



THE
BEDFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

Executive Director of Student Experience and Inclusion

ATTITUDES

KNOWLEDGE

SKILLS



Candidate Information Pack
January 2025
www.fea.co.uk/job/tbcg-sei/

Welcome

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Executive Director of Student Experience and Inclusion at The Bedford College Group (TBCG). The Group is the seventh largest further education college group in the sector by income and comprises seven distinct colleges with three further educational colleges, two sixth form colleges, one agricultural college and one national college for motorsport.

Our values are extremely important to us and keep the student at the heart of everything we do, but none more so than those of valuing teamwork, continuously improving, caring and inclusive, all of which sit at the heart of this role.

The successful candidate will develop and implement strategies to maximise student engagement, inclusion, support and well-being.

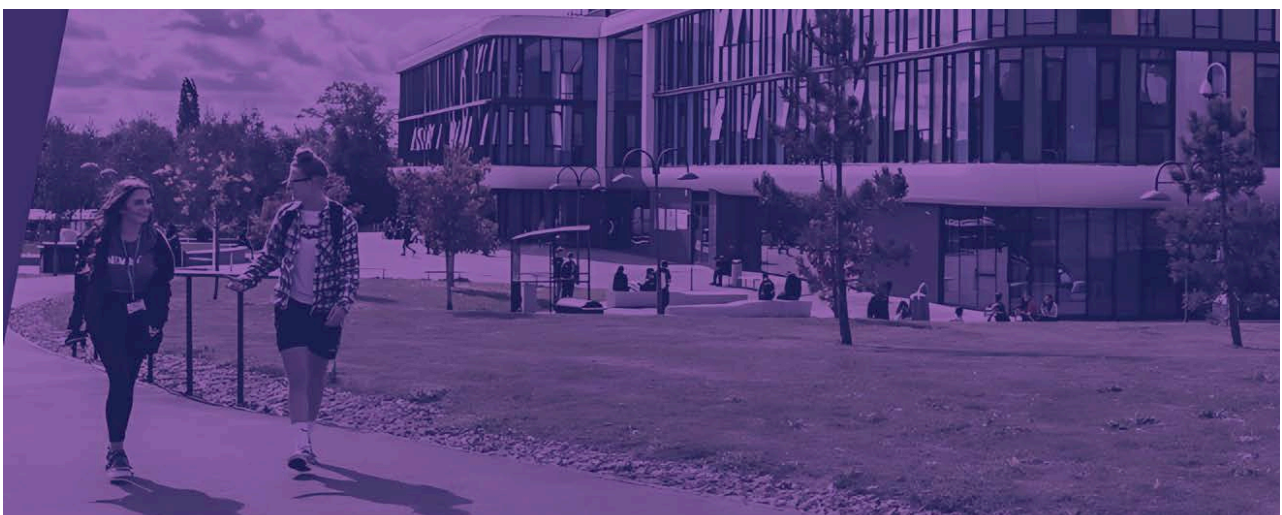
To succeed in this role, you will have a strong leadership background, excellent communication skills and a proven track record in enhancing student services. This role requires collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to foster a safe and positive learning environment, ensuring every student can achieve their full potential.

You will be coming to TBCG at an extremely exciting period of change, having joined as the new CEO in January 2024 the Group is being led with a passionate commitment to and vision of excellence that will take us forward in the next stage of TBCG's evolution.

Interested parties are strongly encouraged to contact our FE Associates recruitment partner, Suzanne.Thurlow@fea.co.uk, to arrange an initial discussion prior to submitting an application.

With best wishes

Yiannis Kouris
Group Chief Executive



About Us

TBCG is one of the largest FE providers in England and has grown rapidly in the last few years. Initially based on the old Bedford College site, through mergers and acquisitions, this year we have grown to have approximately 18,000 learners on multiple sites. In 2018, it successfully merged with Tresham College to create pan-Bedfordshire and North Northamptonshire provision based on the concept of developing regional market towns and this has been boosted by Central Bedfordshire College (CBC) deciding to join the Group in February 2023. The Group has an Ofsted judgement of 'good', having rapidly improved the quality rating of Tresham on merger. These developments mean that TBCG has geographical sites in Bedford, Kettering, Corby, Wellingborough, Silverstone (housing a specialist motorsport facility), Shuttleworth (a land-based campus) and CBC sites in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard.

Our strategic plan from 2022 to 2027 has a straightforward but challenging aim: 'to be the best and most authoritative further education provider in the South East Midlands'. This reflects both our current position as being the largest provider of FE in the region and also our ambition to be recognised as a system leader in national FE and a major source of civic leadership within our communities. TBCG is explicitly a regional institution and has no interest in being a national group or in growing for the sake of growth. Our rationale for expansion has been (and will continue to be) to achieve the benefits of regional integration and its location is a major strength sited, as it is, within the southern part of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and within easy commuting distance of London. Economic growth and employment opportunities are buoyant (under almost all economic models) and population growth and long-term demographic projections are strong. The region has genuine world-class employers with needs requiring world-class technical skills and TBCG is committed to



making a substantial contribution with regional partners to achieving this. We are also aware that advances in digital technology will change many aspects of how FE operates and we intend to be a leader in this area as well.

Notwithstanding such ambitions, TBCG will remain a values-driven institution with its students and the communities it serves at its heart and with a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (our strategic plan reaffirms this). TBCG has always striven to do what is best for its students and, thereby, to promote educational excellence by delivering programmes that stretch and challenge them. Continuing to enhance the quality of provision and student and employer satisfaction is at the heart of our strategic plan.

The strategic plan is available on our website and has been included on the FE Associates microsite for this role. The financial position of the Group is strong and it has a reputation in the sector for excellent financial management including having retained an ESFA financial rating of 'outstanding' for many years. Clearly, the national funding environment is difficult, particularly given inflation and the challenges of many aspects of staff recruitment and reward. Nonetheless, TBCG is better placed to weather such storms than the vast majority of the sector and we have a strong working relationship with our banks.

Our CEO, Yiannis Koursis OBE, continues to build on the Group's strong reputation, guiding us through the next phase of our journey. Yiannis has been transforming the lives of students for more than 17 years, having held senior roles in further education at colleges across the UK. In recognition of his exceptional contributions to social progress and development, he was awarded an OBE in 2022 and a fellowship from the Royal Society of Arts in 2020. Yiannis is a passionate national advocate for further education, championing its power to transform lives and tirelessly promoting the sector as a vital force for opportunity and growth.

We operate a model where each of our colleges has a designated Principal responsible for the day-to-day leadership of their respective campuses, ensuring the effective development and delivery of curriculum, teaching, and learning. The Business Development team, part of TBCG's professional services operations, is led at the Group level, serving the needs of stakeholders across each institutional region.



Job Description

Job title: Executive Director of Student Experience and Inclusion

Reports to: Principal/CEO

Direct reports: Group Director of Access and Inclusion, Group Director of Student Services, Group Head of EDI and Inclusion

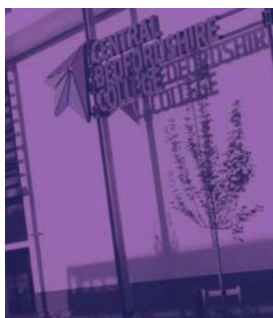
Salary: Competitive

Job Purpose

To provide strategic leadership and management of all aspects of the student experience and inclusion, ensuring a holistic and inclusive approach to safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion. The role focuses on enhancing the student experience across all campuses and provisions within The Bedford College Group (TBCG), ensuring students receive outstanding support and opportunities to achieve their potential.

Priorities

- This is an inspirational role to drive the student experience and inclusion agenda across the TBCG, demonstrating the attributes and behaviours of the TBCG's vision and values.
- To contribute to the development and implementation of strategies, plans and organisational climate, that will enable TBCG to be an outstanding college and exceed the expectations of its staff, learners and employers.
- Act as the Group's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- To ensure TBCG is agile to anticipate and respond to the educational landscape within the changing economic climate and to national, regional and local priorities. Ensuring TBCG is seen as an effective and responsive contributor to the communities it serves.
- To be an active and effective member of TBCG's Executive Team and to make a decisive contribution to the corporate development of TBCG.
- To build, develop and effectively manage the teams within the remit of the role using TBCG's performance management system to ensure high performance and business efficiency.



Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Strategy

- Develop and implement a comprehensive student experience strategy.
- Ensure the strategy aligns with The Bedford College Group's vision and strategic objectives.
- Collaborate with TBCG leaders, including those overseeing the tutorial programme and facilities, to deliver cohesive and impactful initiatives.
- Lead the development and implementation of policies and practices that promote a safe and inclusive environment for all learners.
- Ensure compliance with statutory obligations related to safeguarding and Prevent.

Student Support Services Management

- Oversee the provision of all student support services, including pastoral support, learner finance, enrichment, careers strategy, information, advice and guidance, work experience, learning resource centres and additional learning support.
- Ensure that all students have access to resources that support their progression and personal development.
- Lead and develop student wellbeing services, including information, advice and counselling.
- Develop comprehensive guidance, support and progression strategies, including pastoral care that supports high attendance.
- Manage services that provide a single point of reference for students for all aspects of their college experience.
- Lead timely and efficient assessment of student finance applications, including bursary funds.
- Coordinate high-quality support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers to facilitate their progression to higher learning or employment.
- Gather and address student feedback and ensure recruitment and career guidance promote access for underrepresented and vulnerable groups.
- Support and oversee the Student Union to ensure it represents and meets the needs of students.
- Oversee the design and implementation of a Personal Development (PD) programme that prepares students for future success.
- Ensure consistency in PD delivery across curriculum areas and oversee quality assurance and student progress monitoring.

Inclusion and Equality

- Promote and embed equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of the student experience.
- Ensure TBCG's values related to equity and inclusion are reflected in all policies and practices.
- Develop and lead initiatives to support learners with additional needs, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and codes of practice.
- Act as the primary liaison with statutory authorities and oversee safeguarding training and awareness for staff.
- Develop and review safeguarding practices to meet the highest standards and provide annual reports to the governing body.

Safeguarding

- Act as TBCG's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and effectively implemented.
- Provide regular reports on safeguarding to the executive team, governors and relevant committees.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Foster collaborative partnerships with external stakeholders, including local authorities, schools, employers and community organisations.
- Represent TBCG in relevant local, regional and national forums.

Team Management and Development

- Provide effective leadership and management within the Directorate, ensuring a high-quality provision.
- Ensure the effective performance of the team, providing support, mentorship and development opportunities.
- Ensure compliance with all statutory requirements, policies and procedures.

Quality Assurance

- Ensure continuous improvement in the quality of student services and the student experience.
- Implement effective quality assurance and monitoring processes.



College-Wide Responsibilities

- To attend other TBCG campuses for team management, meetings etc.
- To act as Duty Manager as assigned by rota.
- To support and participate in weekly ID checks and walk rounds.
- To support and participate in invigilation during exam periods.
- To support and participate in TBCG open days.
- To carry out investigations and disciplinary hearings as an independent Executive Director.

Statutory Duties

- **SAFEGUARDING** – To be responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and for raising any concerns in line with BCG policy and procedure.
- **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY** – To be responsible for promoting equality and diversity in line with BCG policy and procedure.
- **HEALTH & SAFETY** – To be responsible for following health and safety requirements in line with BCG policy and procedure.
- **TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT** – To participate proactively in training and development including any required qualification development.



Person Specification

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree level qualification.
- Safeguarding trained.

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualification in a relevant discipline.
- Level 5 management qualification.

Essential Experience

- Proven experience in a leadership role within the education/skills/training sector.
- Extensive experience in managing student services and delivering high-quality student experiences.
- Experience of managing quality systems and implementing quality improvement strategies.
- Experience of effective budget management and financial planning.
- Experience of working with external stakeholders and developing successful partnerships.

Essential Skills and Competencies

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal and people management skills.
- Strong organisational and project management skills.
- Excellent decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent numeracy and analysing skills.
- Knowledge of safeguarding legislation and best practices.
- Understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion principles.
- Proficiency in using IT systems, including Microsoft Office and relevant educational software.

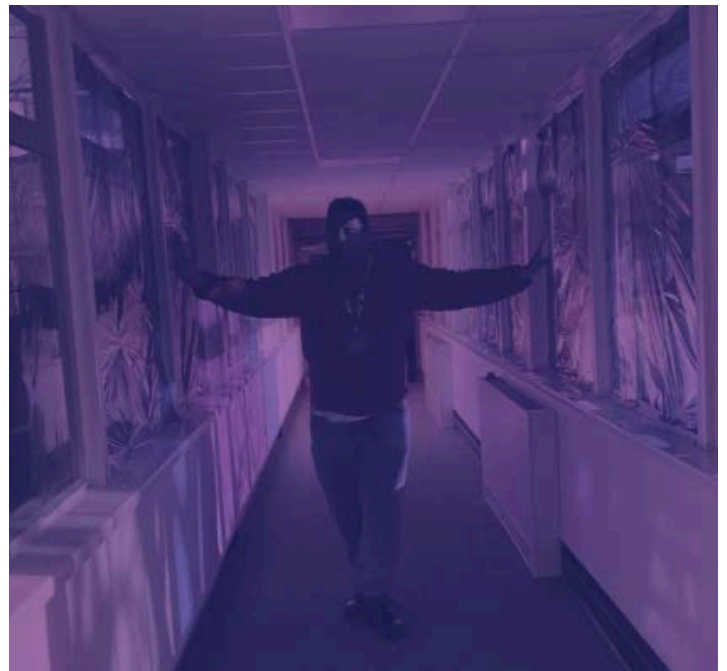


Personal Attributes

- Strong commitment to the values and mission of The Bedford College Group.
- High levels of integrity, honesty and transparency.
- Ability to work under pressure and adapt to changing demands.
- Ability to build and maintain professional relationships.
- Commitment to continuous personal and professional development.
- Ability to influence and inspire others.

Additional Requirements

- Flexible approach to working hours, as required by the needs of the Group.
- Ability to travel between campuses or locations, as needed. A clear understanding of the appropriate professional boundaries and relationships that should be formed and maintained with children and young people.



The Bedford College Group

Terms and Conditions

The appointed candidate will receive the following:

- a competitive salary
- 35 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- a pension through the local government pension scheme

Key Dates

Closing date for applications:	9am Thursday 13 February 2025
Shortlisting:	Monday 17 February 2025
Interview date:	Thursday 27 February 2025

The images used in this document are the copyright of The Bedford College Group; acknowledgement of that copyright is hereby given. All images are used with the permission of the owner and may not be used by third parties without permission of The Bedford College Group.

The Application Process

We have retained FE Associates to support us in finding an outstanding individual to inspire excellent practice across our organisation. The application process is outlined below.

Initial Discussion and Recorded First-Stage Teams Interview

Prior to submitting an application, interested parties are advised to arrange an initial conversation with our FE Associates lead consultant, by emailing Suzanne.Thurlow@fea.co.uk, to discuss the role before the closing date. Once it is agreed for you to proceed with an application, the lead consultant will schedule a first-stage interview via Teams with you which will take place before the closing date and will be recorded. Once this interview has been scheduled, you should submit your application. Please see the final page of this pack for full details on how to submit your application.

Shortlisting and Invitation to Interview

After the closing time/date, our lead consultant will send all applications and recorded first-stage discussions to the college for shortlisting. Once the shortlist has been agreed, candidates will be notified by the lead consultant and shortlisted candidates will be invited to a formal interview/selection process with the college.

Safer Recruitment and Due Diligence Checks

Applicants are advised that, as part of the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education, colleges/training providers are advised to make arrangements for an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. The searches are aimed to assist in identifying things said or done that may harm the organisation's reputation or make the candidate unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where a cause of concern arises from the online search, a risk assessment will determine whether the concern is of such a nature that it is appropriate to exclude a candidate from the process or whether a clarification discussion, before or during an interview, is needed.

This post is exempt from The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975 provides information about which convictions must be declared during job applications and related exceptions and further information about filtering offences can be found in the DBS filtering guide. The Bedford College Group's policy on the employment of ex-offenders is available upon request. Candidates who are barred from working with children are reminded that it is a criminal offence to apply for this post.



Having obtained the full information from <https://www.fea.co.uk/job/tbcg-sei/>, discussed the role with Suzanne Thurlow and scheduled your first-stage interview via Teams, you should email your application to recruitment@fea.co.uk in advance of the closing date and time (see Key Dates section). Applications received after this time will not be considered. Please note, CVs will not be accepted in place of, or in addition to, the application form.

Email Checklist

Please use the latest version of the application and ED forms found on the job page for this role and not older out-of-date versions. These forms are not compatible with IOS/MAC (Pages).

Ensure your email includes only the 2 forms necessary for your application (these forms are located with the candidate information pack on the FEA website jobs page for this role):

1. An Application Form with all sections completed including:

- An explanation of any gaps in your employment in **section 6**.
- A supporting statement which does not exceed the equivalent of 2 pages of A4 and is included as part of the form in **section 9** and not as a separate document. In this section, explain how you believe your knowledge, skills and experience match the criteria as stated in the person specification for this role (detailed in this candidate information pack).
- Please include 2 referees and their full postal and email addresses and their contact numbers in **section 10**. References are usually sought after the interview process and the college will not contact referees without your prior approval.
- Ensure you enter your name/e-signature and date in **section 11**.
- Save your completed form as a Word document with your surname, first name and the job reference as the filename i.e. Surname, First Name – tbcg-sei- Application.

2. The Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form.

- This is a Word format document. Please click **inside** each check box that applies to you.
- Once you have fully completed the form, please save this as a Word document with your surname, first name and the job reference as the filename i.e. Surname, First Name – tbcg-sei- ED.





THE
BEDFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

The Bedford College Group
Bedford College (registered office)
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AH

Tel: 01234 291000
bedfordcollegigroup.ac.uk

FEA **FE ASSOCIATES**

