Job Description

Job Title:	Executive Assistant
Department:	University Relations
Reports To:	Vice-President, University Relations
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 8
Effective Date:	May 2024

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Vice-President, University Relations, the Executive Assistant (EA) is responsible to support the Vice-President, University Relations (VPUR) to achieve their priorities, which includes oversight of the administrative operations of University Relations. This position provides continuity within University Relations (UR) as leadership changes. University Relations includes Community Relations & Events, Government Relations, Marketing & Brand Strategy, and University Communications.
The Executive Assistant is responsible for maintaining the VPUR's daily schedule and itinerary and for providing administrative and executive assistance in respect of all activities in the VPUR's area of responsibility. This includes the provision of organizational, secretarial, and administrative support as needed as well as liaison on behalf of the VPUR with senior administrators across the University, with corporations and government departments across Canada, post-secondary education (PSE) peers, and the Waterloo Region community members/leaders. The EA must perform at a high level, ensuring that the Office of the VPUR functions in an efficient and professional manner. This includes providing support to associate vice-presidents and others in the VPUR team as appropriate.

The Executive Assistant ensures the VPUR is prepared for all meetings and events.

This position requires a high degree of acumen, integrity, tact, diplomacy, and time-management skills; the flexibility to adapt to changing executives and priorities; the ability to work as part of a team; an in-depth knowledge of the university environment, including university structure, policies, and procedures. The incumbent must be able to work independently in terms of daily management of the Office, and yet recognize the emergence of problems and issues that require the attention of the VPUR.

Key Accountabilities

Administrative support to the Vice-President, University Relations

- Control and coordinate all scheduling and management of the VPUR's calendar.
- Provide advice, options, recommendations, and decisions regarding all aspects of the VPUR's calendar based on the VPUR's priorities, timelines, and objectives to ensure the Vice-President's time is being used effectively
- Exercises judgement in determining whether issues or requests for meetings/events are appropriate or best referred elsewhere
- Brings matters of priority to the attention of the VPUR
- Keep the VPUR well informed of sensitive issues related to meetings or events
- Ensure the VPUR is fully prepared and supported for meetings, events, and other engagements by means of coordinating briefing notes, documents, speaking notes, attendee listing and agenda items, etc.

- Prepare and organize support materials required by the VPUR by researching, analyzing, composing and/or synthesizing and formatting documents.
- Track and ensure appropriate follow-up occurs on requests for approval and requests for information ensuring all deadlines are met.
- Supports management of the office during the VPUR's absence while keeping the VPUR informed of priorities and urgencies arising.
- Act as a point of contact between the VPUR and UR senior leaders to ensure the effective flow of information and follow-up.
- Interact frequently with the Office of the President, Provost, and other offices of senior administrators to relay information, seek advice, and engage parties in visits/events/meetings.
- Contact senior corporate, university and government officials to coordinate meetings on behalf of the VPUR.
- Coordinate and manage arrangements for receptions and functions hosted by the VPUR.
- Act as a collaborative team member of the VPUR office and participate in other duties as assigned

Daily functioning of the VPUR office

- Manage email from the VPUR generic email account and respond to or disseminate as required.
- Maintain a bring-forward system to ensure all correspondence is responded to effectively and in a timely manner.
- Maintain files, correspondence, and a retrieval system including highly confidential files on major prospects, contracts, government files under discussion and negotiation.
- Review and filter information, issues, mail, telephone calls, etc., and disseminate information to other members of the VPUR's team including drafting correspondence that may be required by the VPUR.
- Compose e-mails on behalf of the VPUR on own initiative and as instructed.
- Ensures correspondence submitted for review is completed in a timely manner to meet all deadlines, approvals, and signature requirements.
- Take direction on the content for presentations and populate slide decks for VPUR
- Use discretion in handling incoming information and follow-up.
- Manage the VPUR's travel arrangements, complete travel claims, and manage the VPUR itinerary including the provision of documentation, meetings materials and background information as required.
- Prepare the VPUR's expense claims ensuring compliance with UW financial policies and procedures.
- Offers support to VPUR office for those experiencing problems or challenges with expense claiming.
- Using the corporate purchasing card (P-card) purchase required products ensuring all invoices, tracking of purchases and monthly statement reconciliation is completed following established University and/or University Relations guidelines, procedures, and processing requirements.
- Act as a collaborative team member of the VPUR office and participate in other duties as assigned.

**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 or equivalent experience and education

Experience
- 3 to 5 years of professional experience providing administrative, calendar management, business process and project coordination to a senior leader.
- Experience in drafting senior level reports, correspondence, and agenda planning

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities
- Familiarity with best practices for assessing, developing, and implementing new business processes and procedures.
- The ability to identify and recommend emerging collaborative applications, tools, software, and best practices such as Microsoft 365 suite, Airtable, Smartsheet, Adobe Connect, Cisco WebEx, etc.
- Proven ability to build strong relationships and influence individuals at all levels of an organization, as well as external constituents.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and independently and thrive in a fast-paced entrepreneurial environment.
- Strong organizational and analytical skills in the gathering and manipulation of data.
- High level of maturity and empathy; highly developed interpersonal and influencing capabilities.
- Excellent communication (oral and written) with the ability to write communication on behalf of an executive.
- High degree of accuracy and accountability is required given the reputational component of the VPUR.
- Strong technology skills along with excellent organizational skills and ability to manage complex detailed work.
- Familiar with University governance systems, policies, procedures, and knowledge of Waterloo web design standards/guidelines.
- Experience managing multiple schedules and meeting coordinates is an asset.
- Ability to adapt to varying management styles.
- Advanced: Outlook, MS Word and PowerPoint skills.
- A high capacity for work and a willingness to go beyond a regular work schedule to meet deadlines when required.
- This position works independently and collaboratively and requires outstanding customer service, sound judgment, a strong work ethic and an ability to work under challenging time constraints with competing priorities.
- Highly complex issues are involved which may bring in different levels of government, media, corporate leaders, opinion leaders, faculty, staff, and students – often high risk of impact on institutional reputation if not handled well.
- Collaborative team player comfortable leading as well as executing and taking constructive input from multiple sources.
- Ability to provide unobtrusive support to the VPUR and their team by earning their trust and confidence.
- Communicates effectively, precisely, and professionally with internal and external sources.
- Proactive in anticipating the needs of the VPUR and the ability to manage tight deadlines and stressful situations.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internal Relationships: The Executive Assistant to the VPUR facilitates internal working relationships between the VPUR (including the VPUR Office) and: the President; the Vice-President, Academic and Provost; the Vice- President, Research and International; the Vice-President, Finance; the Deans; Senate and its various Councils; the Board of Governors; Deans' and Executive Councils; and College Heads. External Relationships: The Executive Assistant to the VPUR facilitates external working relationships between the VPUR and corporations and federal and provincial ministries. The Executive Assistant also assists the VPUR to execute the responsibilities of numerous board and committee memberships.

- **Level of Responsibility:** Often manages highly confidential issues for the VPUR. The Executive Assistant works very closely with the VPUR and the offices of other Vice-Presidents/Deans on matters to advance the priorities of the President and institution. Highly complex issues are involved which may bring different levels of government, media, corporate leaders, opinion leaders, faculty, staff and students – often high risk of impact on institutional reputation if not handled well. This position has responsibility and accountability for serving as the first point of contact for the VPUR.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** Problem solving is a critical skill for this position as unexpected issues and/or conflicts may arise, and the incumbent must be capable of analyzing problems and quick-solve issues. Makes decisions with respect to the most efficient use of the VPUR's time (e.g., meetings, events, etc.) and seeks advice when required. Expected to work independently carrying out all tasks.

- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment; periods of extensive sitting and concentrated use of visual senses; physical effort that may result in moderate fatigue, strain, or injury, because of repetitive keyboard/mouse movement.

- **Working Environment:** Physical Risks – no significant risk. Psychological Risks – Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a C-level office.