

Job Description

Post title	Sector Skills Lead
Grade	N11
Directorate	Skills, Inclusion and Public Service Reform
Team	Skills Policy, Strategy and Insights
Reporting to	Principal Strategy Lead (Skills and Employment)
Responsible for	N/A

Job Purpose

The Sector Skills Lead will be instrumental to the delivery and implementation of the New Deal for North East Workers, ensuring alignment of regionally commissioned skills provision with the needs of employers across the North East MSA's priority sectors. The postholder will act as the strategic lead across a portfolio of industry sectors, responsible for facilitating high functioning and effective sectoral partnerships with a view to delivering meaningful outcomes for residents in careers, education, skills and economic inclusion. This will include monitoring employer insights, emerging opportunities and challenges, and relevant regional/national/international policy across the portfolio of sectors.

The postholder will shape skills strategy development from policy through to practice, ensuring coherence across the directorate and working closely with internal stakeholders, external partners and key regional influencers, ensuring strong outcomes for residents remains at the heart of economic growth. The role will build and maintain senior relationships across local authorities, education providers, employers, business/employer representative bodies and wider partners. Through these relationships, the postholder will help strengthen the organisation's strategic influence, champion the region's interests, and help define where the MSA goes next in relation to sector-based human capital and economic growth.

Duties and responsibilities

Sector Leadership, Analysis, Horizon Scanning and Strategic Positioning

- Provide visible, confident leadership to engagement, development and growth of a portfolio of sectors as directed by the Head of Service, setting high standards for high quality insights, strategic thinking, and partnership working.
- Provide strategic leadership to businesses, education/academic institutions and skills providers, communities and learners to support the implementation of the New Deal for North East Workers.
- Maintain an understanding of national skills, education, employment and economic inclusion policy and horizon scan to identify emerging trends, risks, and opportunities across the portfolio of sectors.

- Interpret economic data and insights including labour market analyses, employment data, business barometers and economic surveys to identify upcoming challenges and opportunities across the key sectors.
- Drive improvements and alignment across skills provision and economic development initiatives to ensure careers and workforce development needs are strongly at the centre of delivery.
- Work closely with the wider Skills and Employability directorate and other directorates across the MSA to ensure integration of strategy and policy development into the delivery of skills provision, careers and workforce development activity, economic inclusion and growth initiatives, technical/vocational pathways, and vice versa.
- Translate strategic direction set by the Head of Service into strategic and operational frameworks, plans and delivery across the service area.
- Work colleagues and with senior managers to develop a strategic plan for the priority sectors to ensure delivery against key KPIs, reporting a varied range of qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate progress and impact.
- Work with colleagues across the MSA on the development of the MSA's sector skills strategies, ensuring the needs, opportunities and challenges of residents and employers remain at the forefront of discussions.

Stakeholder Engagement, Strategic Partnerships and Influence

- Lead the development and delivery of the North East MSA's cluster network and sectoral partnerships across a portfolio of priority sectors.
- Build and maintain strong, strategic relationships with local authorities, education and skills providers, employers and wider partners.
- Provide strategic leadership to businesses, education and skills providers, and representative organisations, supporting the implementation of the New Deal for North East Workers.
- Represent the MSA at senior skills and employment forums and events, ensuring the region's interests are clearly articulated and understood.
- Act as a trusted senior point of contact for external partners seeking to engage with the MSA on strategic sector skills matters.

Organisational responsibilities

- **Communication**

We communicate effectively with our peers, partners and local authorities and work collaboratively to provide the best possible outcomes. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to the region.

- **Confidentiality**

All members of staff are required to undertake that they will not divulge to anyone personal and/or confidential information to which they may have access during the course of their work.

All members of staff must be aware that they have explicit responsibility for the confidentiality and security of information received and imported in the course of work and in using organisation information assets.

- **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

We take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the North East MSA Health and Safety policy and procedures.

- **Performance Management**

We promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained, and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. You will contribute to the organisation's appraisal processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

All members of staff will receive appraisals, and it is the responsibility of each member of staff to follow guidance on the appraisal process.

The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by their manager.

Values and Behaviours

Our values and behaviours are the things that are important to us, individually and as a team. They articulate the way we want to conduct ourselves. Combined, they work together to make us who we are, and we use them to anchor all that we do. The North East MSA values are:

- Strive for brilliance.
- One team.
- Drive sustainability.
- Make it happen.
- Be inclusive.

Equalities and Diversity

We are committed to creating a fairer North East where everyone can thrive with aspirational jobs, new skills, and better homes. All employees are responsible for taking proactive steps to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and foster good relationships in every aspect of their work.

Special requirements of post

- **DBS**

This post is not subject to a disclosure.

- **Politically restricted**

The North East MSA has designated that this post is not politically restricted in accordance with the requirement of section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State.

Person Specification: Employer Engagement and Insights Manager

The following criteria will be used to shortlist at the application stage and will be further explored at the interview stage.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Degree and/or equivalent experience of working in skills, careers, industry representative organisations or business development.	
Experience	- Experience leading complex strategy development in a political or public sector environment. - Demonstrable experience of engaging and building relationships with stakeholders from across the public sector, private sector, and education. - Experience and/or knowledge of skills delivery, employment support and economic inclusion and the national, regional and local policy landscape. - Experience of leading the delivery of programmes or projects with multiple stakeholders to time and budget and managing and mitigating risks. - Experience of successfully initiating, developing and quality assuring successful projects with strong outcomes. - Experience in gathering high quality quantitative and qualitative evidence to demonstrate impact. - Experience in horizon scanning, analysis, and long-term strategic planning. - Evidence of producing high-quality strategic insight, analysis, and briefings in fast-paced, politically sensitive contexts. - Experience of supporting communications' activities across a partnership, including an awareness of social media. - Experience of analysing data and gathering evidence to demonstrate impact.	- Experience working within or in partnership with a Mayoral Strategic/Combined Authority, Local Authority, central government or similar authority. - Experience, knowledge and/or industry familiarity across one or more of the priority sectors identified in the North East Local Growth Plan. - Experience and/or knowledge of career and progression pathways in one or more of the priority sectors identified in the North East Local Growth Plan.

Skills and Knowledge	• A demonstrable understanding of skills provision and needs, spanning across 19+ adult skills, 16-19 academic and vocational provision, 14-19 careers pathways, and lifelong learning entitlements. • A strong track record of stakeholder engagement and management and of communicating with a variety of audiences, preferably in skills, careers, key industrial sectors or business development. • An understanding of relevant local and national policy relating to careers, skills and economic and workforce development. • An understanding of the issues and barriers to employment, education and training faced by young people and economically inactive adults, and barriers to recruitment faced by industry. • The ability to build productive working relationships with partners and stakeholders and work as part of a hybrid team. • Ability to think, plan and work strategically across a partnership to deliver projects and programmes. • Excellent written and verbal communication skills and interpersonal skills with the ability to engage and persuade a variety of audiences and encourage others to use new ways of working. • Proactive, with the ability to work independently, prioritising a busy workload and with a large number of stakeholders. • Digital skills and experience of using a range of Microsoft Office Applications.	• Strong understanding of English devolution, local government structures, and national policy/strategy making processes. • The role will involve travel around the region, therefore a driving licence would be advantageous. • An understanding of the issues and barriers to employment, education and training faced by young people and economically inactive adults, and barriers to recruitment faced by industry.
Personal Qualities	• Enthusiastic and proactive with a genuine commitment to public value, inclusive growth, and improving outcomes for residents and communities. • Curious, forward-looking, and proactive in identifying future trends, risks, and opportunities. • Resilient, adaptable, and comfortable working in a dynamic political environment. • Committed to partnership working with key stakeholders including internal colleagues, partners and key regional and national influencers. • Committed to continuous improvement, learning and professional development. • Committed to the principles of equality and diversity. • Values-driven, with a commitment to integrity, transparency, and high professional standards.	• Ability to work flexibly with occasional out-of-office-hours commitments linked to political, strategic or external events. • Willingness to travel within the region and to central government hubs as required.

Additional Requirements		
------------------------------------	--	--