



**Harper Adams
University**

**Assistant to the Director of Student Experience and Academic
Services**

(Full Time, Permanent)

Candidate Information Pack



Harper Adams is a friendly, talented community of more than 600 employees, working to ensure that everyone on the planet has access to food, and that this is achieved sustainably. Our work contributes to planetary health, animal health and wellbeing, and ultimately how this contributes to human health. We are passionate about what we do, and are committed to making a difference.

Harper Adams University is committed to the wellbeing of our employees, and their personal and professional development. This is reflected in our annual employee survey - employees tell us they're proud to be a part of the university and that it is a good, safe place to work where they feel trusted to do their jobs and supported by their managers.

Whilst many of our teaching, research and knowledge exchange activities are delivered or coordinated from an attractive campus in rural Shropshire, our impact and reach is regional, national and international. We offer free staff parking, leisure facilities, and we are only a short drive from the busy market town of Newport.

Some of the benefits of working at Harper Adams University are:

- Beautiful rural location
- Generous holiday entitlement
- On campus retail, catering and gym facilities
- Corporate discount to 7 fitness suites in the Telford and Wrekin area
- Opportunity to purchase additional holiday
- Opportunities for agile working
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Disability Confident Employer
- Enhanced maternity benefits
- Enhanced sickness absence payments
- Cyclescheme supporter
- Workwear provided (*if applicable*)

Harper Adams University is the UK's premier educational institution serving the agri-food, animal wellbeing and connected industries, recognised as a world-leading specialist provider. Our focus is on food production and technology, animal health and wellbeing, management of land and property, and their contribution to sustainable living environments for our planet's population; we are equally committed to making the UK's food and farming competitive in a world where we will need to compete globally. Our education and research encompass food production and processing, animal sciences, environmental sustainability, mechanical engineering, land management and sustainable business management. We have strong relationships with companies in the UK and abroad, and with academic institutions across the world, collaborating in research and in the delivery of our courses. We are a University with regional, national and international reach and impact, repeatedly appearing in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times Good University Guide* as the UK's highest-ranked modern university.

The University began life in 1901 as Harper Adams Agricultural College and was granted University status in 2012. Our Chancellor is Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal; our current Vice-Chancellor is Professor Ken Sloan, who joined us in 2021. The University is based on a single campus in Shropshire, close to the old market town of Newport and within easy reach of the modern town of Telford, which offers a range of housing possibilities and has excellent rail and road links to the West Midlands conurbation and beyond. Investment of more than £50 million over the last decade has ensured that our campus boasts the most up-to-date teaching, research and conference facilities as well as accommodation for around 800 students. Our most recent additions include contemporary laboratories and a purpose-built Veterinary Services Centre for teaching and research, swiftly followed by a £500,000 refurbishment of the veterinary nursing facilities. On-campus leisure facilities include a multi-gym, sports hall, dance and aerobics studio. And we are one of the very universities to have its own commercial farm: covering 494 hectares, its facilities include a £2 million leading-edge dairy unit with a robotic dairy.

For a virtual tour of main campus, visit <https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/university-life/our-university/virtual-tour/>

We are regarded as the UK's highest-ranked small specialist provider for the agri-food and animal wellbeing industries, consistently producing the largest cohort of graduates for the agri-food and animal wellbeing sectors, more than 99% of whom go immediately into employment. We currently have about 3,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, studying both full-and part-time. Our courses cover not just every stage of the food chain – from developing the machinery used to prepare land through to how food is sold and the nutrients it delivers – but also broader subjects such as general business management, automotive engineering and veterinary professions, including, since the establishment of the Harper and Keele Veterinary School in 2020, Veterinary Medicine and Surgery. We have achieved the highest ratings in Quality Assurance Agency reviews. Our undergraduate curriculum is industry-aligned, work focused, co-developed and co-delivered with industry, rooted in partnerships with about 1,100 companies in the UK and abroad. At its heart is our mandatory Placement Year – a bespoke learning experience for our students, tailored to the real needs of employers. We offer a swathe of employer and philanthropically-funded scholarships channelled through our Development Trust. And we support employers by providing a large range of (often bespoke) CPD courses – we have about 2,000 learners here – and with our Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeship Programmes launched in 2017. These courses enable us to address directly the skills needs of the UK's agriculture and food industry. We reinforced this work in 2021, by establishing, with support from the NFU, Morrisons and McDonalds, our School of Sustainable Food and Farming, tasked with ensuring that the sector has the skills to enable it to deliver its 2040 Net Zero goal.

We have a strong research profile. Our work is esteemed nationally and internationally for its quality and impact, particularly in areas such as entomology, sustainable agriculture, crops, livestock nutrition, autonomous and precision farming. In the 2021 Research Excellence Framework, 60% of our research was judged to be world-leading or internationally excellent. Our research is both strategic and applied. Our strategic research tackles the inter-related challenges of food security and sustainability, focusing on the need to achieve Net Zero in agriculture and food supply chains in concert with the requirements for sustainable agriculture. We focus particularly on smart agriculture; improving soil health; sustainable land use and rural communities; reducing the impact of ruminant livestock; sustainable food systems and the circular economy, and integrated pest and disease management. Our applied research, in collaboration with regional, national and international companies, addresses their particular needs and is an important part of our research portfolio. Student research also contributes significantly to our research output - a research project is part of all our degree courses, undergraduate and postgraduate. Our research is structured around two overarching research centres covering Crop and Environmental Science, and Animal Welfare, each containing a number of themed groups; we also have cross-cutting multidisciplinary research groups, and our Future Farm – our focus to realise a pathway to Net Zero within wider sustainability parameters.

Harper Adams is a young university, energetic and purposeful – one that says not just 'can do' but 'will do' – ambitious and forward-looking. We are an optimistic, pragmatic and collaborative community, facing challenges with confidence, ready to grasp new opportunities. We aim by 2030 to combine being regarded as the UK's leading specialist institution with being an internationally recognised university for food production animal health and wellbeing and their contribution to sustainable living environments for the world's population. Our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ken Sloan, has recently led a revision of our Strategy to take us up to 2030: this sets out how we can achieve this ambition by focusing on goals of inclusion, community, influence and sustainability. It charts a path that offers both opportunities and challenges – a pioneering journey that involves our whole Harper Adams' community, one to which everyone working to make a difference belongs.

Facilities

Harper Adams has extensive, well-equipped facilities and is constantly investing in its campus. Facilities include a range of modern teaching facilities and an extensive library, a variety of IT suites including an engineering design centre, newly extended laboratory facilities, a field laboratory and a livestock project centre, a glasshouse complex, an agricultural engineering unit with a large, covered soil working area and a number of sustainable technology installations. New facilities opened since 2017 include new laboratories, an Agri-Tech Innovation Hub and SMART Dairy Unit. A Veterinary Education Centre opened 2021, in support of existing programmes and the new Harper & Keele

Veterinary School. Capital funding to support the development of many of these facilities has been provided through the work of the Development Trust.

The University also provides a range of training and professional development opportunities via its staff development programme.

Catering and Sports Facilities

The University's Students' Union operates a membership fee paying gym that staff may join. The University has bowling green and tennis courts that are available for staff use during the summer period. A variety of university catering outlets provide access to lunch facilities on campus.

For further details about the University, please visit our website: <http://www.harper-adams.ac.uk>

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of the post: Assistant to the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services

Department: Office of the Vice-Chancellor

The Assistant to the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services at Harper Adams University plays a crucial role in supporting the overall operations of all services managed by the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services in relation to education and students. This position is also designed to support the Executive Assistant function, serving the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer, and colleagues in the Executive Leadership team. The role requires exceptional organisational and administrative skills, with a focus on ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services office.

The Assistant will be responsible for coordinating administrative tasks, assisting with scheduling, managing communications, supporting university groups and committees, and contributing to the effective operation of the office.

This position is vital in supporting the seamless functioning of the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services Office. If you are an organised and detail-oriented individual with a passion for providing support in a dynamic University environment, we invite you to apply for this position. Join us in contributing to the success of Harper Adams University and shaping the future of higher education.

Main Responsibilities & Duties

Administrative Support

- Provide comprehensive and high-level administrative support, including management of document preparation, record keeping, and electronic and physical filing systems.
- Play a central role in the organisation of meetings, overseeing venue reservations (both on and off campus), preparing meeting materials, managing RSVPs, and arranging refreshments, ensuring smooth and efficient proceedings.
- Coordinating the distribution of documents, agendas, and meeting materials to relevant stakeholders.
- Take a lead in providing administrative assistance, from scheduling meetings and preparing agendas to collating meeting materials and supporting effective communication.
- Expertly commission, interpret, and convey data from a range sources, including professional networks, databases, and systems for the benefit of the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services office, subsequently synthesising this information into systematic reports.
- Maintain the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services calendar with a focus on efficient scheduling and appointment management.
- Handle incoming correspondence and queries, both electronically and in-person, and directing them to the appropriate parties.
- Actively contribute to the organisation and coordination of office events and activities.
- Book and manage travel arrangements for the staff within the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services team.
- Assist with the preparation and distribution of meeting minutes and follow-up actions, demonstrating attention to detail and professionalism.
- Assist with administrative tasks and projects as assigned by the Director of Student Experience and Academic Services and other senior colleagues, often involving complex problem-solving and strategic thinking.

Expenses and Financial Administration

- Manage expense claims and reimbursements ensuring compliance with financial policies and procedures, including the managing, and raising of purchase orders, liaison with suppliers, handling day-to-day financial enquiries, administration of procurement cards, and ordering consumables.

- Monitor budgets related to administrative activities and assisting with the preparation of financial reports as needed, demonstrating financial acumen.

Communications

- Exhibit a high level of professionalism in the preparation and proofreading of documents, reports, and correspondence to ensure absolute accuracy and adherence to statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Maintain and regularly update contact lists for key stakeholders, ensuring timely and precise information dissemination to internal and external parties.

Record Keeping

- Maintain accurate and organised filing systems detailing activities both digital and physical records, facilitating swift and reliable document retrieval.
- Ensure accuracy and confidentiality in data entry and record-keeping tasks, supporting the management of documents and records.
- Assist with data entry and record keeping tasks, ensuring accuracy and confidentiality.

Collaboration

- Actively participate in the creation of a collaborative network of Assistants across the University to promote streamlined office practices and systems, emphasizing collaborative working, skills development, and peer mentoring.
- Coordinate and support the efforts of the Assistants to the Executive teams in fulfilling their diverse responsibilities, including training, and modelling effective cross-team collaboration.
- Support the induction process for new starters and maintain accurate records to ensure that mandatory training is completed.
- Provide support for special projects or assignments as required, including contributions to the University’s sustainability agenda.
- Be a proactive advocate for diversity and equality, actively contributing to the creation of an inclusive working culture within the University.
-

Personal Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Relevant administrative qualification or work experience in a similar role	
Experience	<p>Strong organisational and administrative skills, with the ability to multitask and prioritise effectively.</p> <p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills.</p> <p>Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications</p> <p>Attention to detail and the ability to maintain accurate records.</p> <p>Team player with the ability to collaborate effectively</p> <p>High level of professionalism, discretion, and confidentiality</p> <p>Adaptability and the ability to work in a fast-paced and changing environment</p>	<p>Experience of organising high-profile visits and events.</p> <p>Experience of working in the higher education sector.</p>

Conditions of Service

The national recommendations which have arisen from the negotiations between UCEA and the unions recognised at national level, the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES), directly affect the terms and conditions insofar as they have been adopted by the Board of Governors.

Salary The commencing salary will be within the range £25,433 to £27,344 per annum. The point of entry will be dependent upon relevant qualifications and experience. Salaries are paid monthly, in arrears, by credit transfer on the 28th day of the month.

Contract Term This is a full time, permanent contract. Employment may be terminated during the course of the contract by either party giving one months' notice in writing

Hours of Work The routine working week is 37 hours over Monday to Friday, inclusive. There may be a requirement for overtime working from time to time and time off in lieu may be allowed for agreed hours worked in excess of 37 per week.

Holidays The annual holiday entitlement is 22 working days, plus statutory bank holidays. In addition to this there are 8 University closure days during the full annual leave year. The holiday year runs from 1 August to 31 July and in the holiday year in which the employment commences or terminates the holiday entitlement will accrue on a pro-rata basis for each complete week of service. The timing of holidays is subject to the agreement of the Line Manager.

All annual holiday entitlement (including bank holidays and University closure days) is pro-rata for part-time employees. Further details will be confirmed on appointment.

Sick Leave During periods of certified sickness, the post-holder will be eligible to receive sick pay in accordance with the University Sick Pay Policy. The payment of sick pay is subject to compliance with the University rules for the notification and verification of sickness absence, details of which will be provided to the successful applicant upon commencement of employment.

Pension The post-holder will be entitled to join the Harper Adams Group Pension Scheme and details will be provided to the successful applicant upon commencement of employment.

Exclusivity of Service You are required to devote your full-time attention and abilities to your duties during working hours and to act in the best interests of the University at all times. Accordingly, you must not, without written consent of the University, undertake employment or engagement including external consultancy, which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the University.

It follows that, regardless of whether you are employed on a full-time or part-time contract, you are required to notify your line manager of any employment or engagement which you intend to undertake whilst in the employment of the University (including any such employment or engagement which commenced before your employment under this contract). Your line manager will then notify you within 10 working days whether such employment or engagement is prohibited.

Criminal Convictions The post involves the opportunity for access to children and young persons under the age of 18. For this reason, the University is entitled to consider any criminal convictions, cautions or impending case(s) that it considers to be relevant to this post.

The post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that applicants are not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are "spent" under the provisions of the Act.

Applicants must therefore complete the part of the application form declaring any criminal convictions and cautions from any court or police authority. The successful applicant will have to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service Check before an appointment can be made.

Application Process

All applications should be completed and submitted using the Harper Adams e-Recruitment programme at <http://jobs.harper-adams.ac.uk> to be completed no later than midnight on **Sunday 12th January 2025**.