Job description and person specification: Chief Data Officer

Context

Job title:	Chief Data Officer
Pay band:	12
Location:	Bristol
Responsible to:	Director of Resources and Finance
Responsible for:	Oversee the data provision within the OfS to ensure robust and high-quality data and analysis is available for regulatory purposes. This includes responsibility for developing and implementing a OfS data strategy.
	This role will also take on responsibility for our internal data transformation programme
	The line management of senior staff accountable for the delivery of large substantive portfolios.
Date:	January 2024

The OfS is the statutory regulator for higher education in England. Its aim is to ensure that every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers. It does so by regulating the higher education providers on its register to make sure they are delivering high quality courses and positive outcomes for their students; where they are not, it takes action.

The higher education sector in England is complex and diverse and the OfS's approach to regulation recognises this. Its new strategy signals a shift from an organisation in a start-up phase to an established regulator that understands its regulatory tools and how best to use them to shape incentives across the sector it regulates.

The Chief Data Officer is accountable for enabling provision of data to support the delivery of the OfS's strategy. The successful candidate will provide leadership for its data, analysis and foresight function.

Purpose

The aim of the Chief Data Officer is to provide strategic leadership to the Data, Foresight and Analysis (DFA) function. This is the most senior role in the DFA function. The role is accountable for the development, implementation and continuous improvement of the OfS's approach to data. This includes defining the vision, developing and implementing a data strategy.

The role is responsible for overseeing the data management, data analytics and data governance for the OfS and for ensuring robust and high-quality data and analysis is available for regulatory purposes.

The post holder will play an important role in supporting the organisation to develop, implement and deliver its strategy and business plan.

Responsibilities

Leading the functions' staff and teams to deliver

- There is effective leadership within the function, across the organisation, and in support of other directorates/teams. Staff are led by example, with leaders modelling: the OfS's behaviours and values; flexible, agile and collaborative working, including with staff and teams in other directorates/teams.

- Provide guidance, mentorship and foster a culture of innovation and collaboration as well as supporting the attraction of the best talent and potential in the function

- Supporting the outcomes and objectives in the OfS's business plan to be delivered efficiently and effectively in line with organisational priorities

- Risk to delivery is identified and actively managed with robust mitigation implemented where necessary

- Resources are aligned with priorities, and workload pressures are accommodated and managed, by working with other leaders in the function

- The allocation and management of activities for the function's staff and teams is clear and supports delivery of the OfS's functions and strategy

- Line management arrangements for the function's staff result in clear individual objectives, feedback on performance, and support for development. As a result, staff perform to high standards

- The director is advised and supported, with the postholder deputising as required

- Understanding and capability are built across the organisation in the OfS's approach to data.

Define the vision, develop and deliver the data strategy in a new operating model for the OfS

- Develop and execute an ambitious and deliverable data strategy that aligns with the organisation's strategy and business plans

- Oversee the design and implementation of new data governance policies and procedures to ensure data integrity, security, and compliance

- Ensure that the data function is responsive to organisational priorities and can operate in a flexible, agile and collaborative way across the organisation

- Ensure delivery of the internal data transformation programme (which is implement new technology and ways of working to leverage data analytics to optimise our operations and deliver value).

- Drive the development and implementation of advanced analytics capabilities, leveraging data to generate actionable insights and support evidence-based decision making

- Lead development of policies and practices for using data a corporate asset, identifying areas for improvement in culture and operations

- Legal and policy requirements are firmly embedded and widely understood by data analysts

Continuous improvement of the service provided by the data function

- The function designs and delivers a high-quality service for internal use and for higher education providers.

- The function understands the purpose of the system from an OfS perspective as well as the provider's perspective and is able to design against customer demand.

- The function collects and uses capability measures to understand how the system is performing from the provider's perspective and takes action to improve the system.

- The function takes action to remove blockages to system improvement, with the postholder taking action on issues that fall beyond the function's reach, either because they are outside the OfS, or are complex cross-organisational issues within the OfS.

Internal and external communication

- There is proactive authoritative and credible communication about operational matters at a senior level in providers and with other stakeholders

- The work of the OfS and the function, is effectively communicated in a range of public contexts

- Engagement with government departments and higher education sector bodies on the OfS's approach to data results in: understanding of the requirements placed on providers; the benefits of this for students; consistent communication of the OfS's approach to regulation.

- Develop and maintain strong and effective partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders. This includes the relationship with the Designated Data Body.

Person specification

Experience, skills and knowledge

- Exceptional leadership skills with the ability to provide strategic direction to a function of data professionals, providing guidance, mentorship, and fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration

- Excellent stakeholder management skills with experience of working with, and commanding the confidence of, a diverse set of external stakeholders through complex and contentious issues

- Demonstrable intellectual credibility, analytical capability with the ability to think strategically and take a broad view of issues, events and activities and understand their likely impact or wider implications

- Demonstrable ability to develop quickly a comprehensive and sophisticated technical knowledge and understanding of the areas in which the OfS regulates.

- Exceptional communication skills with a proven record of building, developing, and coaching diverse data teams with the ability to communicate complex concepts to both technical and non-technical audiences

- Strong understanding of data governance, data science and analysis, data engineering, data quality, and data security best practices

- Experience of devising and implementing strategy

- An appreciation of risk management relating to data security, data protection and ethics

- A proven track record in successfully managing projects and programs within agile and/ or waterfall approaches and experience delivering change programmes

- Exceptional analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to draw meaningful insights from complex data sets.

- Knowledge of data management technologies and tools, including data lakes, data warehouses, and data visualization platforms

- Experience overseeing the implementation of advanced analytics techniques, such as machine learning and predictive modelling.

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