Job Description

Job Title:	Executive Assistant
Department:	Office of the President
Reports To:	Project Manager
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 9
Effective Date:	January 2024

Primary Purpose

The Executive Assistant is a key position providing comprehensive administrative support to senior executives within the University. Reporting directly to the Project Manager, this role involves coordinating and managing day-to-day activities, ensuring smooth operations, and fostering positive relationships both internally and externally.

The Executive Assistant is the first contact with a visitor or community member to the President's Office. Service excellence and ensuring best-in-class customer experiences are top priorities for the Office. The quality of responsiveness and the genuine desire to assist in the most difficult or sensitive situations is essential to the reputation of the University and to the Office of the President.

The nature of support is diverse ranging from calendar support, research assistance, communications and correspondence support and general administration. As a member of the Office of the President's team, the Executive Assistant works closely with other members of the President's team to ensure that the logistics and participation of the President in events, meetings, speaking engagements, and recognition events is properly planned so that the President's performance is not negatively impacted by circumstances that could have been avoided. The Executive Assistant provides continuity in the absence of the Administrative Manager and has discretion to make decisions that are in line with strategy and goals within the Office of the President. This position deals with confidential materials and requires the effective management of a high volume of information both internally and externally, as well as the ability to manage additional projects as assigned. The incumbent must be able to communicate knowledgably with internal stakeholders at all levels of the institution, as well as various external stakeholders to ensure the delivery of successful events or meetings for the President.

There is a required in-office component to this role as the successful incumbent will be expected to work in-office 4 days per week.

Key Accountabilities

Service Excellence

- Maintains positive, collaborative relationships with campus and external partners to ensure exceptional engagement, customer service and collaboration.
- *Refers with certainty* – Directs students, staff, faculty, external stakeholders to the right contact person on the first referral or resolves their inquiries or problems immediately to exceed expectations and reduces duplicate efforts for other employees. Finds solutions - is proactive, flexible and makes it happen, whether they can personally address their needs or refer to someone who can whether online, by phone or in person.

- *Reflects a positive attitude* – Engages, listens, and seeks to understand the needs and expectations of all in-person, telephone, and online interactions. Provides courteous, timely and efficient service. Acknowledges receipt of correspondence promptly, manages expectations of response times, provides pleasant, enthusiastic, and professional communications. Uses professional, straightforward language, proper grammar and spelling, and ensures confidentiality (when necessary). Takes great pride in the actions, knowledge, and image of the Office of the President.
- *Treats members of the community with respect* – Values diversity, recognizes that everyone is unique and equally important and facilitates inclusion. Exercises care and devotes attention to all in-person, telephone, and online interactions.
- Supports the team in preparing the Office for guests (catering, signage [physical/electronic] flags, backgrounders, gifts)
- Ensures all security and safety protocol for the office is followed to mitigate risk of any breach of conduct or behaviour.

Administrative coordination

- Provide administrative support (coordinate calendar, meetings, and lunches) for office (including Senior Director, Strategy & Implementation)
- Prepare materials for internal and external meetings, including gathering profiles and backup materials.
- Manage confidential and sensitive information, providing relationship management and administrative coordination.
- Support of financial reconciliation process in partnership with the Administrative Manager
- Coordinate office supplies, maintenance of office, and IST related issues

Issues Management and Information Coordination

- Responsible for managing, delegating, and ensuring timely responses (on behalf of the President) to all correspondence received through the President's public email account. Keeps all stakeholders fully informed regarding emerging issues of importance/sensitivity.
- Provides advice, direction, and/or additional information to contacts internal and external to the university regarding information and how information should be handled. This may include direction regarding action requests, providing information from various databases, or research in preparation for the President and the Office.
- Responsible for composing correspondence on behalf of the Office or the President on own initiative and as instructed with attention to formatting, grammar, and accuracy, ensuring clear and concise communication.
- Monitors the President's calendar to be aware of the issues, challenges and upcoming meetings
- Prepares and arranges President's signature of various forms of correspondence (ie. congratulation letters, nominations, awards submissions, government correspondence, research reports, agreements, etc.)

Data Tracking and Records Management

- Responsible for the management of all incoming and outgoing correspondence within the Office of the President including electronic files and records. A high volume of information is managed by this position and is delegated to appropriate team members or senior executives for action. Strong follow-up processes are required.
- Responsible for the development and management of multiple data tracking systems and ability to provide accurate data to the Office for decision-making purposes. The highest level of accuracy is imperative with respect to the management of the data.

- Tracks and logs various metrics used to manage the President's time to achieve engagement goals.

Event Coordination and Delivery

- Build relationships with Catering and Event Services to coordinate meetings with internal and external stakeholders.
- Preparation of boardroom space and refreshments for meetings, as requested.
- Ability to navigate campus and available technology to order lunches for senior leaders, as requested.

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- University degree, business administration preferred, or equivalent education and related experience within a senior executive office.

Experience

- At least 5-7 years' experience in a front-line capacity, regularly dealing with difficult situations effectively, professionally and with compassion and demonstrate a strong service excellence orientation.
- At least 5-7 years of C-suite level administrative experience providing administrative, business process and assistance.
- Must demonstrate significant experience in the coordination of events and development of briefing materials is essential to the success of this position. Capacity for depth and clarity of thought, and the ability to think strategically.
- Must demonstrate extensive experience in the communication of ideas and information in a clear, concise fashion, both orally and in writing
- Must demonstrate the ability to work independently, with ambiguity and thrive in a fast-paced, intrapreneurial environment.
- Must demonstrate the ability to work within a high stress environment and operate with a high degree of confidentiality and discretionary judgment, be comfortable in an environment that requires shifts in priorities and be able to work quickly.
- At least 3-5 years' experience managing and creating databases.
- At least 3-5 years' project coordination experience with a demonstrated ability to manage concurrent projects under tight deadlines

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Demonstrate the ability to go beyond the call of duty in the capacity to aid stakeholders that exemplifies the Office of the President commitments to:
  - Serve with integrity and respect.
  - Support innovation and continuous improvement in all that we do.
  - Build the reputation of the University in all areas of our work.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm and be viewed by others as an Ambassador for Waterloo
- Strong customer focus, sensitivity to diversity and excellent judgment
- Outstanding organizational, analytical, and problem-solving skills, exceptional time-management
- Familiarity with University policies and procedures preferred.

- Ability to remain calm and in control when faced with multiple, often simultaneous demands made for important decisions/advice, both inside and outside of regular working hours
- High capacity for work and a willingness to go beyond a regular work schedule when required to meet deadlines.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with senior administration and with team members from a variety of disciplines.
- Ability to serve the needs of multiple stakeholders and elicit their confidence and cooperation.
- Proven ability to build strong relationships and influence individuals at all levels of an organization, as well as external constituents.
- High degree of responsiveness, ability to complete tasks swiftly and accurately and ability to maintain absolute confidentiality.
- Portray a professional image by interacting knowledgeably and courteously with all.
- Consistent display of discretion and diplomacy
- Methodical and thorough when considering solutions to issues.
- Possess exceptional interpersonal skills – A team-based approach is necessary within the Office of the President. It is a small team working in a participative, efficient, and anticipatory environment. No two days are ever the same. The need for quick and accurate analysis of issues, constant communication of priorities, and collegial resolution of matters is expected.
- Excellent listening skills and ability to clearly communicate both verbally and in writing are mandatory.
- Possess extensive knowledge of the University of Waterloo
- Ability to pivot quickly, change priorities and be flexible with workload.
- Demonstrate advanced levels of technical experience: Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Smartsheet, database development and automation of workflow processes

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, communicates with employees in all groups and departments at all levels to deal with, influence and motivate others, often with different perspectives and concerns. Able to succeed in high profile, pressure situations with significant campus and public scrutiny and potential for impact on the university. Required to work closely with external as well as internal partners to ensure consistency and management of the President's image and reputation through events, meetings, and activities. The Executive Assistant will be a self-starter, have a strong entrepreneurial spirit, be driven to engage with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders and will take proactive measures to enhance the profile of the Office of the President through enhanced communication and coordination of activities with assigned portfolios. Collaborative team player comfortable leading as well as executing and taking constructive input from multiple sources. Proactive in anticipating the needs of the President and team members and ability to manage tight deadlines, competing priorities and stress.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position provides guidance and problem-solving support to the President, Executive Director, Senior Director, Strategy & Implementation, Administrative Manager and Project Manager on a wide range of issues. The incumbent will be accountable to recognize the competing demands on the President's time and provide options and recommendations to solve conflicts with respect to events, meetings and issues. The nature of the work performed provides an opportunity for the incumbent to demonstrate problem-solving abilities and increased responsibility through initiative, and self-motivation. The incumbent must demonstrate an understanding of the impact of their work in the President's Office by being proactive about process improvements. Must ensure timely completion of objectives, act as a role model and resource to others in the performance of duties, have a thorough in-depth understanding of the work, and demonstrate the ability to deal effectively with complex issues by finding workable resolutions.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes decisions when required on behalf of the Administrative Manager and seeks expert advice when required. The incumbent must be a strategic thinker, analytical and insightful, able to assess and interpret the various factors affecting the university, the President, its communities, and its stakeholders. Makes decisions that have significant impact on the reputation of the University.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: This position works collaboratively with all members of the Office of the President. This requires outstanding customer service, sound judgment, a strong work ethic and an ability to work under very challenging time constraints, constant interruptions, and changes to priorities. Flexibility in working hours is required. Use of a work phone allows the Executive Assistant to be accessible to all members of the Office, including the President, and beyond normal business hours. Access to the internet from home is an ongoing requirement for this position.
- **Working Environment:** Reporting to the President are the Vice President, Academic and Provost, the Vice President, University Relations, Vice President, Advancement, Vice President, Research & International, Vice President, Administration & Finance, and the University Secretary. The Executive Assistant must maintain a strong relationship with all these Vice Presidents and members of their staff as well as members of the Board of Governors and Senate. External relationships include contact with prime ministers, premiers and cabinet ministers, MPs, MPPs, Offices of Provincial and Federal Ministries, Ambassadors, senior international officials, representatives of Canadian and international universities, CEOs, major donors to the university, community organizations, parents, students, faculty, and members of the public. This position requires the incumbent to commit to working a minimum of 4 days per week in the office, depending on the President's calendar and meeting/event schedule.