

Queen Margaret's

Escrick Park • York



Information for candidates
applying for the post of

**DIRECTOR OF
EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

graycell

TO BE BRIEF...

This job is a peach. A hard-working peach (so to speak) but a peach nonetheless, and in a delightful school which sets out to be 'the wind beneath the wings of the girls'.

QM is the last all-girls boarding school in the north of England. That tells you something about the market – but it tells you more about QM's attractiveness, resilience and management.

Nearly two years ago, the School carried out a comprehensive restructuring. It was a painful but necessary step to weather-proof QM against the winds of fortune. The School is now confident of controlling its own destiny. It can run happily at its present size of c270 pupils – and if you can garner another 20-30 it will be happier still.

So QM is, and will remain, a small school. This is a key strength: it is central to the individual care and family feel that our parents, pupils and staff value.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, you will work closely with our new Head and the senior staff to make sure the voice of the School's customers is heard and acted upon. In particular you will take the lead in developing and maintaining the relationships – eg with prospective pupils, their parents, feeder schools and international agents – that will secure a steady flow of good applicants. You can rely on a successful and experienced team of Admissions, Marketing and Development staff.

All this means that you:

- Are likely to have experience of Admissions in a school or university – or have a markedly strong rationale as to why your own experience is equivalent
- Are ready for a step up (or across) to Director level
- Have a marketing mindset and know what good customer care looks like, so that you can guide all staff in best practice (tactfully, of course – you're dealing with smart people; they may just not be as marketing-savvy as you)
- Are a creative thinker, willing to engage in robust debate and question why we do things the way we do
- Are a persuasive communicator in person, in public and in writing (for print or digital). This means you need to catch and exemplify the tone of the School. We're not stuffy, we don't mind if you use the Oxford comma, but you should at least be able to explain what it adds to your text (this is a school, after all)
- Don't need to be a designer, but you do need to have a good sense of how text and visuals can combine to express the qualities – the brand – of QM. In other words, you need to be able to brief a designer, and be confident about what works and what doesn't
- Are a nice person who will fit quickly into the life and spirit of the QM Family – and contribute to it.



ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Our recent inspection (April 2019) found the School to be excellent in all areas. QM was founded over 100 years ago and we are a traditional British boarding school – which is what our families want – but we are intent on looking forwards rather than back.

Overall, about 30% of pupils are from overseas – increasingly, from Europe – and, as you would expect, there are fewer in the younger years, more in the older ones. UK and international pupils are thoroughly integrated in the classroom (some of our best grades in English Language GCSE are gained by non-native speakers). So it is a successful mix, and we don't intend the proportions to change. You will share responsibility for overseas recruitment trips with the Head and other senior staff.

Boarding defines school life at QM. It means every minute of the girls' time can be purposeful (even if the purpose is just to relax among friends). And because they are in our care for 24 hours a day we can help, guide and watch over them in everything they do, outside the classroom as well as inside. This is how we fulfil our aim of developing the whole person.

There is no distinction in our mind between day and boarding; this is not a day school in disguise. Day girls are known as 'day boarders' because every one of them has her own bed here and regularly stays overnight.

The boarding houses are 'horizontal', with a separate boarding house for each year group (except for Years I and II, which share Red House). All girls also belong to a competitive House, eg for sports, and these are 'vertical' (mixed-age). The girls get the best of both worlds: they make lifelong friendships with their peers, while learning from those who are older and looking after those who are younger.

We talk of QM as being a family. These are not empty words: everyone knows everyone; everyone looks out for everyone. This is a conspicuously friendly school. Like any family, we deal with disagreements, of course, but we do so openly and kindly. We look to you to make yourself a full and active member of the family, joining in (for example) on some weekends and evenings.

Our parents are outstandingly supportive; other things apart, they understand that to be a successful school QM must also be a successful business. We keep in touch with families long after their daughters have flown our nest.

QM parents are eloquent in articulating the benefits of an all-girls education – and you will need to be, too. The old arguments about isolating girls from society (ie from boys) no longer stand up when you can contact anyone, any time, at the tap of a smartphone. Girls already leave QM ready to face the world. They have self-confidence and the academic grounding you would expect: typically over 40% of A Level entries gain A or A*. We have a strong story to tell, and you will play a major part in shaping and telling it.

Of course we can always do more. More on life skills to complement examination results and prepare girls for a competitive and changing world. More on identifying and

developing the unique capability that resides in each individual which means more opportunities for the girls to try out new activities, academic or otherwise. And more on acknowledging success, wherever it is to be found.

In the restructuring we asked hard questions of ourselves and accepted some hard answers. That intellectual discipline must stay with us. Why do we do X? Why do we do X in this way? Can we do X better? If that's how your mind works, we want to hear from you.

ABOUT THIS POST

What we do in External Relations, we do well. But that is yesterday's news. You will determine how we reach out to the market of tomorrow. That market includes potential applicants and their families; feeder schools; overseas agents; alumnae, past parents and former staff; and the whole of our present community – families and staff. Relationships with most of these groups and individuals are for the long term: an enquirer today may be the alumna, parent or donor of tomorrow (or indeed all three). Even the enquirer who enrolls elsewhere at age 11 may return for the Sixth Form.

Being efficient in handling these relationships is the least of it. First you may have to work out how to find and contact people; then engage them in the most friendly, helpful and effective way possible, from first to last.

You will be the brand guardian for QM (that's one reason why you are a member of the Senior Leadership Team) so you have to ensure that the School is consistent in what is said to the market and how it is expressed.

To emphasise, once more: your prime task, along with your marketing and admissions colleagues, is to take the number of high-quality pupils closer to 300 and keep it there.

With your events and alumnae colleagues you will run all School occasions, such as Speech Day. You are also responsible for the reunions and other activities for alumnae, and commercial lettings during the school holidays; both of these are areas that can be developed further.

As for development and fundraising, the focus here will be on bursaries: that is, financial assistance for families that could not otherwise afford our fees. QM is already more diverse than the term 'girls' boarding school' may suggest, and we want to keep it that way. This is both a good thing in its own right and a necessity, as the School must continue to demonstrate why it deserves charitable status. We have already started a Leavers' Appeal for bursaries whilst our Annual Fund generates support for smaller-scale activities and facilities. You will run both.

In all of this work you will need to earn the respect, understanding and support of the teachers. They know, at one level or another, that independent schools have to be business-like to prosper; and they know that 21st-century schools need 21st-century professional marketing. But if they had wanted to be marketers they would not be teachers. If you are already in education, you will know that it is not (like some sectors of commerce) a command economy, more a coax-and-cajole co-operative. You have to help the teachers to help you.

As Director you will also continue to develop the systems and processes that underpin External Relations work, including monitoring, measuring and reporting the results for internal and external scrutiny (eg by Governors, the Information Commissioner's Office or the Fundraising Regulator). The Governors' external relations committee is one existing channel of communication between you and them.

THE ROLE

You will bring leadership, strategic initiative and management to all aspects of Admissions, Marketing and Development. You will be building on the excellent work undertaken by our dedicated team in recent years.

You should ideally have significant experience of working with independent schools' admissions and marketing and/or in a customer-facing role in education or business. If you know about recruiting pupils from overseas, that will be an advantage. And if you also have a grasp of fundraising and alumnae relations, so much the better (if you don't, we can train and brief you).

Your External Relations colleagues are professionals who look to you to guide them and monitor them but otherwise trust them to do their job. You will understand when the best thing you can do to support your team is to be active and get stuck in. You will need to meet the School's growth targets for admissions, alumnae relations and, in time, fundraising.

Prove to us that you can inspire and gain the respect of all staff.

You will be a full member of the Senior Leadership Team and will work closely with them, in particular with the Bursar. You will report to the Head and will guide (and be guided by) a sub-committee of Governors.

Above all, we want someone who won't take anything for granted when it comes to how we promote our School.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following list, which is in order of priority for QM, is not exhaustive but is by way of example. Responsibilities and duties may vary as the position evolves.

Leadership and Management

You will:

- Line-manage six members of staff (two of whom job share):
 - Admissions Manager
 - Admissions Assistant (with responsibility for overseas recruitment)
 - Marketing Manager (job share)
 - Development and Events Manager
 - Development and Events Officer

Your team will give you administrative support.

- Ensure that line-management duties are carried out in accordance with employment law (our HR Team will provide specialist advice and support where required)

- Ensure all your Departments' activities are managed within budget
- Promote good practice across the whole School in all aspects of External Relations, supporting colleagues as required.

Admissions

You will:

- Lead the School in meeting its growth targets for UK and overseas pupil recruitment
- Systematically and regularly review and develop all aspects of the QM Admissions Policy and Procedures. You will continuously monitor the effectiveness of all admissions activities, ensuring in particular that enquiries are converted into enrolments
- Provide guidance to the Admissions Team in respect of:
 - Enquiries: building relationships and setting service standards as appropriate
 - Applications: ensuring that the whole customer experience of QM is both positive and memorable
 - Communication: ensuring all communication to prospective parents is in tune with the character and ethos of QM
 - Key metrics: analysis and reporting
 - Visits and open events: ensuring all staff understand their role in representing the School
 - Promotional events: ensuring that the visitor experience is of the highest quality
- Be a persuasive ambassador for the School at recruitment fairs and events for UK and overseas applicants
- Build and maintain relations with existing and prospective feeder schools, visiting them regularly
- Build and maintain relations with international agents and attend education events for overseas applicants both in the UK and abroad
- Monitor competitors: keeping abreast of competitor activity.

Marketing

You will:

- Lead the School in all aspects of marketing, branding, PR and communications
- Systematically and regularly review and develop all aspects of the QM Marketing and Communications Strategy and continuously monitor the effectiveness of all marketing, PR and communications activities
- Provide brand leadership and ensure that branding guidelines remain consistent with the values, personality and objectives of the School and are met consistently across the School
- Ensure that relations with current parents and other stakeholders are of the highest standard
- Provide guidance and support to the Marketing Team in respect of:
 - Marketing events: planning, delivery and evaluation

- Prospectus and all other promotional literature: planning, delivery and evaluation
- Local community, local and national media: fostering good relations and obtaining coverage
- Website and all social media: planning, delivery and evaluation
- Advertising and other promotional strategies: planning, delivery and evaluation
- Research among the wide range of stakeholders.

Development (QM Family Relations and Fundraising)

You will:

- Develop and deliver QM's four-year rolling Development Plan for fundraising, focussing on bursary funding
- Create, deliver and monitor the results of a programme to foster good relationships with members of the wider QM Family through an annual programme of events, visits, reunions and communications
- Embed fundraising and the culture of philanthropy as a natural and necessary part of the School's operations
- Cultivate excellent relationships with potential donors, motivating and guiding those who contribute to the Development operation – volunteers, staff and colleagues
- Oversee the management of the School's CRM system
- Give direction and momentum to identifying potential donors and support the Head and others in seeking major gifts
- Ensure policies are in place – and are followed – for accepting and recording gifts, thanking donors, and using gifts as the donors have stipulated
- Keep abreast of developments in the sector – eg charity law, tax-effective giving and the different means by which donors may give – so that you can advise donors on the best ways of supporting the School
- Establish and maintain due ethical standards in the Development operation, with a view to registration with the Fundraising Regulator.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Our Strong Preference

We are ideally looking for someone who has experience of education, especially student recruitment. However, if you can persuade us that your background and skills meet our criteria we'll be pleased to hear from you.

Essential

- Evidence of successful engagement and management of customers
- Proven ability to come up with creative solutions to business challenges
- The vision, energy and ability to motivate and lead others in a large and multifaceted environment
- The ability to take a strategic view

- Personal warmth and charisma, with a demonstrable ability to build rapport and communicate persuasively with people of different backgrounds and major influencers
- The ability to write clearly, convincingly and persuasively: whether in reports and proposals or in publicity that captures the spirit of QM
- The ability to adapt to new situations and address problems from new perspectives with resilience and good humour
- Excellent management of information and general organisational skills
- The ability to thrive in a high-workload environment and to be goal/target oriented
- Persistence in following through multiple projects over long periods
- An understanding of, and belief in, the aims and ethos of an independent girls-only education both in general and at QM in particular.



Attributes	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth understanding and appreciation of the principles of marketing and selling in an educational or related context Understanding of effective customer care and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working knowledge of fundraising and alumnae relations Experience of using a CRM database and managing content effectively.
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership of teams in multifaceted organisations Strategic planning and implementation at senior level Excellent written and oral communication skills Ability to interact well with people at all levels Ability to maintain a strong and cohesive team Budget management Competence in IT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events management Website management Familiarity with digital and social media Success working with and managing volunteers and major influencers.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful track record of meeting targets in an educational or business environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation of an Admissions Department in an educational organisation Experience of developing and delivering a fundraising strategy.
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated to degree level or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional qualification in marketing, admissions and/or fundraising Membership of a relevant professional body.
Personal Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willing to attend School events, including out of hours Willing to travel in the UK and overseas. 	
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and acceptance of the principles underlying equal opportunities, and commitment to them. 	

The External Relations Team wanted us to add: 'Must like biscuits. And cake.' But they meant, of course: 'Must grasp from day one that we like biscuits. And cake.'

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

QM would like the successful candidate to start as soon as possible. There will be a probationary period of six months.

Gross annual salary: c£55,000, dependent on the experience of the successful candidate.

Normal working hours are 40 per week, generally 08:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday, but flexibility will be required. There will be evening and weekend working as well as overseas travel. It will be possible to work from home on an occasional basis.

The holiday entitlement is 38 days (inclusive of statutory Bank Holidays). During term time holiday may be taken only at the discretion of the Head. The School can allocate up to five days of the holiday entitlement to dates that it will fix to meet School requirements – generally over the Christmas and New Year period.

BENEFITS

You will be working in a beautiful rural setting which is a stone's throw from York and therefore easily accessible from London and Manchester. The vibrant city of Leeds and charming town of Harrogate are also very easily reachable.

QM offers a contributory pension scheme with 8.4% employer and 6% employee contributions to a defined contribution plan.

Fee remission for your daughter(s) at the discretion of the Head.

Business class air travel for long flights immediately preceding a full meeting schedule.

Temporary accommodation may be available to assist with relocation.

Meals are provided whilst you are on duty in term time.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

To discuss this role in more detail please contact Davina Fairweather at Graycell Consulting on 07854 074830 or email davinafairweather@graycellconsulting.co.uk.

For an information pack please contact Claire Tonks, Head's PA on 01904 727621 or email ctonks@queenmargarets.com.

An application form can be found on the Queen Margaret's website www.queenmargarets.com. Please complete and return this to Davina Fairweather by emailing davinafairweather@graycellconsulting.co.uk.

TIMETABLE

The deadline for applications is close of business on Monday 23 September 2019.

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by telephone before Sunday 29 September 2019.

Interviews will take place in the week commencing Monday 7 October 2019.

We will take up references before the telephone interview. If you ask us not to contact your current employer, of course we shall not, but we shall still need to hear from one other referee.

QM is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to a DBS check.

NOTE

Although this document is designed to give a fair picture of the nature of the role and conditions of employment, it does not represent a legally binding contract. A separate contract of employment will be provided for that purpose upon receipt of references and acceptance of an oral offer made to the successful candidate.





QM

*Let your
journey begin.*

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QUEENMARGARETS.COM

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