

# University of Aberdeen Director of Advancement

Appointment Brief  
April 2019

THE  TIMES  
THE SUNDAY TIMES

**GOOD  
UNIVERSITY  
GUIDE  
2019**

**SCOTTISH  
UNIVERSITY  
OF THE YEAR**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
ABERDEEN**

# UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

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*“Open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others”*

Founded in 1495 by William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen and Chancellor of Scotland, we are Scotland's third oldest and the UK's fifth oldest university. We remain true to Elphinstone's guiding principle of a university that is “open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others”.

Named as **Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019**, ranked 158<sup>th</sup> in the world by the Times Higher and in February 2018 awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education in recognition of our world-leading research into health economics and health services over the last forty years, we are committed to building further on our history and international reputation for teaching and research excellence.

Our research is at the forefront of addressing a number of challenges facing the world today, from healthcare research, energy transitions, meeting global food challenges and tackling climate change. We continue to innovate in pursuit of excellence in learning and teaching, ensuring that our students who will shape our society in the future are supported to reach their full potential.

Among the many pioneers who have been associated with the University of Aberdeen are five Nobel Laureates, with our alumni making major contributions to many fields, including science, the arts, medical research, business and politics.

We are proud to be at the forefront of innovations in teaching, learning and research and are committed to continuing our programme of Digital Transformation, which includes the continuous implementation of new technologies, greater accessibility of information, simplified business processes and enhanced training and development for students and staff.



## KEY FACTS

In looking to our future and in developing our new Strategic Plan we will build upon our strong foundations of high quality teaching and research. Our strong performance across a number of areas has contributed to our continuing rise in league table rankings:

### Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE)

We rose 27 places and are now ranked at 158 – 3<sup>rd</sup> in Scotland and 22<sup>nd</sup> in the UK.



### Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide

We were recently named as Scottish University of the Year for 2019 in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide. We displayed a strong performance across several key indicators, resulting in a rise of 14 places from 40<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> in the UK – the biggest move by a university that appeared in the previous year's top 40 and the third successive year in which we rose in the rankings. This earned us a place on the shortlist for UK University of the Year.

### Complete University Guide

We rose from 40<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> in the UK, the biggest rise of any of last year's top 50 universities. We rose from 7<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> place in Scotland, with six subjects being ranked amongst the top ten in the UK.



### Research Excellence Framework

Preparations for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise in 2021 are well underway. Our REF results in 2014 returned a strong performance, with 76% of assessed research judged as world-leading or internationally excellent. With respect to the impact of this research, 85% was judged to be world-leading or internationally excellent.





## THE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

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The mission of our Development Trust is to inspire our community of alumni and donors to support the University's ambitions for the future.

Governed by a Board of Trustees, the Development Trust is a charity founded in 1982 with the sole purpose of attracting charitable donations to benefit the University of Aberdeen. The Trust's key priorities are designed to provide support for the patronage of students, to progress innovation and for the preservation of heritage.

The life and breadth of the University of Aberdeen over 500 years has been sustained by a generous history of philanthropic giving which has enabled us to enhance our campus, advance our research and grow a multicultural community. The University of Aberdeen Development Trust strives to maintain this momentum of support through donations and gifts in kind from our worldwide family of alumni, friends and benefactors and we have a number of key priorities designed to support the University's ambitions.

At the University of Aberdeen we produce well-rounded individuals who look forward to an exciting future with the solid foundations of a stimulating education behind them. Widening access is a key priority for the University so that we can harness the talent and potential of young people who are considering higher education but deem it unachievable without the financial support of scholarships. Our Founder Bishop Elphinstone's ambition was to create a university which would be "open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others" and our commitment to widening access ensures that this continues to be as true today as it was more than 500 years ago. The University thrives on the vibrancy of its students and our donors provide support, not just for scholarships, but for support services; student experiences; and activities such as sport, the arts and music as well as facilities for them. This allows the University to maintain the synergy of education, experience and innovation for every student who comes here.

Innovation needs inspiration and that means continued investment in world-class facilities. Our international research spans many areas from medicine to the humanities. Currently our fundraising is focused on a number of medical appeals which include creating a new world-class Cancer Research Programme, developing a new approach to women's health, and transforming the teaching of medicine. Through these appeals we endeavour to help people live healthier lives, to influence global strategies and to collaborate with partners internationally.

As guardians of our splendid cultural heritage, we are charged with preserving it for future generations. We are very fortunate to have inherited a stunning and unrivalled legacy of historical buildings, gardens, archives, rare books, art, artefacts and scientific specimens which embody one of the finest collections in the country. Donor support ensures that these are treasured, studied and enjoyed by all.

The Development Trust has an excellent track record in fundraising and consistently performs extremely well amongst institutions of a comparable size and heritage. Annual income is ~£6M across major gifts, legacies, regular giving and community (third party) fundraising. In 2010, the University and the Trust successfully closed a £150M campaign – at the time the highest education campaign in Scotland. Since then, the University and the Trust have together raised in excess of £100M. In 2017, the Trust featured in the top 200 charities in the UK for legacy income, one of only three higher education institutions to feature in the list. The Trust's endowment currently stands at £14.2M, and the University's at £46.2M.

The fundraising team currently comprises four major gift officers, a regular/digital giving officer, a community fundraising officer and a fundraising research officer. It is anticipated that as the next campaign progresses there will be further investment in the team.

The Trust benefits from excellent relationships with peer institutions and actively engages through fora such as the Caledonian Group, the Ross Group and CASE. We take part in the annual Ross-CASE survey to aid benchmarking and strategic planning.

Sitting at the heart of this role is the launch of our 2020 Fundraising Campaign, which will build on the success of our previous campaign. To support the delivery of this campaign, it is anticipated that the staffing complement within the Development Trust will be enhanced as appropriate.

## Academic Structure

Fundamental to supporting the 2020 Fundraising Campaign is our academic community. As a broad-based, research intensive University, with our students at the heart of everything we do, our vibrant research community provides the ideal narratives to drive our campaign.

The University's academic structure comprises 12 Schools each of which operates within a framework of devolved budgetary and planning responsibility:

- Biological Sciences
- Business School
- Divinity, History and Philosophy
- Education
- Engineering
- Geosciences
- Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture
- Law
- Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition
- Natural and Computing Sciences
- Psychology
- Social Science

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

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The overall structure for Professional Services has recently been streamlined into nine Directorates with the intention of delivering more focused and cost-effective services that will be better able to support and help implement the University's overall strategy. Each Directorate reports to the University Secretary and is supported by a nominated strategic lead from the Senior Management Team. The University's Professional Services comprise the following Directorates:

- Digital and Information Services
- Estates and Facilities
- External Relations
- Finance
- Marketing and Student Recruitment
- People
- Planning
- Research and Innovation
- Student and Academic Services

# THE ROLE

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**We are seeking to appoint an exceptional individual to lead the new fundraising campaign and to provide inspirational leadership to the Development Trust Team.**

## Responsibilities

You will work closely with the Principal & Vice Chancellor and the Board of Trustees of the Development Trust in all aspects of your work. You will be formally accountable to the Principal & Vice Chancellor for developing and leading the advancement strategy, and for driving forward the achievement of our ambitious fundraising targets. However, your relationship with the Board of Trustees will be of critical importance in supporting the delivery of the strategy, therefore you will have a formal reporting line to the Development Trust Board. You will be a member of the University's Senior Management Team.

In operationalising the campaign, you will work directly with the Principal & Vice Chancellor and other members of the University's Senior Management Team, supported by the Development Trust team. You will be responsible for the line management of the Director of Development and Alumni Relations, who in turn will manage the Development Trust team.

You will be expected to undertake significant international, European and domestic travel as part of our approach to attracting funds from global trusts, foundations and other organisations to deliver our fundraising targets.

Specifically, you will:

- Lead the development, launch and effective delivery of an inspiring and innovative advancement strategy for our 2020 Campaign and successfully deliver fundraising targets. This will include leading a robust evaluation of the campaign and any learning points which would lead to further advancement;
- Proactively develop and pursue entrepreneurial approaches to engaging with prospective donors, senior representatives of global trusts, foundations and other organisations, and with alumni and members of local/regional communities; and to maximising income opportunities and establishing a wide portfolio of diverse and sustainable philanthropic income streams in support of the campaign's ambitious fundraising targets;
- Undertake an ambassadorial role for the University by proactively promoting its strategic objectives locally, nationally and internationally amongst new and existing networks and through collaborative links with academic, business and charitable organisations;
- Provide line management, leadership and direction to the Director of Development and Alumni Relations.
- Undertake other such reasonable duties as assigned by the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and/or University Secretary.

You will play a central role in the successful delivery of the University's fundraising campaign by:

- Working closely with the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and other members of the University's senior management and the Development Trust to identify and deliver upon appropriate short, medium and long-term advancement priorities;
- Providing motivational and inspirational leadership to multi-disciplinary teams to ensure the effective dissemination and implementation of a coherent advancement strategy and vision in support of key strategic and operational campaign objectives;
- Successfully interacting, negotiating and influencing at a senior level within local, national and international companies, trusts, foundations and organisations in support of the fundraising campaign;
- Developing strong working relationships with a broad range of colleagues and stakeholders, particularly prospective donors, to ensure the achievement of the campaign's strategic and operational objectives;
- Developing clear performance indicators and ensuring that effective and robust mechanisms exist for the long-term financial planning and monitoring of the advancement strategy and the 2020 Campaign.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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## Qualifications, Skills & Experience

The successful candidate will bring the following experience:

- A proven track record of success at a senior level in developing, delivering and evaluating innovative and effective fundraising strategies and advancement processes;
- A proven track record of fostering and delivering a strong performance ethos, coupled with highly developed interpersonal and motivational skills;
- A proven track record of efficient and effective management of resources, including the planning and co-ordination of staffing and budgetary resources;
- Ability to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of key issues and challenges facing the HE sector, particularly in relation to funding and fundraising matters;
- Education to degree level;
- Experience of working in the HE sector is desirable but not essential.

Candidates will also demonstrate the following attributes:

- Well-developed leadership and management skills, with a proven track record in leading and motivating individuals and teams from a multi-disciplinary perspective;
- Demonstrable ability to develop strong working relationships with a broad range of colleagues and stakeholders;
- Effective decision-making skills and the confidence to delegate and empower colleagues, as well as sound judgement and problem-solving skills;
- Excellent communication skills, including clarity of thought and the ability to listen;
- Flexible approach to work, including willingness to work out with normal office hours and undertake significant international, European and domestic travel.



## HOW TO APPLY

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

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **WVBS**.

Click on the **'apply'** button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and covering letter. The closing date for applications is **Tuesday 7 May 2019**.