

Job Description

Associate Director of Partnering	
Grade	9
Department	Directorate of Estates & Facilities
Role Purpose	
The Associate Director of Estates Partnering provides senior strategic leadership of the Estates Partnering function, ensuring that Faculty, Professional Services and institutional priorities are translated into integrated estates plans, service strategies and delivery programmes that support long-term University objectives, financial sustainability and operational resilience. The role leads the strategic partnering model across allocated portfolios, providing senior oversight of stakeholder engagement, service performance, estate planning, prioritisation and delivery assurance. It ensures that estates requirements are understood, constructively challenged, evidence-based and aligned with University strategy, operational need, sustainability commitments, value for money and available resources. As a member of the Directorate Senior Leadership Team, the post-holder acts as a key interface between Estates and Facilities and senior academic, Professional Services and Directorate stakeholders. The role plays a critical part in ensuring that estate services, space utilisation, maintenance priorities and capital, revenue and minor works programmes enable and support high-quality teaching, research, innovation, student experience and external collaboration. Reporting to the Director of Estates Partnering, the post-holder supports delivery of the University's Integrated Infrastructure Plan by ensuring that partnering activity, estate priorities, operational decision-making and service improvement are informed by robust governance, accurate data and strong engagement with internal and external stakeholders.	
Key Accountabilities	
Strategic Leadership & Vision • Lead the strategic development and delivery of Estates Partnering services across all Faculties, Cultural Institutes, Professional Services areas and external partners, establishing short, medium and long-term plans that align with University objectives, Directorate priorities and the Integrated Infrastructure Plan. • Provide senior leadership and coordination across cross-directorate workstreams that support delivery of the Estates Directorate Plan, ensuring alignment with Faculty Strategic Estates Plans, the Integrated Infrastructure Plan, Estates Workbook and associated thematic or sub-plans. • Provide senior oversight of the project allocation and prioritisation framework, ensuring Critical, High, Medium and Low ranked projects are assessed consistently, governed appropriately and resourced through collective Directorate engagement.	

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- Set strategic expectations for the prioritisation of capital, long-term maintenance, infrastructure, space and service improvement requirements, ensuring competing needs are challenged, evidence-based and progressed through appropriate governance routes.
- Deputise for the Director of Estates Partnering as required, representing the service at senior internal meetings, committees, working groups and external forums.

Partnering & Relationship Management

- Build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with senior academic, Professional Services and Directorate stakeholders to co-create estates solutions that meet evolving institutional needs.
- Act as a senior strategic interface between Estates and Facilities and University Partners, ensuring clear communication, shared goals, mutual accountability and effective escalation routes.
- Lead senior-level engagement through Faculty Estates Strategic Partnership Meetings, stakeholder reviews and other strategic forums, ensuring issues, risks and opportunities are escalated, resolved and translated into clear delivery priorities.
- Participate as a senior Estates Partnering representative in Faculty, School, Professional Services and Directorate meetings, contributing to strategic discussions and providing authoritative estates advice.
- Establish and maintain effective communication channels with internal and external colleagues, using insight from stakeholders to shape and improve estates services.

Operational Excellence & Service Delivery

- Oversee the performance and continuous improvement of all Estates Partnering teams, ensuring delivery of high-quality, customer-focused and responsive services.
- Promote the Directorate of Estates and Facilities by fostering strong working relationships ensuring the 'one team of teams ethos is delivered' across the University and ensuring the delivery of high-quality, responsive and efficient services.
- Establish, oversee and assure service standards, KPIs, service level statements and performance frameworks, driving consistency, operational efficiency, accountability and continuous improvement across Estates Partnering services.
- Lead Directorate working groups, service reviews and improvement programmes as agreed with the Director of Estates Partnering, providing senior recommendations that strengthen compliance, value for money, service effectiveness and operational resilience.
- Ensure compliance with University policies, procedures and statutory requirements, particularly health and safety, inclusion, sustainability, information governance, procurement and financial regulations.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of energy and environmental policies, championing initiatives that reduce costs, improve sustainability and promote best practice.
- Undertake lead decision-making responsibility during participative duty within the Emergency Incident Rota, coordinating and managing emergency-related University incidents which may arise outside of core hours, liaising with other colleagues and emergency services as required, and minding as far as possible any associated operational and reputational risks for The University.

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- Work constructively with a wide range of staff in the pursuit of The University's goals, continually building strong working relationships with colleagues across the University, thereby enabling mutual understanding and unity of skills and effort.
- Provide senior leadership in promoting teamwork, shared priorities and a collective sense of purpose across the broader Directorate of Estates and Facilities operation.
- Assume senior-level responsibility for setting, delivering, and continuously enhancing the operational standards of Estates Partnering (EP) services across Faculties, Schools, Residences, and Cultural Institutions. Ensure efficient, cost-effective, and high-performing service delivery through a balanced model of internal and external provision, aligned with Estates & Facilities strategy, Service Level Agreements (SLAs), and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Drive productivity and service innovation to meet evolving institutional needs and strategic ambitions.

Resource Management & Financial Stewardship

- Provide senior stewardship of allocated staffing, financial and operational resources, ensuring effective deployment, robust accountability and value for money across partnering activities and service priorities.
- Oversee the development of budgets, forecasts and business cases in support of capital projects, service improvement and operational initiatives, ensuring financial assumptions are robust, evidence-based and aligned with University priorities.
- Liaise with Finance, Procurement and Directorate colleagues to ensure appropriate procurement routes, budgetary controls, reporting arrangements and financial governance are maintained.
- Identify, manage and escalate risks relating to service delivery, stakeholder expectations, programme delivery, financial commitments, compliance and reputational impact.

Property, Space Strategy & Utilisation

- Provide strategic partnering leadership in the management of the University estate, shaping property, space, utilisation, asset management and service planning activity to support institutional priorities and long-term estate performance.
- Provide senior oversight with Property and Space colleagues on space planning, rationalisation, teaching space strategy and utilisation reviews, ensuring the estate is used efficiently and remains capable of responding to changing operational requirements.
- Use stakeholder insight, data and operational knowledge to challenge, assess and forecast future space and estate requirements, identifying opportunities for consolidation, repurposing, investment or service improvement.
- Provide strategic estates input to innovation, research, enterprise and collaboration priorities, ensuring estates plans enable academic, professional services and external partner ambitions while supporting effective use of the University estate.

Capital Projects & Infrastructure Development

- Provide strategic partnering oversight and coordination across the planning, briefing, delivery and evaluation of capital, revenue, minor works, long-term maintenance and infrastructure projects across allocated areas.

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- Provide strategic oversight and set clear governance expectations for how stakeholder requirements are challenged, prioritised and translated into project briefs, scopes, option appraisals and delivery requirements, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities, value for money, sustainability objectives and operational need.
- Oversee project prioritisation, allocation, monitoring and assurance processes, ensuring schemes are evidence-based, appropriately governed and aligned with University objectives, sustainability commitments, operational need, risk, value for money and available resources.
- Represent Estates Partnering at senior project boards, committees and stakeholder meetings, providing authoritative advice, assurance reporting, risk escalation and strategic challenge to support effective decision-making.

Leadership & People Development

- Lead, manage and develop high-performing teams across all partnering units, fostering a culture of cross-team collaboration, innovation, accountability, inclusion, professional growth, service excellence and continuous improvement.
- Support recruitment, induction, workforce planning, professional development, performance management, wellbeing, conduct and succession planning across allocated partnering teams.
- Coach and manage Heads of Estates Partnering and senior colleagues to strengthen stakeholder management, improve consistency and resolve complex operational issues.
- Actively contribute to and promote inclusion, wellbeing and social responsibility objectives across the Directorate and wider University.

External Engagement & Sector Influence

- Represent Estates Partnering in external forums, sector networks and professional relationships as agreed with the Director of Estates Partnering.
- Develop effective working relationships with consultants, contractors, suppliers, professional bodies, local authorities, sector partners and other Higher Education Institutions to share best practice and support service development.
- Maintain awareness of sector developments, emerging estates trends, benchmarking information and good practice, applying learning to improve Estates Partnering services.

Qualifications	A relevant degree and/or professional qualification in a construction, property, facilities management, architecture, engineering, planning, surveying or related discipline, or equivalent demonstrable professional experience.
Knowledge	• Strong understanding of strategic estates management, capital planning, space utilisation and facilities operations within a large, complex organisation. • Knowledge of higher education sector dynamics, academic structures, research environments, student experience priorities and professional services requirements. • Familiarity with estates-related compliance, sustainability, accessibility, health and safety, inclusion, procurement, information governance and data protection frameworks.

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	• Understanding of service performance management, KPIs, service level agreements, business planning, budget management and continuous improvement approaches. • Awareness of emerging trends in estates strategy, smart campus development, space optimisation, and operational resilience. • Demonstrable, equivalent professional experience knowledge and skills in the built environment. • Of management and leadership at a senior level in a complex private sector firm or public sector organisation. • Of current issues in Higher Education and their relevance to the University of Manchester
Skills	• Strategic and operational leadership: ability to translate institutional priorities into clear, deliverable estates plans and service objectives. • Partnering and relationship-building: strong interpersonal and influencing skills to build trust-based relationships with senior stakeholders across academic, professional and operational domains. • Operational and financial acumen: ability to support resource planning, budget management, performance reporting and value for money. • Change leadership: ability to lead service improvement, embed consistent ways of working and support transformation across teams. • Communication and engagement: excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to convey complex information clearly and persuasively to varied audiences. • Team leadership and development: ability to lead, motivate, coach and develop high-performing individuals and teams, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and professional growth. • Problem-solving and decision-making: strong analytical skills and professional judgement in managing complex stakeholder, service, project and resource challenges. • Demonstrable skills in the successful delivery of a complex capital plan • Successful development, planning and implementation of strategy and associated performance reporting within a comparable professional environment • Effective influencing skills for policy development and implementation to senior management level in a comparable working environment • Able to deliver business improvement projects with demonstrable tangible benefits • Demonstrable ability in the successful management of change • Ability to communicate and engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders

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	• Ability to analyse information to generate and implement pragmatic solutions • Ability to act as a team member at all levels of the University, building key relationships with people to drive achievement and successful outcomes • Ability to engage and contribute to change; able to lead and manage projects to schedule, budget, and to deliver agreed, targeted outcomes • Excellent ICT skills, with the ability to use technology effectively, e.g. - M365
Experience	• Significant senior-level experience in estates and facilities leadership, ideally within a higher education or similarly complex environment. • Proven experience of leading multi-disciplinary teams and delivering services, improvement activity or projects to agreed standards, timescales and budgets. • Demonstrated success in strategic partnering, stakeholder engagement, and cross-functional collaboration. • Experience of contributing to estate strategies, service plans, capital or maintenance programmes, and space planning. • Experience of producing high-quality reports, business cases, briefing papers, options appraisals, performance updates and recommendations for senior audiences. • Evidence of external engagement, including working with local authorities, delivery partners, and sector bodies to influence and deliver strategic outcomes.
Other	• Commitment to continuing professional development and maintaining current knowledge of estates, facilities, higher education and sector good practice. • Ability to operate with a high degree of autonomy, professional judgement and accountability within a complex, politically sensitive and service-led environment. • Willingness to participate in senior-level incident response, business continuity or emergency arrangements as required by the Directorate.
Key Behaviours	
One University: A 'One University' approach, whereby we break down silos and work collaboratively towards furthering the University's strategic goals, vision and values. Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom: Support the University's commitment to securing and actively promoting the importance of free speech and academic freedom within our community. Service Excellence: Committed to prioritising service excellence and high performance to deliver great people-centred experiences.	

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Agility: Demonstrate a commitment to agility and continuous improvement by embracing change, championing innovation, and being flexible and forward thinking to adapt.

Sustainability: A sustainable approach that safeguards the University of the future by championing environmental practices, advancing digital capability, and supporting financial stability and philanthropic initiatives.

Inclusion: Support the University's ambition to create an inclusive place to work where every person matters, demonstrating a commitment to non-discriminatory conduct and respect for others, and fostering a University where people feel deeply connected to each other, to Manchester, and to the wider world.

Social Responsibility: Promote and champion the University's social responsibility ambitions to advance social inclusion, prosperous communities, better health, and cultural engagement.

People Leadership: Demonstrates effective leadership by empowering, motivating, and developing teams to achieve high performance. Builds a collaborative and inclusive work environment and provides clear direction, support, and feedback.