



**RUSSELL  
GROUP**

**INTERIM POLICY MANAGER  
Higher Education Funding,  
Skills and Regulation  
(Maternity Leave cover)  
Candidate Pack**

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University of Birmingham  
University of Bristol  
University of Cambridge  
Cardiff University  
Durham University  
University of Edinburgh  
University of Exeter  
University of Glasgow  
Imperial College London  
King's College London  
University of Leeds  
University of Liverpool  
London School of Economics  
and Political Science  
University of Manchester  
Newcastle University  
University of Nottingham  
University of Oxford  
Queen Mary University of London  
Queen's University Belfast  
University of Sheffield  
University of Southampton  
University College London  
University of Warwick  
University of York

## An introduction from our CEO, Dr Tim Bradshaw

Thank you for your interest in working for the Russell Group.

Higher Education provides a rich landscape for policy development and best-practice sharing, and incredible opportunities for engagement and influence. We represent the interests of our 24 university members at the highest level with our government, but also with key research and innovation funders, with business, third-sector partners, regulators, and internationally with like-minded bodies.



At the Russell Group, we value our people as our greatest asset and strive to create a positive and stimulating working environment. This pack includes information about our organisation, its working structure and culture, as well as specific details of the vacant post.

I wish you all the best in your application.  
Dr Tim Bradshaw

## About the Russell Group

The Russell Group represents 24 research-intensive universities located in every region and nation of the UK.

Our universities share the ambition to change the world for the better. They do this by harnessing academic excellence at scale and with purpose across their research, innovation and education activities. Our universities have a global reputation for high quality research and education which generates significant export earnings for the UK. They use their extensive international industry and academic networks to generate prosperity and improve lives across the UK and around the world.

From achieving net zero, to reducing social inequalities and addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals; from harnessing the power of AI safely, to improving the NHS and finding new cures and treatments, these are but a few examples of the wide-ranging social, economic, cultural, health and environmental impacts Russell Group universities are working to deliver.

Our aim is to support and enable our member universities to:

- **Transform how we understand the world** – creating, curating and disseminating knowledge for the betterment of society.
- **Advance world-changing research and innovation** – generating and translating excellent, globally-recognised research across a breadth of disciplines to enable new discoveries and innovative solutions to address the challenges facing the UK and the world.
- **Nurture talent and develop high-level skills** – providing high-quality education, training and experience for an increasingly diverse community of students and staff to strengthen the skilled workforce needed in regions and nations across the UK now and for the future.
- **Leverage their reach for local and global benefit** – using international connections and presence to support investment, jobs and vibrant local ecosystems across the whole of the UK, where the knowledge, skills and partnerships our universities develop involve and benefit their local communities and beyond.

## Our Mission

To advance and champion the positive economic, societal and cultural impacts of UK research-intensive universities through collaboration and advocacy.

## Our Vision

As the voice of the UK's major research-intensive universities, the Russell Group will enhance the impact of our members by being regarded as a trusted organisation with a reputation for high-quality, evidence-based outputs that show thought leadership across a range of higher education and research policy issues.

## Our Values

The organisation and its staff have collectively agreed the following set of values that underpin all aspects of our work:

### Proactive, forward-thinking and influential

- We seek to make impactful change through the work we do, by being proactive, forward-thinking and providing credible and creative solutions that have real influence.

### Autonomy, trust and ownership

- We want to get the very best out of people, supporting them to reach their full potential by fostering expertise across the team, with individuals given appropriate responsibility and opportunities to drive their work and their development.

### Collaboration

- We are a team, where everyone has an integral role to play. We work together and we support one another. We strive to be inclusive and respectful, championing equality and diversity. We collaborate constructively with our members as well as with external stakeholders.

### Excellence

- We operate with integrity, honesty and rigour and we are committed to ensuring our work is evidence-based, high quality and with close attention to detail.

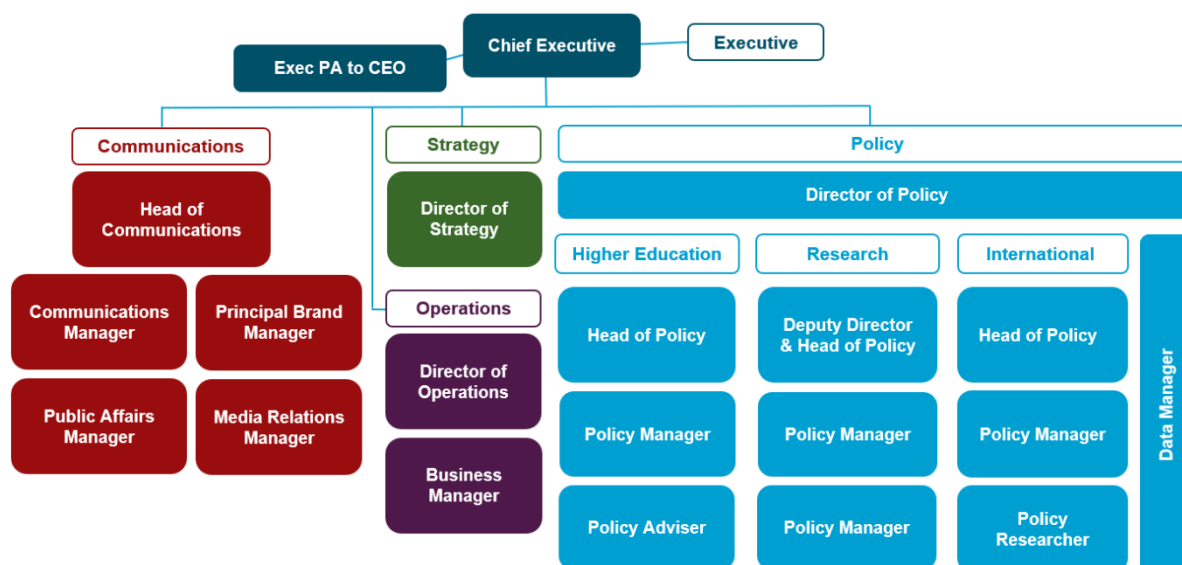
## Governance and Structure

The Russell Group was originally founded in 1994 and was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee (company no. 06086902) in 2007. It is wholly owned by its [24 university members](#).

Our Board is made up of the leaders of our 24 Russell Group universities. They meet regularly and provide guidance and direction to our policy development, as well as directly supporting our engagement activities.

**Professor Chris Day** (Vice-Chancellor and President of Newcastle University) has been Chair of the Russell Group since 2023. **Professor Shearer West** (Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Leeds) is Deputy Chair, also since 2023.

The following organogram shows our internal structure:



We have established a “**Champions Initiative**” where staff voluntarily take on roles to help coordinate areas that are key to our working culture:

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities in all areas of recruitment, employment, training and career development for all employees according to the opportunities available, organisational requirements and individual attitudes and abilities.

In our recruitment, applications are name-blinded and all staff involved in the process will have undertaken unconscious bias training before reviewing and selecting applications. Equal weight is given to candidates’ potential and the benefits to the organisation of employees with relevant experience outside of the Higher Education sector. We also have dedicated interview slots for applicants from under-represented groups to ensure a balanced shortlist of candidates for interview.

Our commitment extends to supporting a staff EDI Champion to provide a trusted voice to help improve all of our HR policies and monitor the EDI dimension of our procedures, both in our recruitment and how these are applied in the working environment.

### **Staff Wellbeing**

We also have a dedicated Staff Wellbeing Champion to coordinate staff involvement in wellbeing initiatives and activities. This includes overseeing a Wellbeing Fund that provides dedicated support to the office environment and other support for staff.

We are committed to supporting the wellbeing of staff through all elements of our HR procedures and in reinforcing a culture that is based on trust and shared values. A framework has been developed focussing on positive behaviours, improved mindset and engaging social connections, all evidenced by regular staff surveys.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Environmental sustainability is at the heart of our operational procedures, from procurement of goods and services to our office environment. We require contracted suppliers to demonstrate a similar commitment as part of the bidding process, so this is reflected in our supply chains as well as our working practices.

As above, we have a staff Environmental Sustainability Champion to ensure a staff voice is included in reviews of our policies, and to challenge us to go further in our procedures and practices.

### **Learning, Training and Development**

We recognise that Learning, Training and Development is critical to organisational performance, as well as to the personal benefit of our staff. Learning and Development opportunities are sought throughout the year and then acknowledged and recorded in periodic review processes, as well as identifying specific Training needs.

This is an integral part of our working culture and our Learning, Training and Development Champion has helped refine our appraisal processes to capture this aspect of staff working experiences. The Champion also coordinates specific initiatives, such as our staff “Lunch and Learn” series of presentations.

## Vacancy Description

### Role Responsibilities

- 1.1 We are looking to recruit a Policy Manager within our Higher Education team who will report to the Head of Policy (Higher Education). They will advocate for our member universities and deliver our mission and vision by advancing our **key objectives**:
- **Trust and recognition** - Improve understanding of how our universities work and the wide-ranging contributions they make to help inform sound political decision-making so UK and devolved governments can leverage the full capabilities of our research-intensive universities, who are ambitious to do even more for the country.
  - **Positive partnerships** - Provide opportunities and reduce barriers for Russell Group universities to build strong, collaborative and secure relationships with a range of different partners at home and abroad to enhance the quality, impacts and reach of our universities' research, innovation, education and wider civic activities.
  - **Financial resilience** - Secure an environment which supports the overall financial resilience of Russell Group universities to ensure they are on a stable footing to deliver long-term impacts for society and the UK economy.
  - **Efficient operations** - Ensure the frameworks which govern or incentivise how universities operate (such as legislation, regulation, guidance and funding conditions) allow them to use their resources efficiently and effectively to deliver for their students, staff and wider communities.
- 1.2 The role will involve (but not be limited to) policy development in response to government priorities for reform in the higher education sector, with a focus on fostering economic growth, enhancing quality, and improving efficiency in the sector, as well as the government's post-16 skills agenda and the implementation of the recommendations from the Independent Review of the Office for Students (OfS).
- 1.3 We expect the policy areas the post-holder will lead on to include:
- Skills and post-16 strategy, including Skills England
  - Higher education regulation, including OfS
  - University funding, including tuition fees and strategic priorities grant
  - Financial sustainability, including efficiencies and sector transformation
  - Teaching Quality and standards
  - Technical education and apprenticeships
  - Lifelong Learning

#### Data sets used:

- TEF, B3, HESA (including graduate outcomes), degree classifications, degree apprenticeship data, LEO data, OfS KPIs

### Person Specification and Competencies

- 2.1 We are looking for an experienced, motivated and flexible individual to undertake research, analysis and policy development and advocacy work. Substantial prior experience of policy analysis and/or policy development and advocacy is essential. Ideally the candidate will have gained such experience through a relevant role in the civil service, public sector, higher education, or third sector. However, candidates with policy knowledge and skills gained in other sectors and areas will also be considered.
- 2.2 This role requires good data analysis skills.
- 2.3 Candidates should have:
- Substantial experience of working in policy analysis and development.

- Project management skills and experience of owning projects and policy areas.
- Ability to pick up and manage new policy areas quickly.
- Capability to respond effectively to rapidly changing policy environments, including by showing sound judgement in re-prioritising workplans.
- Ability to analyse policy issues and propose solutions - demonstrating political awareness and sensitivity to different viewpoints.
- A high degree of attention to detail in producing persuasive, evidence-based conclusions across complex policy issues and addressed to a range of audiences.
- Experience of analysing/using a range of data/information sources to inform evidence-based policy development.
- Experience of networking and influencing diverse and senior groups of stakeholders, preferably involving advocacy work with business, government and/or the third sector.
- Ability to communicate diplomatically in person and in writing, including representing the organisation externally.
- Experience of working in higher education funding, regulation and/or skills policy is desirable but not essential.

2.4 The following are the key competencies we are looking for in a Policy Manager:

Initiative and judgement:

- Lead the policy agenda in their areas with input from their line manager where required.
- Analyse risks associated with decisions and make recommendations, taking accountability for the results.
- Generate and take forward new ideas and provide analysis and recommendations on policy options.
- Lead on strategic development in their own areas and contribute to the strategic vision for the whole organisation.
- Demonstrate political sensitivity to think creatively about policy issues.
- Understand members' (different) priorities and propose solutions which demonstrate sensitivity to potentially conflicting viewpoints.

Management:

- Manage a challenging and varied workload effectively; prioritising to ensure work is delivered on time to the expected standard.
- Manage policy projects from start to finish, including managing and motivating others to deliver a project where appropriate.
- Lead on stakeholder engagement, developing an understanding of the needs of others, the constraints they face and the levers to their engagement; build alliances to establish mutually beneficial working.
- Use organisational resources appropriately (e.g. for meetings, trips etc.)

Communicating and influencing:

- Ensure a high degree of attention to detail across all oral and written communications in own areas, ensuring high-quality outputs.
- Ensure work across a broad range of areas is persuasive, credible, evidence-based and adapted appropriately to the audience.
- Identify gaps in the evidence base and design solutions to address this.
- Work closely with the comms team leading on outputs in own areas (with final sign off from line manager where appropriate); proactively develop comms strategies with the comms team.

- Represent the Russell Group externally at a senior level, including public speaking and occasional engagement with the media.

Expert knowledge:

- Continually develop expert knowledge across a wide range of complex policy issues, drawing on a high-level of political awareness.
- Apply knowledge appropriately, gathering intelligence from varied sources, analysing and testing it, and drawing evidence-based conclusions.
- Proactively undertake horizon-scanning activities to identify future challenges and opportunities and develop proposals for action in response to this analysis.
- Use a range of data sources across a broad mix of complex policy areas competently and independently.
- Initiate, lead and manage research outputs working with colleagues and external stakeholders.

Team working and positive attitude to work:

- Maintain good working relationships with colleagues across the organisation and effective alliances with key stakeholders in own areas.
- Support decision-making on prioritisation across the policy team and encourage and support others to be flexible and adaptive.
- Support their line-manager and others in driving and exemplifying a culture of continuous improvement.

2.5 While this role does not currently include line management, a willingness to help oversee the work of more junior colleagues is necessary.



## Employment Package

This appointment is for maternity leave cover on a fixed-term contract for 10 months with a pro-rata salary of between £50,000-£55,000 (per annum) dependent on skills and experience. A higher salary may be available for an exceptional candidate. Secondments from other organisations will be considered.

Our offices are based in the heart of Westminster, but we have a **hybrid office and home working policy** where staff may choose to work from home up to three days a week, subject to work priorities.

As well as a competitive salary, our employment package includes many progressive policies including the following:

- 21 days of Paid Leave (equivalent to 25 days per annum)
- Discretionary closure days at Christmas holidays (in addition to Public Holidays)
- Membership of the USS pension scheme
- Interest-free travelcard loans
- Cycle scheme
- Subsidised canteen (in our office building)

As this role is for maternity leave cover, we anticipate the appointee starting in early May 2025.

## Application Process

We welcome applications from people whatever their race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, or age. We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion as a core part of our Values (stated in section 2 above).

Please submit the following to [rg.1@russellgroup.ac.uk](mailto:rg.1@russellgroup.ac.uk) by the closing date - **5pm, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025**:

- 1) An up-to-date *curriculum vitae* (max. two sides of A4) including:
  - a. details of your current and past employment
  - b. your degree qualifications including subjects and grades
  - c. two references:
    - o your current or most recent employer (who would not be approached until a job offer had been made and accepted); and
    - o a former line manager who could be contacted during the process
- 2) A cover letter no more than two sides of A4 addressing the following points:
  - a. how your knowledge, skills and experience meet the requirements of the role
  - b. why you are interested in working for the Russell Group
- 3) We ask all applicants to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form which you can download from our Vacancies webpage - <http://russellgroup.ac.uk/about/vacancies/>

We anticipate that interviews will be held in week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025, with the appointee starting in May 2025.

For a confidential discussion, please contact Paul Purcell on 020 3816 1314 or at [Paul.Purcell@russellgroup.ac.uk](mailto:Paul.Purcell@russellgroup.ac.uk).

Further information on the Russell Group can be found at <https://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/>