CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY - DUBAI
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A WARM WELCOME FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Dear Applicant,

I would like to formally thank you for your interest in the post of Chief Operating Officer (COO) Dubai. Here at Heriot-Watt University we are intent on continuing the global transformation of our University to deepen its scholarly research, policy influence and innovation through investment in specific strengths in science, technology, engineering and business.

The Dubai Campus has a reputation for world-class teaching and practical, leading-edge research, which has translated into a sharp growth in student applications since it opened in 2005. Our students who study identical programmes at our Dubai campus, enjoy similar levels of employability after graduation, as their UK counterparts. We are proud to have been named International University of the Year by the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018, recognising our truly global presence and impact.

The COO Dubai will work in close partnership with the Secretary of the University, Provost and Vice Principal of the Dubai Campus, and COO Malaysia to deliver and strengthen Professional Services across the Heriot-Watt Group.

This integral position of COO Dubai is offered at a time of significant change for the University. We are championing and driving forward our key priorities of quality and global distinctiveness in teaching, research and key areas of innovation.

The University is about to embark on the development of its Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2023 and as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the new COO for Dubai will provide strategic leadership for the operational planning and management of the Heriot-Watt University Dubai campus.

If you have the relevant, demonstrable experience, in developing and delivering high quality Professional Services, combined with a track record of leading positive working relationships globally, we would be delighted to receive your application.

I look forward with interest to reading how you will make a significant and positive difference as part of our global team for the future. Good luck!

Yours sincerely,

Ann Marie Dalton-Pillay
Secretary of Heriot-Watt University
THE ORGANISATION

HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY

Heriot-Watt is a forward-looking, research-focused university, with world-leading expertise in science, engineering, business management, languages and design. Our mission is the creation and exchange of knowledge for the benefit of society. Since its foundation in 1821, Heriot-Watt has taken pride in supporting academically excellent research that delivers significant impact to industry and beyond. We have a strong track record of engagement with the private sector, other universities, professional institutions, and the general public.

Our global community

- We have five campuses across the world: Edinburgh, Scottish Borders, Orkney, Dubai and Malaysia, as well as 45 Approved Learning Partners (ALPs) and educational collaborative partners in 150 countries
- We have 30,000 students studying with us at our campuses and online through distance learning
- This includes over 9,000 at our Scottish campuses, almost 4,000 at our Dubai campus and 1,400 at our Malaysia campus
- We have over 15,000 students studying through one of our partnerships or via Independent Distance Learning
- We employ over 2,000 staff across all our campuses
- Around 30% of our on-campus students studying in Scotland are from outside the UK, making Heriot-Watt one of the most internationally diversified of any UK university
A rich heritage

- The eighth oldest higher education institution in the UK
- The Watt Club is oldest graduate club in the UK
- We have over 116,000 alumni worldwide in over 190 countries

A research-led institution

- The Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 ranked Heriot-Watt 22nd in the UK, with 82% of our research as world-leading or internationally excellent
- We are 9th in the UK and 1st in Scotland for research impact
- Over 80% of our academic staff are currently engaged in research at internationally recognised levels

World-leading reputation

- We are in the top 4% of universities globally, based on approximately 10,000 universities in the world (QS World’s University Rankings 2016/17)
- The National Student Survey 2016 placed us 25th in the UK and joint 3rd in Scotland, with 90% of students satisfied overall with their course in over half of the University’s subject areas
- Top 30 in the UK and 4th in Scotland in the Guardian University League Table 2017
- We are 39th in the world and 13th in the UK for our international outlook based on THE World University Rankings 2016/17
- 94% of graduates are in employment or further study within six months of graduation

The University’s shared values are embodied in all of its endeavours. These are:

- Pursuing Excellence
- Shaping the Future
- Outward Looking
- Pride and Belonging
- Valuing and Respecting Everyone

As a learning, living and working institution, we use our values as the building blocks of how we go about doing our work. They represent what binds us together as a University community and help us to become the best at what we do. By joining Heriot-Watt University you have the opportunity to belong to a community – 93% of our staff are happy to work here and 95% are proud to tell others that they work here. We are committed to our staff’s well-being and development and we offer a wide range of opportunities supporting academic and personal development. For all staff who join in a senior role we offer a comprehensive Leadership Development programme centred on our Leadership Excellence Framework.
DUBAI CAMPUS

Since 2005, the Dubai campus has cultivated an environment in which our students live to the full, make lasting friendships and enjoy everything that one of the world’s greatest cities has to offer. Studying programmes identical to those at our campuses in the UK, our graduates from Dubai are always in great demand. Heriot-Watt was the first British university to open its doors in Dubai International Academic City. Having provided a world-renowned education within the UK for 190 years, Heriot-Watt was invited to Dubai to educate students from all over the Gulf region and beyond.

The Dubai Study Programmes range from Masters programmes in disciplines as challenging and diverse as Petroleum Engineering, Construction Project Management, Management, Energy, Information Technology, and the Edinburgh Business School MBA, to undergraduate degrees in Management, Construction, Quantity Surveying and Engineering. Recently, the Dubai campus got approval to enrol PhD students in four of the schools. This is an activity that is set to grow significantly. Heriot-Watt’s portfolio of programmes in Dubai has been specifically tailored to match the demands of the UAE employment market, giving our students the best possible career advancement opportunities. All of our programmes are taught by permanent Heriot-Watt academic staff and many of them are accredited by the relevant industry professional bodies. Covering 300,000 square feet, Heriot-Watt’s fully equipped campus provides a challenging but supportive learning environment for its students.

Our reputation for world-class teaching and practical, leading-edge research, combined with our strong links to business and industry, has translated into sharp growth in applications to the Dubai campus since it opened in 2005. To reinforce our commitment to providing a high quality British education through programmes tailored to meet the demands of the UAE employment market, we opened a new, purpose-built campus in 2011. Then 2013 saw the opening of phase two of the Dubai campus. The 100 million AED structure features on-campus, 160-room accommodation and an auditorium with seating for up to 700, plus food court, gymnasium, mini market, coffee shop, beauty salon and indoor games room, along with a variety of other student services that add further value to both local and international scholars.

The academic performance of Dubai students has been exceptional. As well as winning more than their fair share of University prizes and degrees with distinction, they have generated a reputation for winning a number of industry and design awards. This, combined with many undergraduates gaining their first taste of employment with blue chip companies and postgraduates achieving career progression as a result of their degrees, demonstrates the synergy between students and the University experience.
SCOTTISH CAMPUSES

In Scotland, the University operates over three campuses: the campus based in Edinburgh; the Scottish Borders campus in Galashiels, which is home to the School of Textiles & Design; and the Orkney campus, which specialises in renewable energy.

One-third of Heriot-Watt’s students studying at campuses in Scotland come from outside of the UK, one of the highest proportions of overseas students of any UK university. The University currently has approximately 9,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled at its Scottish campuses.

Noted for its community feel, our Edinburgh campus is based in 380 acres of beautiful parkland and offers a range of services to students and staff, including onsite nursery, health and dental care, a treatment and rehabilitation centre, sports facilities, a range of catering options, and free parking.
MALAYSIA CAMPUS

In January 2013, the University opened a new campus, Heriot-Watt University Malaysia, that resulted in a spectacular building which opened in February 2015. There are now over 1,000 students including 170 postgraduate students and ambitious plans for future growth. The first intake of undergraduate students commenced their studies in September 2014.

Located at Putrajaya, 25km south of Kuala Lumpur, the campus is situated in a stunning lakeside location of 4.8 acres. The first phase of the campus accommodates a population of 4,000 students and when fully developed, will support a vibrant community of up to 6,000 students. The striking building design reveals itself within the landscape, from beneath a living grass roof. Located in a fantastic area, part of Putrajaya Lake’s ‘green continuum’, the building is consciously designed with the environment in mind and is built to Green Building Index (GBI) standards. The green roof is one of the biggest in the country, and the most recognisably sustainable feature of the campus. As well as shading most of the naturally ventilated spaces below, it acts to reduce thermal transmittance to its surroundings, and collects rainwater to irrigate the landscape below. The University provides access to four modern halls of residence nearly in Cyberjaya.
THE POSITION

This role reports directly to the Secretary of the University and the Provost and Vice Principal of the Dubai Campus.

POSITION PURPOSE

A key member of the Senior Leadership Team at HWUD, the COO will provide strategic leadership and lead the operational planning and management of Heriot-Watt University’s Dubai campus.

The COO will be responsible for managing and delivering the full range of Professional Services that are necessary to efficiently and successfully implement, optimise and help deliver an exceptional student experience, staff experience and contribute to the continued success of the University both regionally and globally.

This role will also have responsibility for University wide corporate accountabilities including global projects under the direction of the Secretary of the University.

The COO will work with integrity and will inspire staff to share the University’s ambitions and contribute to its success, helping to instill the University’s culture and values across the organisation.

The role requires an individual who has a passion for working internationally and in inter-cultural contexts.
SUMMARY OF KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop high professional standards in addition to excellent customer care across a range of functions, ensuring high quality in all areas of delivery
- Lead and manage the Professional Service areas employed directly by Heriot-Watt University working closely with the Provost and the Secretary of the University and the Global Professional Services Directors and their School counterparts
- Be responsible for the effective Partnership working with our Academic Infrastructure Provider (AIP) – Study World, ensuring that agreed Service Level Descriptors are delivered at the highest quality levels. Develop and maintain an excellent working relationship with the senior management, in particular the COO or equivalent role of our AIP
- Working with colleagues (including the Secretary and the COO at HWUM), maximise student recruitment revenues, drive margin improvement through highly effective resource utilisation, enhance productivity and cost containment initiatives through a focused emphasis on and vision for process improvement and new process design implementation
- With relevant colleagues, develop and optimise new IT and other systems that will enable effective interfaces and enhance service delivery
- Develop and/or implement plans and processes to ensure the University is operating effectively and in a compliant manner in our Dubai location
- Be able to analyse performance data along with other pertinent information to assess the level of risk and exposures across the range of local Professional Services. Report regularly to the Provost and the Secretary of the University, proposing solutions and action plans
- Monitor other key risk indicators in the University to identify potential risk issues in the business environment and develop meaningful action plans to correct negative trends and behaviours
- Be part of the Global Leadership Team, collaborating with stakeholders to maintain consistency of delivery and student experience, and address global implementation challenges and opportunities. Liaise and share best practice with the COO at HWUM
- Drive and enhance the student experience, in particular agreeing the implementation and maintenance of high quality facilities designed to deliver excellent student experience
- Proactive support for the development of the Heriot-Watt University reputation in the region with external stakeholders, helping to build the brand and impact of HWU and create new opportunities for business development and partnership
- Engage in the University’s annual planning cycle and with the Provost and Secretary, develop an annual budget for Professional Services at HWUD
- Create and maintain appropriate quality assurance protocols to ensure service level expectations are consistently met while providing timely and accurate key performance indicators to stakeholders
COMPETENCIES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Outlook
- Contribute to the development and delivery of the University strategy, drawing upon and sharing knowledge gained through engagement and close relationships with colleagues to inform and influence decisions
- Identify, interpret and translate University Strategies into operational planning and outcomes, keeping in mind the bigger picture and the external environment and ensuring operational planning is robust enough to support the strategy but nimble enough to adapt to changing needs

Leadership
- Provide leadership to the team, providing line management direction, support, mentoring and coaching
- Through strong leadership and example, lead and develop staff to achieve their potential, ensuring a clear understanding of their role within the team
- Provide specialist professional, technical and expert advice within the team and across the University
- Deputise for University Secretary where required

Management Responsibilities
- Lead by example
- Create a working environment for colleagues which enables personal growth and development
- Provide guidance, coaching and support to their team through change

Team Work
- Ensures management team are effectively managing staff performance
- Proactively encourages and offers personal development opportunities available to all staff members
- Build visible, effective and influential professional relationships across the University and external stakeholders
- Works with the relevant boards and University Executive to achieve University goals

Championing Change
- Assess and lead on change management, influencing and managing stakeholder expectations
- Manage the implications of change on the team, maintaining team morale and service levels
- Be nimble and agile to respond to the pace and direction of change

Decision Making
- Take responsibility for all local decision making and action planning
- Apply solid judgement and exhibit courage in decision making
- Provide high quality, value-added analysis and commentary on reports and metrics
- Represent the Campus and University on committees, boards and to external stakeholders

Planning and Organising
- Ensure HWUD has capacity to deliver to University needs
- Manage and monitor budget to deliver value for money and fit for purpose resources and facilities
- Forecast and review staffing and resource needs, priorities and workload allocation in consultation with the Secretary

Initiative and Problem Solving
- Oversee governance and risk management within HWUD
- Work with other University leaders to resolve University wide challenges
Service Excellence

- Provide clear leadership to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of a high-quality service, developing high professional standards and excellent customer service
- Ensure timely, accurate and informative provision of statutory and other reports and metrics

Clear and Consistent Communications

- Be able to communicate a clear vision and strategy
- Create, review and submit proposals for change
- Checking understanding and using language appropriate for an international team actively managing both content and process in all communication

Citizenship

- Demonstrate the University Values at all times through performance and behaviour
- Participate in ad-hoc duties to support the team/University and for personal development
- Support newer or inexperienced colleagues within and outside the University by offering support, help and advice
- Provide mentoring support (informally and formally)
- Positively promote the University internally and externally through positive behaviour and supporting University-wide activities
- Build partnerships to advance the University’s strategy, especially at an international level
- Engage with community audiences through public activities
- Work with public bodies, charities, government agencies and other external stakeholders and influencers to provide input and support in areas such as policy formation, legislative consultation, committee membership or other activities that will support the University strategy and demonstrate its co-operation with and support for the local community.
- Support University-wide activities and actively encourage team members to do the same

This job description is intended as a flexible framework which outlines the key general areas of activity in your position. Other activities may be required which are not outlined above but which are appropriate to the position and grade.

BENEFITS

- Medical insurance for the employee and a 50% contribution to medical insurance for their spouse while resident in UAE
- 43 days annual leave per annum, including national holidays
- Relocation allowance to the value of one month’s gross salary
- 4 weeks temporary accommodation with accommodation allowance of 81,000 AED per annum thereafter
- Annual cash equivalent per year for an economy air ticket to the country of origin for the employee and spouse
- If relevant, membership of the USS pension scheme can continue, however the employee will waive any rights to end of service gratuity payment
THE PERSON

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Honours degree required in related field, or equivalent practical experience in the workplace
- Significant professional experience in the Higher Education or comparable sector
- Demonstrable experience of managing a team that includes multiple layers of management (preferably in a global environment)
- Demonstrable experience of managing resources, workloads and changing priorities for self and others
- Demonstrable track record of implementing and managing change in a complex and culturally sensitive environment
- Experience of developing and implementing strategy with the ability to translate the vision into practical reality
- Proven excellent communication and stakeholder management and influencing skills - track record of developing and maintaining positive working relationships with internal and external customers, peers, stakeholders and others globally
- Flexible and resilient, demonstrating the tenacity and persevering in the face of challenges - proven experience of dealing with, and leading in, a changing environment
- Collaborative and proactive in outlook and approach

Desirable

- Chartered Member of relevant Professional Body
- Experience of Higher Education sector
- Knowledge of the legal, financial and regulatory frameworks which operate in Dubai and the UAE, combined with awareness of the frameworks which operate in the UK and which would affect a UK University’s operation in Dubai
- Proven ability to operate in a complex global environment
- Project Management skills
- Experience in the use and management of technology systems
THE LOCATION

DUBAI AS A PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK

Since its formation in 1971, Dubai has established a reputation as one of the world’s most attractive and rapidly developing destinations. Its transformation from a tranquil desert into the trading and commercial hub of the Middle East has seen a prestigious business and tourist centre spring up amidst the wide-open spaces of an awe-inspiring landscape.

It is an ambitious city with clear aspirations that are reflected in its approach to education. Dubai International Academic City set itself the aim of conquering the education market by opening its doors to universities and institutions from every corner of the globe. Heriot-Watt University was the first British university to open in Dubai International Academic City, in 2005, bringing with it the prestige of a high quality British education offering flexible study options for ambitious students throughout the Gulf region and beyond. Dubai is an emirate rich in contrasts.

Located at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa, Dubai is a magnet for tourists. Weekends can be spent on safari, riding camels and enjoying traditional Arabic coffee. Alternatively, you can enjoy shopping weekends or relaxing to music in the vast array of clubs and nightspots. The comforts of the 21st century coexist comfortably with the region’s rich Arab-Islamic culture.
HOW TO APPLY

Initial contact should be made with Witt/Kieffer Ccentric, the executive search firm exclusively engaged to assist with the appointment. The relevant Witt/Kieffer Ccentric contact is as follows:

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