



POSITION PROFILE

Director of the  
Employers' Association



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Thank you for your interest in this exciting opportunity to join the Colleges Scotland team in the business-critical role of Director of the Employers' Association.

Scotland's colleges have a long and proud history; they are situated right across the length and breadth of our country, providing training, learning, and skills for all our communities. We have over 239,000 students studying in Scotland's colleges each year from all backgrounds with over 95% achieving their qualifications and moving on to positive destinations of further study, training, or employment.

The college sector in Scotland enables people from all walks of life, all backgrounds, and all ages, to obtain qualifications and skills that can improve their lives, and further their careers. It also plays an intrinsic role in helping the Scottish Government deliver its ambitions for increased inclusivity and sustainable economic growth in Scotland.

Collaboration is essential if Scotland is to continue building a world-class education system, and the college sector is committed to working with partners across the public, private, third sector, and trade unions to capitalise on societal transformations, digital innovations, and changing demands in education.

Enabling the effective delivery of the National Bargaining Agenda, the College Scotland Employers' Association:

- Supports its members to achieve their collective ambitions whilst also ensuring they have the workforce and resources to deliver excellence for their students.
- Delivers progress and sustainable outcomes for college staff in partnership with the recognised staff trade unions. This takes place through the effective national collective bargaining forum of the National Joint Negotiating Committee.

As the Director, you will ensure the Employers' Association has a clear strategy, direction, identity, and voice. You will develop and maintain effective relationships with a range of external stakeholders to deliver true partnership working. You will have ownership of, and a proactive approach to, National Bargaining. The role of the Director includes representing the sector at a national level on key areas of National Bargaining, and also ensure the Employers Association's contribution to the national agenda is valued and impactful.

We are delighted that you have taken the time to consider this exciting role within Colleges Scotland and wish you well in your application.



Alex Linkston,  
Chair of Colleges Scotland Employers'  
Association



Shona Struthers,  
Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland



Colleges Scotland is the collective voice for the college sector, and as the membership body, represents all 26 colleges in Scotland and the three strategic regional bodies, delivering further education provision and around a quarter of all higher education in Scotland.

The 26 colleges operate in 13 regions across Scotland, allowing them to plan nationally and regionally, as well as deliver locally, while three regional strategic bodies co-ordinate approaches for colleges in the Highlands and Islands, Glasgow, and Lanarkshire regions.

The Colleges Scotland board is made up of the 13 regional college chairs, four nominated college principals, and the CEO of Colleges Scotland.

Colleges Scotland's primary role is to support colleges and regional strategic bodies in achieving their aims and objectives, and to cultivate the strength of the college sector in Scotland. This is achieved through policy development, advocating and campaigning on behalf of the college sector, co-ordinating sector-wide engagement on major issues, and maintaining strong and proactive relationships with government, sector agencies, and industry bodies.

It is an exciting time for the sector and over the coming years it will continue to evolve.

Colleges Scotland supports its members by ensuring their views are heard and interests represented. We do this by:

- Campaigning for colleges, their staff and learners to policy makers and influencers
- Informing the public policy debate
- Influencing decision-makers to secure the best possible financial settlement for the sector
- Securing strong parliamentary and media representation
- Building future governance and leadership capacity
- Providing professional advice to college sector institutions
- Supporting National Bargaining.

Our vision is that Colleges Scotland will be at the heart of a world-class college sector that is recognised, valued, and available to all.

Colleges Scotland has four core values that underpin its work:

- **Respect** – we will act with respect, integrity, openness, and honesty.
- **Support** – we will strive for excellence, provide effective leadership, understand and respond to the needs of colleges and regional strategic bodies.
- **Trust** – we will use truthfulness as the guiding principle for everything we do and it is essential to our success.
- **Inclusivity** – we will advocate diversity and equality



The [College Sector Statement of Ambition](#), published in December 2018, sets out a five-year vision for “a dynamic, collaborative, and innovative sector delivering high-quality lifelong learning, widening access to education, and promoting social inclusion that enables people to thrive in life, in their communities, and in work”. As the college sector’s representative body, Colleges Scotland has a crucial responsibility in helping the sector achieve its vision and deliver on its ambitions.

## **Employers’ Association**

As well as Colleges Scotland acting as a policy organisation for the college sector in Scotland, we also act as the Employers’ Association. The Colleges Scotland Employers’ Association is the forum through which National Bargaining is being implemented by the college sector.

The Employers’ Association is jointly responsible for implementing National Bargaining in partnership with the trade unions. Colleges Scotland was awarded funding from the Scottish Funding Council’s Strategic Funds, in August 2016 to establish the Employment Services Team which is tasked with supporting activities related to the implementation of National Bargaining across the college sector.

The National Joint Negotiating Committee was established to jointly agree matters, such as pay and terms and conditions of employment in Scotland’s colleges, in partnership between the employers and the recognised trade unions, UNISON, Unite, GMB and EIS-FELA.





<b>Role:</b>	Director of the Employers' Association
<b>Reports to:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Direct Reports:</b>	Interim Employers Secretary (Support Staff) Interim Employers Secretary (Lecturing Staff) Senior Employment Services Advisor Job Evaluation Project Manager Pay and Grading Lead

## Role Overview

Ensuring Colleges Scotland Employers' Association effectively supports members to achieve their collective ambitions, the Director of the Employers' Association will operate at a national level and lead the National Bargaining agenda.

Colleges Scotland is currently reviewing working arrangements which include agile working and whilst this post is based in Stirling, it is envisaged that the successful candidate would not necessarily need to be in the office on a full-time basis.

Accountable to Colleges Scotland's Chief Executive, the key priorities of the role include:

- Ensure the Employers' Association has a clear strategy, identity and voice and takes both ownership of, and a proactive approach to, National Bargaining.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with a range of external stakeholders (including Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council, college chairs and principals, and trade unions) to deliver true partnership working.
- Work closely with the relevant key personnel, including both interim Joint Secretaries, to ensure agreement is reached, at both a strategic and operational level, to enable the delivery of the National Bargaining agenda.
- Ensure, through established negotiation mechanisms, that appropriate pay and grading models and national conditions of service are agreed and implemented.
- As a key spokesperson for the Employers' Association, represent the sector at a national level on key National Bargaining areas ensuring the organisation's contribution to the national agenda is valued and impactful.
- Provide strategic and operational leadership to all team members and ensure the effective and accountable use of resources to deliver the aims and objectives of National Bargaining.
- Lead on the development of Scottish Funding Council Business Cases to secure funding / deliver additional resources.
- Drive innovation and best practice across all employment relations activities.
- As a member of Colleges Scotland's small Executive team, directly contribute to the development of strategies and operational plans that ensure the achievement of Colleges Scotland's strategic aims.



## Duties and Responsibilities

- Lead, motivate and manage small teams of professionals, ensuring team members' roles are aligned with the Employers' Association's key strategic priorities and College Scotland's strategic plan.
- Ensure effective ongoing advice is provided to the college sector on employment matters including all aspects of National Bargaining and issues emerging from negotiations as well as other relevant external factors.
- Ensure the implementation of agreed national actions and activities.
- Ensure members are continually engaged and effectively consulted on pertinent employment related issues.
- Lead all NJNC and Employers' Association projects e.g., the Fair Work agenda.
- Undertake horizon scanning activities and use the intelligence gained to influence policy development and implementation, as appropriate.
- Utilise robust analytical information to facilitate discussions and inform ongoing costs and funding requirements.
- Represent the employers on the National Joint Negotiating Committee.
- Oversee the production of reports to the sector and relevant stakeholders, including relevant civil servants and Ministers within the Scottish Government, on developments associated with National Bargaining.





The successful candidate will be a strategic and solutions focused leader with excellent stakeholder management experience coupled with a proven track record in building and maintaining a wide range of collaborative relationships and partnerships. An accomplished communicator you will have instant credibility when engaging with both internal and external stakeholders.

## Skills and Experience:

- Experience of leading the development, implementation and delivery of strategies and large-scale projects.
- Relevant employment legislation knowledge, or the ability to quickly gain an understanding of pay systems, pay bargaining, employment relations, workforce development systems, and benchmarking processes.
- Strong ambassadorial and presentation skills with the ability to express views convincingly and coherently using a variety of media.
- Relevant employee management experience including involvement in managing and mitigating employment relations issues and risks.
- Strong political acuity coupled with the ability to operate effectively and rationally in a highly politicised environment.
- Lead, manage and deliver on a range of complex tasks, projects, and services.
- Ability to translate strategic priorities into deliverable actions, projects, and services.
- Proven track record in motivating and supporting both individuals and teams.
- Exceptional planning and project management skills.
- Knowledge of policy development and consultation processes.
- The ability to proactively support and advise committees and working groups.
- Knowledge of Scotland's college sector is desirable but not essential.
- Previous involvement in advising on strategic HR/employment relations issues and relevant exposure to both trade union negotiation and consultation processes would be beneficial but not essential.







## Personal Attributes:

- An inspirational leader who is a pragmatic problem solver and delivers to a high level.
- Highly skilled negotiator with a record of achieving successful outcomes.
- Intellectual flexibility to move easily between significant detail and the bigger picture.
- A high level of interpersonal, communication (verbal and written) and influencing skills.
- Absolute personal integrity – the public profile of the organisation is of paramount importance.
- Willingness to listen and take opinions of members and external stakeholders into account.
- Significant personal drive and resilience.
- Tact, diplomacy, and the ability to build and sustain relationships with colleagues at all levels.
- Exercises good judgement, confident in own knowledge, able to give advice to others and be accountable for that advice.
- Flexible in approach and able to respond creatively to new developments and to adjust priorities accordingly.





Salary:	£69,554
Pension:	Falkirk Council Local Government Pension Scheme
Holidays:	45 Days Holiday (33 Flexible and 12 Public)

## The Recruitment Process

The recruitment for this position is being managed by our advising consultants, Livingston James.

Interested candidates should contact Douglas Adam of Livingston James in the first instance – [douglasadam@livingstonjames.com](mailto:douglasadam@livingstonjames.com).

Initial interviews will be held with Livingston James.

Next steps will involve meeting with key stakeholders of Colleges Scotland. Details of this process will be provided to successful candidates.

*Colleges Scotland is an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.*