HEAD OF
APPLIED DATA SCIENCE

Candidate pack

UCAS

AN INTRODUCTION TO UCAS

As a highly trusted, independent charity, UCAS helps over 700,000 people from more than 200 countries and territories to explore the opportunities and benefits of undergraduate higher education (HE) every year. We are proud to enable over half a million people to change their lives by embarking on their studies at a UK university or college. You can read our strategy for 2020-2025 'Discover your future' **here**. Our digital capability and customer service expertise also mean that we can support individuals interested in exploring postgraduate courses, as well as degree and higher apprenticeships, and we currently run admissions services for conservatoires, postgraduate courses, and teacher training.

UCAS has a turnover of circa £50m. About 40% of that revenue comes from income generated from commercial activity through subsidiaries – all of which is gift aided back into the charity. The charity generates the remaining 60% of income through the application fees paid by individuals, and a fee paid by universities and colleges for students placed.

The Digital and Data team defines and delivers the digital products and services used by students, providers, advisers, and commercial partners, as well as the underlying technology platforms that enable these products to be developed in a responsive and agile way. Our new digital strategy, 'Connected and flexible admissions services for the digital age', sets out our intention for UCAS to be a customer centric, product-focused digital business, able to use data and digital technologies to connect students with their next opportunity, and to connect providers of further and higher education with individuals with whom they can build lasting, empowering possibilities.

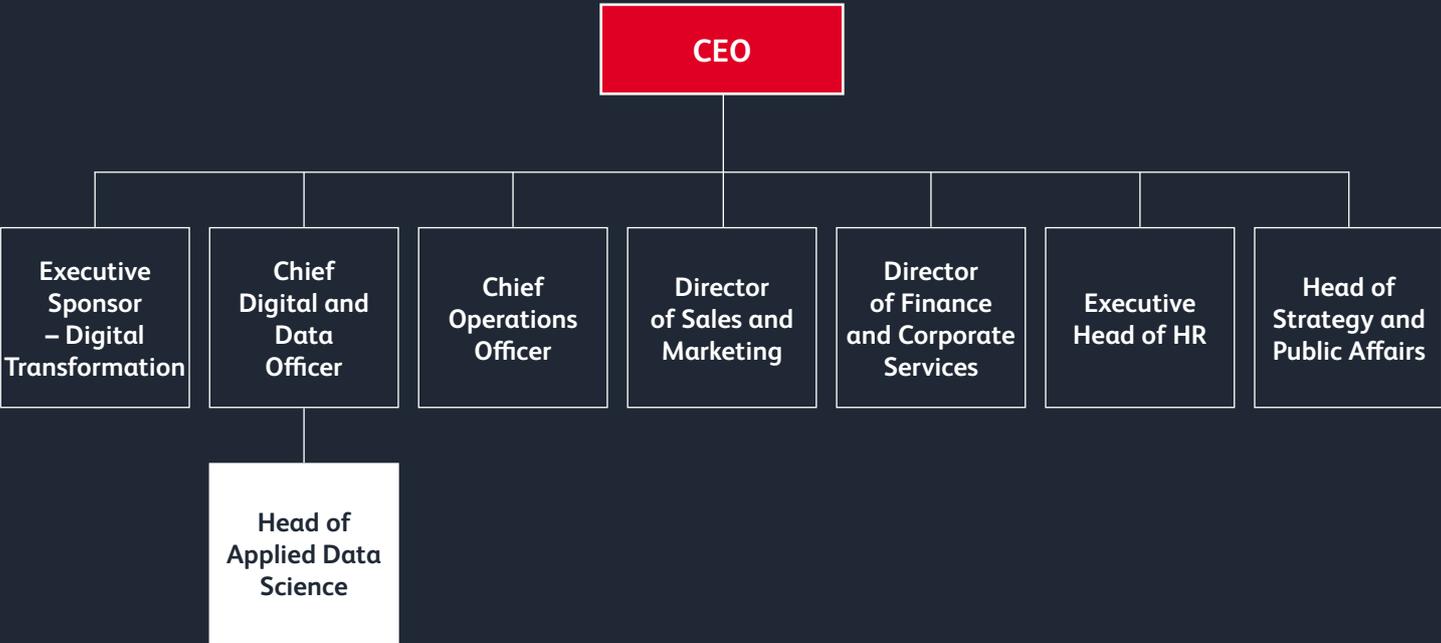**WITH UCAS YOU CAN thrive in a changing world**

THE OPPORTUNITY

UCAS is on a fast paced, digital development trajectory having just launched its new digital strategy to 2025. As Head of Applied Data Science, you will lead the implementation of the data product pipeline across UCAS, translating strategic product requirements into data science solutions, recommending best practices and opportunities for innovation, and assessing feasibility and ramifications of new business requirements. Providing technical data science vision and direction, combined with practical experience of bringing data products to life, you'll maximize the value of UCAS' data asset by empowering the data science team to build from our ambitious roadmap to deliver commercial growth and exceptional data products and services to UCAS customers.

EXECUTIVE TEAM STRUCTURE

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                              CEO
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| Executive Sponsor – Digital Transformation | Chief Digital and Data Officer | Chief Operations Officer | Director of Sales and Marketing | Director of Finance and Corporate Services | Executive Head of HR | Head of Strategy and Public Affairs |

Head of Applied Data Science

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

> Provide data science leadership and direction for the development and build of UCAS' data products and services and advising the business on how best to continually improve and deliver them through a data science led approach.

> Lead on best practice and innovative data science solutions to ensure UCAS is at the cutting edge of data products and services.

> Ensure that data product development is informed by a strong understanding of customer needs, and together with the Head of Product Engineering, Head of Product and product management function, resource data product delivery according to the agreed timescales.

> Working closely with the customer-facing teams, you will shape ideas into value-adding commercial propositions, including increased use of visualisation, personalisation and rich data presentation.

> Participate in and play a critical role in UCAS' digital and data leadership team, helping to drive company strategy at business scale.

> Future-proof the data science teams and its ability to deliver high quality, innovative data products and services through effective leadership and management of your staff, and their skills and capabilities. Enable staff to flourish, perform and achieve.

> Ensure that there is a clear line of sight between data science team activities and UCAS' corporate aims and objectives, ensuring that staff are clear on their purpose and deliverables.

> Build morale and motivation to bring out the best in your staff, enabling them to do the best work of their careers, while building and retaining critical skills and potential.

> Provide insight and direction to the ongoing development of UCAS' data platform and data architecture.

> Drive standardisation and automation in the development of data products, ensuring that they are sustainable operationally with the right skills and working practices in place.

> Foster a data science culture of technical excellence and professionalism, combined with customer insight and an acute awareness of value – continually reviewing best practice and ensures best in class data science capability.

WITH UCAS YOU CAN share our sense of purpose

PERSON SPECIFICATION

> Demonstrable experience of owning and executing a short- and long-term strategy for data products and services for commercial gain and customer value.

> Proven experience in delivering data science-based projects and products.

> Several years of professional experience in progressive advanced analytics.

> A strong academic record likely to include an advanced degree in data science and/or advanced analytics.

> Leads with a passion for data product development and empathises with UCAS customers, their requirements, and is driven to build data products that continually add value to customers' lives, and the issues that may prevent this.

> Commercially minded with a proven track record of growing the commercial value of a data product portfolio.

> Strong planning and organising skills, including the ability to manage several work streams simultaneously, while balancing business priorities and quality.

> Excellent communication skills with a capacity to present, discuss, and explain issues coherently and logically, both in writing and verbally.

> Demonstrates advanced knowledge of leadership concepts, practices and techniques, especially change management and leading culture change.

> Creative at heart, with the ability to encourage novel ways of thinking in their team.

> Excellent influencing and persuasion skills, with the ability to enthuse and inspire multi-disciplinary teams, and build successful relationships at all levels, including Executive and Board.

> Ability to balance conflicting and changing demands through prioritisation and a pragmatic approach.

> Demonstrates advanced knowledge of leadership concepts, practices and techniques, especially change management and leading culture change.

> Strives to build inclusive teams and a culture that respects and champions diversity.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Location: Cheltenham, but flexible working

Salary: A competitive salary, commensurate with the scope and complexity of the role, will be negotiated with the successful candidate. A benefits package will include annual leave of 30 days per year, generous employer pension contribution, free parking, on-site nursery, enhanced family leave for new parents, and use of our subsidised, gym and restaurant.

Terms: Full-time, permanent. UCAS is committed to hiring the best possible talent, irrespective of background or needs. Many of our staff work in many different ways, please talk to us at interview about any flexibility requirements or reasonable adjustments you may have.

WITH UCAS YOU CAN be a part of it
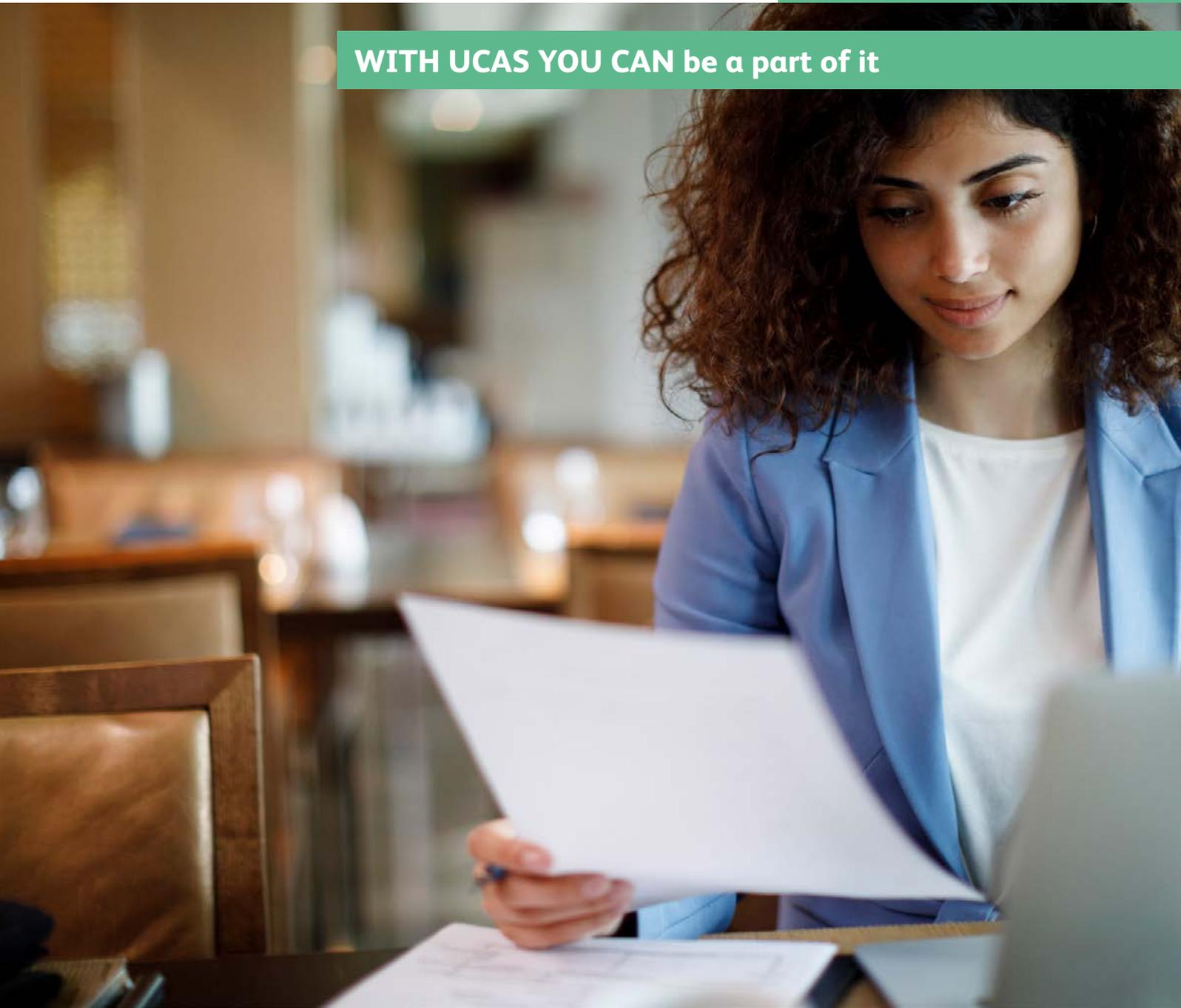
HOW TO APPLY

Apply on our website here.

You will receive an email confirming that your application has reached us. We endeavour to contact all candidates before or soon after the closing date.

The closing date for this role is 25 November 2020.

Interviews will be held on 1 December and 4 December 2020.

If you would like to discuss the role or terms further, please contact Hayley Histed our internal recruiter, at **h.histed@ucas.ac.uk**

UCAS