

Job Description

Post Title: Programme Assurance Specialist

Directorate: Finance and Business Hub

Reports to: Programme Assurance Manager

Direct Reports: 0

Salary Band: SP36-SP40

Key Relationships: Finance and Business Hub, Project/Programme enabling services' subject matter experts, internal and external project/programme leads/SROs

Role Purpose

Provide professional 2nd line of defence programme assurance expertise across the West Midlands Combined Authority including external delivery partners. Acting as a trusted advisor and 'critical friend' providing specialist and objective advice and guidance.

The role leads on providing an independent assurance function and conducts maturity assessments of business cases against HM Treasury Green Book guidance and WMCA priorities; effectively demonstrating the five-case model is applied. In addition, the role is responsible for conducting Health Checks of Projects/Programmes that are in delivery.

A key role of this post will be working with internal and external Project/Programme leads and other subject matter experts to drive continuous improvement at a local and organisation level, to assist with the successful development and delivery of projects and programmes in accordance with WMCA's Single Assurance Framework (SAF).

Responsibilities

- Undertake complex assessments of the maturity of project/programme business cases against HM Treasury Green Book guidance and WMCA priorities; ensuring a clear, authoritative, objective and evidence-based approach is applied
- Develop and maintain an effective business case assessment tool that is aligned to HM Treasury Green Book guidance, WMCA priorities and industry best practice, to drive objectivity and consistency of assessment, reporting and ongoing improvement activity.
- Collaborate and engage with risk, performance, internal audit and other key enabling services' subject matter experts to ensure an integrated and risk-based approach is taken in the development and implementation of an annual health check plan and ongoing assurance activity.
- Undertake 'Health Checks' of Projects/Programmes in delivery, in accordance with an annual integrated risk-based Plan.
- Develop and maintain an effective Project/Programme Health Check tool that is aligned to industry best practice and bodies of knowledge including Association for Project Management (APM), Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA)
- Conduct effective and appropriate fieldwork to ensure accurate and evidence-based health checks are conducted of projects and programmes in delivery, This fieldwork will be an appropriate mix of desk-based and in person interviews.
- Develop and maintain an effective Project/Programme Health Check tool that is aligned to industry best practice and bodies of knowledge.
- Develop bespoke assurance arrangements, templates and reporting methodologies, as required, to support the development and delivery of effective Projects and Programmes.
- Use professional judgement and expertise, rooted in key project and programme management principles, to develop and agree comprehensive Assurance Observations Reports within agreed timescales, summarising evidence-based findings and appropriate recommendations.
- Maintain effective management information to provide accurate and up to date reporting and assurance insights to project/programme leads, directorate leads, Executive Board and Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee; making recommendations for improvement and escalating ongoing issues where appropriate.
- Build and maintain close working relationships with key and diverse stakeholders including internal and external project delivery leads, enabling services' subject matter experts and senior leaders.
- Provide specialist advice and guidance to Directorates, delivery leads and enabling services regarding business case development, WMCA Single Assurance Framework, Programme/Project management best practice and HM Treasury Green Book requirements
- Act as a subject matter expert in the field of project/programme assurance and management and maintain knowledge regarding the latest industry and government advancements, tools, techniques and guidance.
- Support ongoing continuous improvement activity across the Programme Assurance and Appraisal Team to help embed and drive compliance with the Single Assurance Framework and Project/Programme management best practice.

Person Specification

Please specify (X) whether the experience required is Essential (E) or Desirable (D)			Assessment Method		
Experience	E	D	App*	Int**	Other***
Experience of leading or developing assurance reviews with a view to driving organisational continuous improvement and managing risks to delivery	X		X	X	
Experience of capital and revenue programme / project delivery, ideally in the areas of local authority/wider Mayoral Combined Authority related projects		X	X	X	
Experience of developing programme assurance standards, tools and processes		X	X	X	
Skills/Knowledge/Abilities	E	D	App	Int	Other
Ability to communicate, influence and negotiate across all levels and roles (including external delivery leads) and bring issues to resolution	X		X	X	
Excellent verbal and interpersonal communication skills with an ability to deliver briefings/presentations and challenging findings/recommendations	X		X	X	
Exhibit a high degree of proactivity and creative thinking when faced with challenges requiring resolution	X		X	X	
Excellent written and analytical skills with the ability to summarise complex information succinctly and clearly to senior managers and WMCA decision-makers	X		X	X	
Ability to plan and coordinate multiple activities simultaneously whilst managing time and resource accordingly and maintaining high quality outputs and positive outcomes	X		X	X	
Demonstrate specialist best practice assurance and project/programme management knowledge with the ability to influence and drive improvement	X		X	X	
Ability to build effective relationships with internal/external stakeholders at every level within an organisation, building trust and confidence in assurance activity and feedback	X		X	X	
Knowledge of HM Treasury Green Book and the five-case model		X	X	X	
Knowledge of Programme Assurance best practice e.g. tools and guidance developed by the Association for Project Management (APM), and Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA)		X	X	X	
Experience of using MS Office suite of applications	X		X	X	
Qualifications/ Professional Memberships	E	D	App	Int	Other
Degree level or equivalent	X		X		
PRINCE 2 Practitioner or equivalent		X	X		
Managing Successful Programmes Foundation/Practitioner		X	X		
P30 Foundation/Practitioner		X	X		
Assurance Practitioner training		X	X		X
Better Business Case (HMT Green Book) Foundation/ Practitioner training		X	X		X

* Application

** Interview

*** Details will be shared at interview stage

Core Expectations

Our culture is underpinned by what we do and how we do it. Our behaviours outline the ways we need to work to deliver success, become truly inclusive, and make the organisation somewhere where everyone can give their best contribution.

Value	Competency	Behaviour
Collaborative	Team Focused	Works as part of team, managing and leading.
	Service Driven	Customer, resident and partner focused.
Driven	Empowered & Accountable	Takes ownership and leads when needed.
	Performance Focused	Ambitious and going the extra mile.
Inclusive	'One Organisation' Mindset	Believe in each other's expertise.
	Open & Honest	We do what we say we are going to do.
Innovative	Forward Thinking	Embrace change and open to new possibilities.
	Problem Solving	Go for clear and simple whenever possible.

Health and Safety

All employees have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work; and co-operate with their employer so far as is necessary to enable it to successfully discharge its own responsibilities in relation to health and safety.

Equality and Diversity

To promote and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of the role

Learning and Development

To participate in and take responsibility of any learning and development required to carry out this role effectively.

Performance Management

To actively engage in the performance management process and take responsibility for managing performance outcomes.

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

To ensure the reasonable and proportionate protection, processing, sharing and storing of WMCA information in accordance with the relevant legislation, corporate policies, and in the best interests of the data subjects (Data Protection/GDPR), the WMCA, our partners, and the West Midlands, in all aspects of the role.

Other

There may be a requirement to work outside normal office hours on occasion to meet work deadlines, give presentations, attend meetings etc., including a requirement to work within stakeholder and partner offices within the WMCA Constituent area on a regular basis