics Technology

'Kingston has provided me with a fantastic support network and put me in touch with other students who have come from a similar care background as myself. The team, KU Cares, have helped me throughout my time here and I know I can go to them, at any point if I need any advice or support.'

Rochelle Watson, BA (Hons) Working with children and Young People: Social Pedagogy

Rochelle, a single mother and the first in her family to go to university, recently picked up an UpReach Student Social Mobility Award, recognising the achievements of undergraduates from less advantaged backgrounds.

'My experience at Kingston has transformed my life. I've been able to build my confidence during my studies, and all the extra-curricular activities Kingston offers have helped me become more independent.'



OUR VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Vision

Our vision is for Kingston University to be sought after by students and staff as a place to further their ambitions and to have impact on our communities. Our students and staff will be sought after for their skills, knowledge, and ability to innovate.

Mission

Our mission is to enhance students' life chances, support staff ambitions and strengthen Kingston University's impact on industry, policy, and the professions to enable a sustainable future socially, economically and environmentally.

Our Values:

We strive to be:

- **Inclusive:** To value the diversity of students and staff, treating all our community with respect.
- **Innovative:** To apply new methods or ideas to drive progress.
- **Ambitious:** To pursue excellence for individuals, the University and our communities.
- **Enterprising:** To recognise and act on opportunities.



OUR STRATEGY

Our new Town House Strategy will transform our students' education by embedding the Future Skills sought by business and the professions across our curriculum. It will also give greater prominence, visibility and support to research and knowledge exchange. Finally, it will help create a culture of high performance that is inclusive, innovative, ambitious, and enterprising.

The strategy will ensure our graduates, our staff, and the University itself are sought after. Students will seek to broaden their knowledge and skills at Kingston University because it will help them make the most of their higher education; staff will choose to work at the University because they can be effective, innovative and develop their careers; and businesses, organisations and government bodies will seek to partner with us because of our approach, expertise, and values.

The building which our strategy is named after, the Town House, secured two internationally renowned architectural awards. It gives physical form to our ambitions for Kingston University and proves we can compete against the best anywhere.

To read our strategy please click on the link: [Town House Strategy](#)



FUTURE SKILLS

In June 2021, we launched a major public campaign to highlight the importance of a creative education and entrepreneurial innovation in providing employers with the skilled workforce of the future. With YouGov we launched the 'Future Skills League Table' that asked more than 2,000 employers what skills they need to succeed in a challenging environment.

Following its launch in June 2021, the next phase of our Future Skills campaign was marked with a parliamentary event at the House of Commons in June 2022. Business leaders, MPs, policymakers, and local stakeholders joined students and staff from the University to hear our proposals for tackling the country's skills shortage in our second Future Skills report.

This year's report, which surveyed businesses and students on the skill most important to future career and the economy, set out a framework for how businesses, government and higher education should come together to deliver the workforce needed to keep the UK globally competition.

Read the latest findings and recommendations in [Our Report](#)



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is at the very heart of Kingston University. It's in our diverse student population and staff, it's in our multi-cultural student societies and events, and it's in our activities to encourage prospective students and create the best study experience for all.

Diverse and global community

There's no such thing as an average Kingston University student – they come from all over the UK and around the world. Last time we checked, our non-UK students came from 154 countries, from Australia-Zimbabwe.

Our student societies alone cover a fantastic variety of nationalities, communities, faiths, interests and more. They all come together annually for our Global Festival – celebrating diversity, culture, and internationalism.

Championing equality and diversity

One Kingston is our strategy for equality, diversity, and inclusion. It is designed to ensure that students, like those from black, Asian, minority groups or those with disabilities benefit fully from the university process – from student recruitment to the student experience, to graduate employment.

Kingston University is also proud to hold the Athena SWAN bronze award for our commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, maths and medicine (STEMM).

EDI objectives and commitments

Kingston is a diverse university with an established commitment to embedding equality and diversity in everything that we do. However, we recognise there is always more to be done and one of the ways we can measure our progress is by setting targets.

In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we refresh and renew our equality objectives every four years and we have recently consulted with our university community to agree a new set of objectives for 2021 to 2025. To read our objectives please click here: [Kingston University Equality Objectives 2021-2025](#)



OUR LOCATIONS

The University is located across four teaching campuses in and around Kingston upon Thames. Our campuses are not only welcoming and supportive environments for students and staff, they are also home to incredible learning facilities. With laboratories and studios, modern classrooms, lecture theatres and libraries, our campuses also include dedicated postgraduate study centres, virtual learning tools, 24/7 online learning support, specialist computer suites and many more additional study spaces.

Penrhyn Road campus

Within walking distance of Kingston town centre, this campus is busy, lively, and cosmopolitan and there is a range of cafés, bars and restaurants on-site. It also has central University facilities such as the fitness centre, health centre, main student restaurant, the Union of Kingston Students and the Student Life Centre, which provides services such as accommodation and finance advice.

Kingston School of Art, Knights Park campus

Set in a riverside location, a short walk from Kingston town centre and the Penrhyn Road campus. The restaurant and bar are right next to the picturesque Hogsmill River, providing a tranquil backdrop for breaks in between lectures.

Kingston Hill campus

A beautiful, leafy, self-contained site with a mix of modern and historic buildings and a community feel. The campus boasts a cafe, restaurant, bar, Subway and Starbucks as well as halls of residence, tennis courts, beehives and a nature walk.

Roehampton Vale campus

Purpose-built and completely dedicated to the study of engineering. The campus is just a bus ride or short drive from Kingston and within walking distance of Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common.

THE ROLE

Purpose of the Role

The University Secretary will lead the strategic and operational development and delivery of the University's long-term vision for its corporate services activities. Maintain overall accountability for Board relations, corporate governance, compliance, risk and legal activity, health & safety, public affairs, brand and communications, strategic programme office and executive support.

The University Secretary acts as a senior post-holder and a trusted adviser to the Board Chair and the Vice-Chancellor, providing a link between governance and executive functions.

As part of the Senior Leadership Team the University Secretary will work in partnership with other SLT roles to provide leadership across the University, ensuring the University's strategic aims are well-defined and delivered.

This role will:

- lead the corporate governance of the University and its legal and compliance functions. This includes ensuring the management of the Board is effective and governance issues and matters are presented and dealt with appropriately.
- take accountability for institutional compliance with the requirements of the Office for Students, and other regulators which are active in the higher education sector.
- understand the strategic and political landscape, both within and outside the sector, to ensure the University can respond proactively and competitively to emerging opportunities, risks, and requirements.
- lead the strategic vision for corporate and external communications to engage, promote and enhance our reputation through a well-defined internal and external communications strategy.
- lead the creation and implementation of plans, processes, programmes, and services for corporate services portfolio to ensure the University always operates effectively and efficiently and supports the University's academic endeavour.
- ensure relevant expert guidance is in place across the corporate services portfolio to assist all University colleagues and to shape these crucial professional services to meet the emerging aims and objectives of the university, whilst ensuring compliance with relevant policies and legal requirements.

Strategic Context and Role Drivers

To ensure the University is successful in its strategic aims effective corporate services are required. This role promotes a unified approach to deliver such activities.

As the University Secretary and part of the SLT, this role will be required to identify and act to address opportunities for significant change and performance improvement in corporate, university-wide processes, practices, and services.

Working in cooperation with senior colleagues across the University, the role will ensure the benefits of a centralised corporate service approach are realised. It will provide easy access to consistently high-quality support, and the promotion of continuous improvement.

Accountabilities

1. Lead the development and implementation of integrated corporate services which align with the University's strategic aims ensuring regulatory and legal compliance, and best practice, using appropriate measures and performance indicators.
2. To lead the Directorate for Corporate Services and create an exceptional service culture, providing quality support to stakeholders to manage risk, budgets, and the effect of decisions on the University, its strategy, and stakeholders.
3. To lead, motivate and manage the performance of senior professional staff within the Directorate ensuring team members have clear objectives, responsibilities, and accountabilities, and deliver to the highest professional standards to achieve the University's vision and aims.
4. To act as the lead senior advisor to the Vice-Chancellor and the Board of Governors / Committees on matters relating to the corporate portfolio issues, needs, requirements and services. In addition, ensure the governance and management of the Board is effective and issues and matters are presented and dealt with appropriately.
5. To ensure that the corporate service portfolio meets the University's strategic aims and aspirations. This will be achieved by:
 - a. acting as the lead senior advisor to the Vice-Chancellor and the Board of Governors / Committees on matters and requirements to ensure the governance and management of the Board is effective and issues and matters are presented and dealt with appropriately.
 - b. ensuring effective corporate governance and compliance of all related regulations, policies and transparent processes for pan-university committees, operational planning, risk, and business continuity to all stakeholders are in place and are effective.
 - c. leading the development and execution of the University's brand, communication, and public affairs strategies, which define, project, and reinforce a high reputation for the University and provide influence which enable the institution to achieve its goals.
 - d. leading the Strategic Programme Office for the University, to plan, manage, deliver, and track the progress and impact of all strands of activity and change and secure the delivery of the Town House Strategy.
 - e. ensure the safety and security of university held data and its compliance with the GDPR regulations.
 - f. in conjunction with the Chief of Staff and the Executive Support Team, ensure the work of the Executive Team and of the Vice Chancellor is facilitated, underpinned by advice and data, and followed through into successful action.
 - g. ensuring the provision of legal advice to the University, informing strategies, plans, initiatives, and casework. Act as the University's final arbiter in complaints, the correspondent with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), the University Whistleblowing Officer and the named contact for all legal matters.
6. Leading the management of relationship with and be the connection point for relevant regulatory bodies and agencies, including the Office for Students and the Department for Education.
7. Provide expertise and authoritative advice to the chair, members of the Board and SLT on constitutional and regulatory frameworks as embodied in the Articles of Government and requirements of government or funding bodies.
8. Ensure the University fully meets the expectations and requirements set out in the Committee of University Chairs Higher Education (CUC HE) code by Office for Students.
9. Ensuring we have robust due diligence processes including fulfilling the Office for Students requirements for a Fit and Proper Person processes: the Public Interest Disclosure policy and process and oversee the responsibilities associated with the Prevent duty.
10. To lead the directorate, ensuring that strong and effective partnerships with internal and external stakeholders are developed and maintained, in particular:

- a. external representation of the University and management of relations with Government / external agencies and regulatory bodies, ensuring the University's policy needs are understood and it is promoted as a strong, influential institution.
- b. relationships and contracts with external service providers relate to students and associated services, ensuring quality and value for money.

Role as part of University SLT

As a member of the senior leadership team for the University, this role plays a critical part in defining and developing strategy, policies, and decision-making.

This role requires a willingness to engage with staff, students, and the wider community as a senior leader of the University.

The role is the SLT lead for corporate services, ensuring that the centralised portfolio provides effective support across the full range of critical corporate activities and is fully integrated into the development and delivery of the University's strategy.

This role works closely with all SLT/SLG colleagues, to create and implement change to enhance the University's performance.

Committee Membership

This role will lead and attend relevant key internal/external committees, bodies and other forums as required as a representative of the University.

Role in relation to the University Board

This role is the Board's primary advisor on corporate services portfolio matters. The role will be expected to attend meetings of the Board and its subcommittees.

Management Responsibilities

As a line manager, the role includes, but is not limited to, the following key responsibilities:

To provide leadership, motivation and direction to all direct reports and directorate team members.

To be accountable for the directorate's overall budget and resource planning in line with the University's financial regulations

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Typical Qualifications and Registrations

- Postgraduate degree or equivalent experience.
- Track record and credibility in liaising with the Board and of operating at the most senior institutional level.
- Substantial experience as a member of a senior leadership team playing a pivotal part in defining and developing strategies, policies, and decision-making.
- A seasoned professional with substantial experience of developing and leading critical corporate functions.
- Significant understanding and substantial experience of regulations and governance.
- Essential experience of working with a range of professionals from a variety of disciplines, ideally within a matrix structure of significant size.
- Ideally experience of working with external agencies, government departments and professional and regulatory bodies.
- Proven reputation for building capability, driving implementation, and delivering high performance.

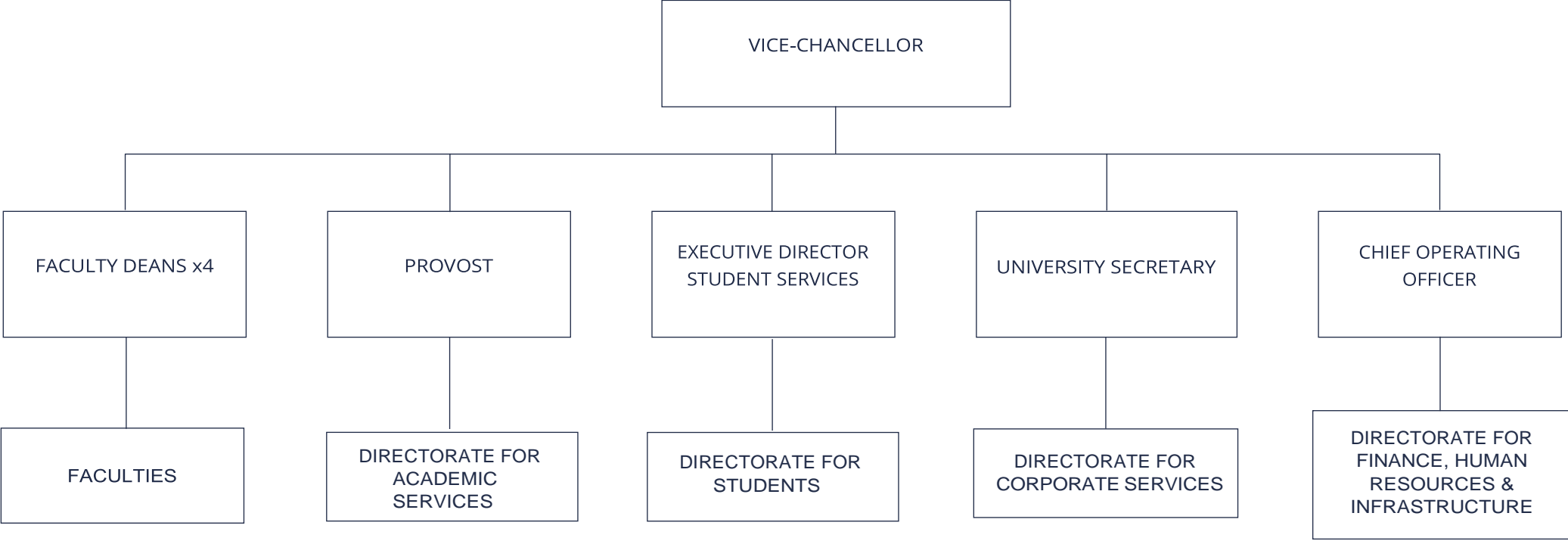
Core behaviours

- **Ensures accountability** – Holding oneself and others accountable for meeting commitments.
- **Develops talent** – Developing people to meet both their career goals and the organisation's goals.
- **Manages complexity** – Making sense of complex, high quantity and sometimes contradictory information to effectively solve problems.
- **Communicates effectively** – Developing and delivering multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.
- **Balances stakeholders** – Anticipating and balancing the needs of multiple stakeholders.
- **Decision quality** – Making good and timely decisions that keep the organisation moving forward.
- **Drives vision and purpose** – paints a compelling picture of the vision and strategy that motivates others to action
- **Collaborates** – Building partnerships and working collaboratively with others to meet shared objectives both internally and externally.
- **Cultivates Innovation** – Creating new and better ways for the organisation to be successful
- **Plans and Aligns** – Planning and prioritising work to meet commitments aligned to organisational goals
- **Persuades** – Using compelling arguments to gain the support and commitment of others
- **Drives Engagement** – Creating a climate where people are motivated to do their best to help the organisation achieve its objectives

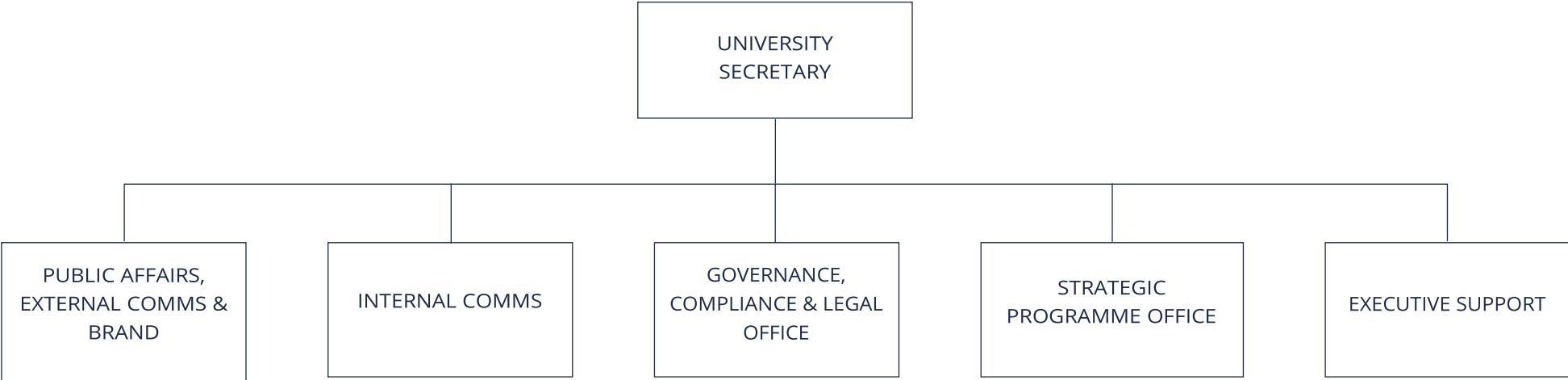
Core values

- Inclusive – To Value the diversity of students and staff treating them respectfully.
- Innovative – To apply new methods or ideas to facilitate progress.
- Ambitious – To pursue excellence for oneself, the University, and our communities.
- Enterprising – To recognise and act on opportunities.

Senior Leadership Team:



Corporate Services Directorate



HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Kingston University on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code MAWRH.

Click on the **'apply'** button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter.

The closing date for applications is **noon on 7 August 2023**.

Timetable

Shortlisting: 13th September 2023

Formal Interviews*: 5th October 2023

*If any of the interview dates pose a problem for you, please let us know about this at the time of application.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please **do not** include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be