

MAT HR Business Partner – Job Description



Reporting to the Director of Operations

Hours: 37 hours a week, whole year

Grade: SFCA Support Staff Pay Scale 32 - 35

Location: This role is primarily based at either our Guisborough or Stockton College Campuses, but it is expected that working across the Trust Sites will be required on a regular basis.

Main purpose

The MAT HR Business Partner will act as a strategic and trusted advisor to trust and academy leaders, providing expert HR insight, challenge and coaching that shapes decision-making at the highest level. The role goes beyond transactional HR management to embed a proactive, business-focused people function, including:

- Leading the strategic development, evaluation and continuous improvement of the trust's HR strategy, aligned to organisational priorities and growth plans
- Partnering with senior and academy leaders as a credible advisor on complex organisational, workforce and employee relations matters
- Driving organisational design, workforce planning and change management across the trust's all-through 3–19 model
- Championing a data-driven, commercially astute approach to HR service delivery and decision-making
- Building leadership capability across the trust to embed a high-performance, values-led people culture

Responsibilities and duties:

Strategic HR Business Partnering

The MAT HR Business Partner will be accountable for shaping and delivering the trust's HR strategy as a genuine business partner to trust and academy leaders, upholding the trust's vision and values in all aspects of their work.

1. The MAT HR Business Partner will:
2. Partner with the CEO and senior leadership team to shape the long-term vision and strategy for the trust's HR function, ensuring it is a driver of organisational performance rather than a support service alone
3. Own and evolve the trust's HR strategy, using workforce data and sector insight to anticipate future needs rather than simply reviewing past performance
4. Act as a credible, challenging sounding board to academy leaders on complex, sensitive or high-risk people issues, exercising sound judgement and commercial awareness
5. Provide regular, proactive business partnering visits and drop-in surgeries across all trust sites, building strong relationships with leadership teams rather than responding only when issues arise
6. Lead the sourcing, implementation and ongoing optimisation of the trust's HR software and digital systems to enable insight-led decision-making
7. Provide expert, forward-looking advice to trust leaders on HR practice, employment legislation and sector developments, co-ordinating external legal or professional advice where required
8. Build lasting HR capability within the trust by coaching, upskilling and developing academy leaders' confidence and competence in managing their people
9. Contribute HR and workforce expertise to the trust's strategic planning, risk management and governance processes, including reporting to trustees as required

10. Lead and develop the trust's HR team, taking responsibility for their professional development and ensuring the team itself models excellent business partnering
11. Establish, own and continuously improve the trust's HR policy framework, including pay, performance management, induction, parental leave, sickness absence, whistleblowing and resignation
12. Manage the trust's relationships with external HR providers, ensuring quality, value for money and strategic alignment with trust priorities
13. Lead HR due diligence for schools joining the trust, providing clear, risk-based recommendations to senior leaders
14. Lead the trust's approach to organisational change, including restructuring, redundancy and TUPE, ensuring change is managed with commercial rigour and genuine care for staff
15. Lead on complex disciplinary and grievance procedures, providing case management oversight and coaching to those involved
16. Own the end-to-end process for resolving HR casework, identifying and addressing systemic themes rather than individual cases alone

Organisational design, workforce planning and change

The MAT HR Business Partner will:

1. Develop and maintain a trust-wide workforce plan, identifying skills gaps, succession risks and options for staff deployment across academies
2. Advise senior leaders on organisational design, structure and role design to ensure the trust's people model supports its strategic priorities
3. Use workforce and people data to build a compelling, evidence-based narrative that informs trust and academy-level decision-making
4. Lead or support restructuring and change programmes end-to-end, from options analysis through to consultation and implementation

Recruitment, talent and induction

The MAT HR Business Partner will be responsible for co-ordinating recruitment across the trust, partnering with academy leaders on talent strategy, and ensuring recruitment priorities align with the trust's aims.

The MAT HR Business Partner will:

1. Oversee the recruitment process, including communicating timeframes to all involved and sending out the necessary information at each stage
2. Partner with academy leaders on talent attraction, selection and succession planning strategies for key and hard-to-fill roles
3. Work with trust leaders to ensure new members of staff have an induction programme appropriate to their role, including NQTs and Early Career teachers
4. Ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed

Performance management, pay, and conditions

The MAT HR Business Partner will be accountable for the effectiveness and strategic alignment of pay and performance management processes across the trust.

The MAT HR Business Partner will:

1. Own the trust's professional development strategy, ensuring investment in training is prioritised, targeted and evidenced through impact
2. Partner with trust leaders to design a benefits and rewards package for each role that supports recruitment, retention and value for money
3. Lead the trust's approach to performance management, using data and feedback to drive continuous improvement
4. Develop and benchmark the trust's pay scales for all roles, ensuring they remain competitive and support the trust's ability to recruit and retain the best staff

Staff engagement, culture and wellbeing

The MAT HR Business Partner will be accountable for shaping a positive, engaged and resilient staff culture that supports the trust's ability to recruit and retain the best people.

The MAT HR Business Partner will:

1. Design, implement and evaluate staff wellbeing and engagement strategies, reporting on impact and return on investment to trust leaders
2. Act as an escalation point and expert advisor for complex staff queries relating to HR policy and procedure
3. Build and maintain strong, effective relationships with unions and professional associations, using these relationships strategically to support the trust's employment approach
4. Partner with trust leaders to gather and act on staff voice, using insight to drive tangible improvements in job satisfaction and culture

Safeguarding

The MAT HR Business Partner will be accountable for supporting the trust's work to safeguard its pupils, its staff and the wider community.

The MAT HR Business Partner will:

1. Own and continuously improve the trust's safer recruitment procedures, including compliance with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and training requirements
2. Monitor and review the trust's DBS checking process, ensuring compliance and efficiency
3. Lead the trust's responsibilities for safeguarding as they relate to employee matters
4. Lead the trust's procedures for handling allegations against adults, liaising with external agencies as required
5. Partner with the designated safeguarding lead to develop and implement a programme of safeguarding training

Carrying out such similar duties as may be required by the Chief Executive Officer, commensurate with the post.

This job description sets out the main responsibilities for the postholder but is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Specific duties may change from time to time without changing the general nature of the post, and the postholder is expected to be flexible in the range of responsibilities they undertake commensurate with the responsibility and salary.

Essential

- CIPD Level 5 qualification or above (or equivalent senior/strategic HR qualification), or demonstrable equivalent experience operating at a strategic HR business partnering level
- Good standard of secondary/further education achievement – a minimum of four GCSEs or equivalent Level 2 qualifications, including Maths and English, and at least one Level 3 qualification
- Substantial experience operating as an HR Business Partner or senior HR professional, advising and influencing senior leaders on strategic and operational people matters
- Demonstrable experience leading organisational design, workforce planning or change management programmes, including restructuring and TUPE
- Broad-based and up-to-date knowledge of HR, staff development and training issues
- Sound, current knowledge of employment legislation and its practical application in complex casework
- Experience leading on complex, high-risk employee relations casework, including disciplinary, grievance and allegations against adults
- Excellent communication, negotiation and influencing skills, with the credibility to challenge and coach senior leaders
- Excellent problem-solving skills with the ability to react positively and decisively in difficult or high-pressure situations
- A high level of confidence and integrity together with diplomacy and assertiveness
- Able to build and maintain strong, trusted working relationships with people at all levels, including governors and trustees
- Able to manage conflicting priorities across multiple sites and stakeholders
- Able to work under own initiative and flexibly as part of a team, and to lead a team effectively
- Adaptable and highly motivated, with dedication, drive and commitment
- Able to maintain a professional and confidential approach at all times
- Excellent data analysis skills, with the ability to use workforce data and spreadsheet/database tools to build a business case and inform decision-making
- Have a flexible approach to working hours

Desirable

- Experience of HR business partnering within a multi-academy trust or wider education setting
- An understanding of and interest in the working environment across a wide range of educational establishments, including both statutory (STPCD) and further education (FE) pay and conditions frameworks
- Experience of selecting, implementing and embedding integrated HR software systems
- Experience coaching or developing the HR capability of non-HR leaders