#### Trent University LogoEXEMPT JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Communications Officer, Trent International

**Job Number:** X-479 | VIP: 2002

**Band:** EXEMPT-5

**Department:** Communications/Trent International

**Supervisor Title:** Manager, Communications

**Last Reviewed:**  July 8, 2024

#### **Job Purpose:**

Reporting to the Manager of Communications, the Communications Officer for Trent International is responsible for consistent and creative delivery of strategic marketing and communications plans and materials to support the University’s international recruitment and retention goals across both Trent’s campuses in Peterborough and Durham GTA. Emphasizing innovation in creating compelling communications, this position supports the Trent brand, reputation, and strategic enrolment management goals of the University. Working with a high calibre team of communications and brand journalism experts, as well as representatives from across the University, the Communications Officer coordinates, writes and produces communications materials for external and internal audiences, serves as the lead communications contact for Trent International, and is a key member of the University’s Integrated Communications Committee.

#### Key Activities:

##### Strategic Communications & Planning

* Takes direction from the Executive Director of Global Enrolment & Business Strategy to enhance strategic communications for Trent International.
* Builds reputation, awareness, enrolment, and engagement through meetings and working relationships with team members across Communications and Trent International.
* Collaborates on the development and implementation of integrated marketing, communications and engagement plans and strategies for Trent International, within a brand journalism approach to an array of target audiences, including current and future students, donors, the community, funding agencies, and others.
* Contributes to goal setting, and measures and reports on targets, metrics and key performance indicators for marketing, communications and engagement plans.
* Builds relationships and engages with academic and administrative faculty and staff across both campuses to effectively and strategically coordinate International communications, identify those with specific areas of expertise, gather stories about faculty, student and alumni successes, advance opportunities for commentary on topical issues, and provide information for reports.

##### Content Development

* Plans, writes and edits high-quality, compelling and accurate materials for International across all mediums directed at both internal and external audiences, consistent with the objectives set out in the Communications Plans. Multimedia and collateral. materials include, but are not limited to: web material, social media, online marketing, eCommunications, viewbook, brochures and publications, newsletters, and video.
* Prepares recruitment presentations and interactive materials for a wide range of audiences, and digital agent training sessions, for use by the international recruitment team.
* Sources and contributes Trent International news, initiatives and profiles for the Trent website and other platforms, including news releases, op-eds, and media opportunities.
* Drafts International advertising and marketing material concepts and copy for review by internal clients and approval by Manager, Communications.

##### Social Media & Digital Support

* Drives innovation by researching best practices, marketing trends and new digital strategies, exploring creative ways to integrate written and digital content.
* Assists with strategic development of University’s various social media channels and with the Digital Content Coordinator, Trent International, plays lead role in overseeing Trent International social media channels, including strategic development, planning, content creation, asset development and posting/scheduling.
* Monitors and maintains fresh, relevant content on Trent International websites.
* Assists with digital and other photography/video/podcasts/webinars to support marketing, communications, recruitment and admissions materials and initiatives for Trent International.

##### Issues Management, Project Management and Administrative Duties

* Acts as back-up to Communications & Media Relations Officers and Manager, Communications on emergency communications, including issues management, related to Trent International.
* Acts on strategies for crisis/emergency communications as required, including emergency response, human resources and issues management.
* Accesses confidential and sensitive information, related to board governance, budgets, human resources, for backgrounders, speaking points, communications plans, etc.
* Maintains discretion and confidentiality with regard to files and sensitive issues, supporting the Manager of Communications on communication plans and materials.
* Liaises with suppliers (designers, printers) to produce high quality materials and ensure deadlines are met; and works with Media Relations Officers to connect with media outlets to place content or distribute materials to audiences.
* Develops briefing materials, backgrounders, speaking points for senior administration and faculty on media requests and confidential issues as required.
* Acts as key member and contributor to University-wide Integrated Communications Committee, contributing to pan University communications strategy and planning.
* Attends regular meetings with Trent International, working closely with the senior management in these offices.
* Hiring and supervision of student assistants and interns to support international marketing and communications through first language
* Other duties as assigned.

#### Education Required:

* Bachelor’s degree (Honours) is required.

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Three (3) to five (5) years of professional marketing and/or communications experience
* Excellent written and verbal communications skills
* Considerable knowledge and experience with writing and marketing techniques to communicate effectively to a variety of audiences
* Experience in creating communications plans and strategies, monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and adjusting them for optimal performance
* Experience assessing communication needs in order to develop strategies for implementation, including working within brand guidelines and standards
* Superior interpersonal strengths, conceptual skills, the ability to collaborate creatively and consult with others
* Excellent organizational and planning skills to manage diverse projects and shifting priorities within tight timelines
* Proficiency with computer systems and digital/new media communications platforms, including online email marketing programs, spreadsheets, web content management systems, social media, and Internet
* Self-motivated and responsible with mature attitude and professional demeanour
* Demonstrated ability to use appropriate judgement, initiative, tact, diplomacy and discretion
* Ability to take direction and work with constructive feedback
* High degree of enthusiasm and customer service orientation
* Proven project management skills
* Advanced skills with new media technologies, social media, photography and videography
* Experience in the Ontario post-secondary sector considered an asset

#### Supervision:

* Supervise and direct the activities of student employees.

**Job Evaluation Factors:**

##### Analytical Reasoning

Must display an issues management mindset and be able to project how evolving issues will impact the reputation of the department/University. The complexity of this role is tied to the multitude of projects and priorities that must be managed simultaneously, with tight deadlines. The output of work is public in nature and special attention must be adhered to ensuring the accuracy of work that is published in the public domain. Intense conceptual thinking is required to define the correct path for successful project management (e.g. recruitment marketing strategy, planning and coordination on confidential issues management topics).

Example:

The Communications Officer is responsible for overseeing and coordinating multiple projects at the same time. Some projects can be organized in advance (i.e. scheduled publications like the Viewbook, which is produced and distributed once per year) but well thought out and established timelines for such projects can be affected by competing priorities (i.e. recruitment projects like ads or brochures required in a short, tight timeframe). In addition, depending on the strategic priorities of the University, last minute additions/revisions to established editorial line-ups and publication outlines can occur, sometimes during the last stages of a project/publication. In this position, such competing priorities are the norm and the candidate must learn to adapt and reprioritize projects accordingly.

##### Decision Making

Interacts with senior administration, including VPs, AVPs, Deans, as well as external stakeholders including agents, parents, prospects, applicants. In doing so, the Communications Officer provides support and messaging that has wide-reaching impact across the University, in the community and beyond. Sound judgement is required to maintain and cultivate relations with a variety of stakeholders in media, administration and internal/external communities. In broader consultation with Manager, Communications, this position is required to use sound judgement; decisions usually involve determining the best process to carry out the job tasks.

Example:

Publications planning – the Communications Officer is responsible for overseeing all aspects of certain publications (i.e. Viewbook), including developing timelines for production, managing relationships with suppliers – designers, photographers, and printers (including completing RFPs, if required), writing content (based on strategic messaging and University priorities), sourcing photos/organizing relevant photo shoots, etc.

##### Impact

Decisions taken by the Communications Officer have the potential of impacting the reputation and public image of the University. Work completed is frequently broadcast and shared in the public domain.

Impact on the organization is likely to extend to other work groups and may also have some effect on clients and service partners: errors are normally detected before they become serious, but may cause interruption and loss of time to colleagues in the same section or other work groups to correct. Errors that go undetected may affect recommendations, decisions or actions, leading to a minor negative impact to the whole organization. Areas of potential impact could be in the organization’s reputation and public image.

Example:

This position is responsible for producing a variety of critical communications materials to internationally diverse audiences through the web, print and social media. Poorly written or conceived messaging and materials can lead to dissatisfaction of these audiences (including prospective students and applicants) and potentially damage the University’s reputation and ability to attract students. Ideas and proposals are discussed with and approved by the Manager.

##### Responsibility for the Work of Others

Position will supervise student staff. Supervisory responsibility of other positions is not a job requirement. The job may provide guidance by helping new people to adapt to the work environment or orienting others to work processes and methods on an ad hoc basis.

Direct Responsibility for the Work of Others:

* Contracted suppliers, including freelance writers, designers, photographers, and printers – often act as first point of contact in the department for contracted suppliers – manage work of freelance writers (assign stories, review and edit materials, provide feedback and act as mentor/provide direction for future pieces); designers – seek quotes on publications and projects, manage relationships with multiple designers.; photographers – provide creative direction of photo shoots and video projects; printers – seek quotes on publications and projects, manage relationships with multiple print houses, ensure work is distributed equally, etc.
* Student employees – provide direction to student employees on projects/tasks to be undertaken; review/edit written materials and photography; assist with training on various office procedures, etc.

Indirect Responsibility for the Work of Others:

* Liaises with other internal departments (e.g. Recruitment, Graduate Studies, Advancement, Risk Management, Facilities Management, Conference Services) on messaging and materials.

##### Communication

The Communications Officer is a direct point of contact for both the internal and external communities. Communication involves the ability to clarify ideas and messages, to summarize or synthesize the information according to the audience’s need, to use judgment in discussing problems, presenting information, making recommendations. Communication requires consulting on issues. Lack of judgment and discretion in communicating messages could result in damage to the organization’s image. Job responsibilities require communication with very diverse contacts, both inside and outside of the organization, including senior officials in the University, government representatives, prospective students and applicants, the community, and the general public.

Internal Contacts:

* University administration – President’s Office, Vice Presidents, Board of Governors, Deans, etc. (institutional messaging, speech and letter writing, briefing and background documents, internal memos/updates, press materials, etc.)
* Academic department heads, faculty and administrative assistants – all departments/programs, including undergraduate, graduate and professional programs (institutional messaging, press materials, profiles, brochures, marketing materials, online marketing/websites, photography, etc.)
* Administrative department directors and staff – all offices (i.e. Advancement, Alumni, Trent International, Registrar, Recruitment, Careerspace, Library, etc.) (institutional messaging, profiles, brochures, marketing materials, online marketing/websites, photography, etc.)
* Students – undergraduate and graduate – regular contact with current students and alumni for profiles, press materials, online marketing/web content, events promotion, etc.
* Ancillary operations (Athletics, Conferences, etc.) (institutional messaging, profiles, brochures, marketing materials, online marketing/websites, photography, etc.

External Contacts:

* Suppliers, vendors (agents, freelance writers, designers, printers, etc.) – arrange “contracts” with vendors (RFPs, quotes, etc.), act as liaison between University clients (including departments, offices and Communications) and suppliers on various projects, etc.
* General public – indirect contact through development of stories and messages for press releases, website stories and text, etc.; occasionally respond to direct inquiries from the public
* Prospective students and applicants – through printed materials and social media interaction communicate with prospective students and their families and influencers, including guidance counsellors, etc.
* Associations – COU, Universities Canada, etc.
* VIPs – honorary degree recipients, Chancellor
* Government representatives – work with government reps through Manager
* Communications, press conferences and University events, news releases, etc.
* Counterparts or contacts at other universities or academic institutions – consult on best practices; work with them on various events and/or announcements (especially local institutions/Fleming College), etc.
* Representatives from various external organizations – includes community organizations (around events, press releases, etc.)
* Media – direct contact with members of the media, back-up to Media Relations & Communications Officer for international media calls/inquires, etc.

##### Motor/ Sensory Skills

There is a requirement for some level of precision in motor or sensory skills. Job duties include keyboarding throughout the day and require dexterity involving speed and accuracy. Attention to visual detail is also required (reviewing/providing direction on designed materials, etc.). Sight is also an important factor in regards to photography.

Skill Type

* Working at work station throughout the day, responding to telephone calls, large volumes of e-mails
* Keyboarding – require dexterity involving speed and accuracy
* Handwriting – required to capture notes from interviews (in person or on the phone) quickly and accurately
* Verbal – excellent verbal communication skills; engaged in extensive verbal communication in media and public relations role; pick-up on verbal cues in interviews (in person, on phone or through e-mail); communicate effectively with all audiences
* Visual – attention to fine detail and overall presentation of professional-looking materials; fit with Trent brand and identity; photography and videography best angles/lighting/set-up for various purposes

##### Effort

Mental Effort:

Description Job Tasks Required

Sustained concentration ability to maintain concentration on projects to ensure their completion in an accurate and timely manner in the face of constant interruptions, requests and emerging issues

Multitasking/competing demands ability to manage multiple and diverse projects with competing timelines; ability to adapt schedule for new priorities

Listening understanding of complex stakeholder groups and diverse audiences; listen and work with constructive feedback; take direction; good customer service approach

Diplomacy appropriate judgement, tact and discretion in dealing with confidential and sensitive information as well as various audiences and constituents

Physical Effort:

Description Job Tasks Required

Keyboarding extended periods of time spent keyboarding; speed and accuracy required

Visual demand working on computers, writing, reviewing visual materials, etc.; photography skills

Duration working on computer and in office for sustained periods of time

Lifting/Carrying limited lifting and carrying – publication mailings, etc.

Walking/Standing event coverage and photography; travel/walking to various places on campus and throughout community to cover events and activities, conduct interviews, etc.; standing for longer periods of time for photography, etc.

Extended Hours/Mobility Work sometimes involves covering evening and weekend events and activities

##### Working Conditions

Psychological Conditions:

Condition Condition Description

Competing demands/Conflicting multiple and diverse projects with competing timelines work priorities

Changing deadlines/time pressures ability to adapt to shifting timelines; ability to work under time pressures and produce accurate materials/information in short time frame

Stress position is part of a department that manages a consistent high volume of work and concurrent projects

Physical Conditions:

Condition Condition Description

Duration extended hours often required – covering events/activities, meeting deadlines, etc.

Interior/Exterior activities take place both internally and externally and may require limited, local travel