

POSITION DESCRIPTION



HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

Job Title: Public Information Officer

Date: July 1, 2021
Department: Communications
Supervisor: Director of Communications and Strategic Projects
FLSA Status: Exempt
Supervisory: No direct supervision

Position Overview:

The Public Information Officer is responsible for crafting consistent, accurate responses to inquiries from external constituents; developing clear and accurate public information about HLC and its work; monitoring the use of HLC's name by others; and providing materials and information for institutions on how to promote their relationship with HLC. In addition, the Public Information Officer collaborates in the systematic improvement of designated processes and in developing and supporting HLC programs, services, and initiatives as assigned.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Acts as the spokesperson for HLC for interaction with the media
- Develops messaging and talking points in collaboration with the Director of Communications and Strategic Projects, Legal and Regulatory Affairs team, and HLC's President for dissemination of messages through media relations
- Develops relationships with trade reporters in higher education
- Facilitates HLC's crisis communications exercises for preparedness of the Executive Leadership Team
- Develops protocols for responding consistently and accurately to telephone and written inquiries from the public. Creates scripts and form responses for frequently asked questions and trains staff in the use of these tools
- Serves as a primary contact point on inquiries from external stakeholders. Determines the routes for inquiries to designated staff as appropriate and provides strategies for communicating responses. Shares information with other staff as appropriate. Develops and manages tracking systems on public inquiries
- Collaborates with others to develop clear and accurate public information about HLC, its work, and its affiliated institutions
- Provides advice and guidance to other members of the staff to develop strategies for dealing with high-profile institutions
- Develops clear instructions and materials for institutions in how they use HLC's name, promote their affiliation relationship, and announce accreditation events
- Monitors how institutions use HLC's name, promote their membership relationship, and announce accreditation events. Addresses problems arising from the institution's use of HLC's name, logo, and contact information
- Develops and implements penalties for institutions that do not comply with HLC expectations. Manages the use of HLC's Mark of Accreditation

- Identifies sources of information that are misleading or confusing to the public and identifies strategies for responding
- Identifies new and revised policies and procedures related to disseminating public information, including for social media outreach
- Provides support for the Communications Department
- Maintains technology skills needed for position and adapts to technology changes as required
- Performs other duties as assigned

Qualifications and Competencies:

- Bachelor's degree required
- Significant experience in media relations, message development
- Experience in crisis communication
- Experience providing valued customer service
- Experience in managing teams and the workflow
- Experience with standard office software, technology, and equipment
- Experience in working with internal and external groups and individuals
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrated time management and organizational skills
- Demonstrated flexibility, dependability, and responsibility
- Ability to multi-task and to work independently and collaboratively

Previously Revised: June 2014

The information in this position is intended to generally describe the duties and responsibilities and qualifications and competencies of the above-named position. This position is not an exhaustive list of all the responsibilities and requirements of the position. HLC reserves the right to modify this position description at any time.