

Hills Road Sixth Form College

Appointment of: Head of Careers

Location: Cambridge



Shape
the
future



Hills Road
Sixth Form College
Cambridge



Welcome from the Principal

Thank you for your interest in Hills Road Sixth Form College and in this post. We really hope that the information in this booklet will support you in making an application to our College and will provide all you need for deciding whether we're right for your next career step. We hope we are!

Choosing an institution where you find a fit in terms of ethos and values is hugely important. Hills Road Sixth Form College enjoys a strong national reputation, having topped Sixth Form College performance league tables for many years. But that doesn't make us complacent. We still want to improve the ways in which we work with young people to get the best for them and from them, whatever that might take.

We are therefore looking for a colleague to join us who shares that drive and wants to ensure that the department they are joining continues to achieve excellent outcomes. Everything we achieve relies on the quality and commitment of our staff team, whatever their role in the College, and we are keen to recruit colleagues for whom excellence comes as standard. Excellence is one of our six core staff values, together with Kindness, Integrity, Diversity, Respect and Community. We want you to know that you will be joining a diverse, welcoming community where you will continue to grow professionally. We are lucky to have colleagues here who are not only committed to our values but also to young people and the potential within each one of them to be brilliant at something they've not yet tried.

As a busy, vibrant community with around 2,970 young people, there's always a great deal going on and lots to be part of and take part in. Extra-curricular opportunities abound and we hope you will want to get involved with the extraordinary range of activities that is on offer. We have an on-site sports centre, including a fully equipped gym, plus squash and tennis courts, to which all staff colleagues have free membership, and our staff wellbeing programme includes access to on-site talking therapy, fitness and relaxation sessions. If you would like to talk through a prospective application or to explore the College's ethos and values a little more, please don't hesitate to make contact for an informal chat.

Finally, I do appreciate the time commitment involved in completing a job application and, if you do decide to apply, can I thank you for the investment of time you have chosen to make. Whatever the outcome, can I wish you all the very best with your future career, wherever that may be.

With very best wishes

Jo Trump
Principal

Head of Careers

Permanent, from 20 August 2026

4 days (30 hours) to 5 days (37 hours), dependent on candidate preference

Term time + additional 10 days*

Support Staff Spine Point 35 (£54,711 per annum FTE): 37 hours per week - £49,044 per annum pro rata, or 30 hours per week - £39,765 per annum pro rata

Hills Road Sixth Form College is seeking an experienced, forward-thinking and student-centred Head of Careers to lead our Careers Department. This is a key leadership role within the College's Guidance team, ensuring every student has access to high quality information, advice and guidance, and the support they need to make informed decisions about their futures.

This is an important time to be joining the College. The Head of Careers will provide strategic leadership, manage a dedicated team, and oversee all aspects of careers provision alongside ensuring the support and guidance remains future focussed and is supported by wide external collaboration and engagement.

We offer a wide range of competitive benefits including a generous pension scheme, free use of the College sporting facilities, local discounts, free on-site parking, cycle-to-work scheme, and discounts on all Adult Education courses.

Closing date: Monday 23rd February 2026 at 9am

Interviews: w/c Monday 2nd March 2026

Details and an application form for the above post may be obtained from our website www.hillsroad.ac.uk

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and staff and expects all members of the College community, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment. The College actively promotes equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Information for applicants

The Post

The Head of Careers will lead a well-established, high-performing department with a clear focus on supporting students' progression to higher education, apprenticeships, employment and other post-18 pathways. With nearly 3,000 students, Hills Road requires a careers leader who can combine strategic thinking with operational excellence, ensuring that all students receive outstanding guidance and that the College meets and exceeds national expectations.

The role is varied and impactful. The Head of Careers will oversee the UCAS process, develop employer and university partnerships, expand work experience opportunities, promote apprenticeships and specialist pathways and ensure targeted support for priority groups. They will also lead on innovation, integrating digital and AI-enabled tools, virtual work experience and emerging labour-market insights.

The Department

The Head of Careers reports to the Vice Principal – Student Progression and Support and leads a committed Careers team. The department plays a central role in the pastoral and progression work of the College, collaborating closely with Progress and Support Tutors, Student Services, Study Skills, the Development Office and a host of external providers.

We hope this booklet provides a clear sense of the role and the opportunities available. If you have any questions about the post or the person specification, please contact me using the details below.

I should like to thank you in advance for your interest in this post and in our College. We hope very much that you will be interested in joining us.

Tim Lomas

Vice Principal- Student Progression and Support

tlomas@hrsfc.ac.uk

Job Description

Head of Careers at Hills Road Sixth Form College

Purpose: To lead the Careers Department so that every student, whatever their background or needs, has access to excellent information, advice and guidance. The aim is to enable students to make well informed decisions about their future beyond Hills Road and to develop the career management skills they need for success.

Reports to: Vice Principal – Student Progression and Support

Main Accountabilities:

Strategic Leadership and Compliance

- Provide strategic leadership for the Careers Department and ensure careers education is embedded across the college
- Ensure compliance with Department for Education statutory guidance and delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks
- Review and evaluate the Careers Programme, Strategy and Policy and lead the annual departmental self-assessment
- Advise the College Strategy Team (CST) and Trustees on policy, strategy and resources for careers education and guidance
- Horizon scan for developments in careers education and integrate innovative methods and technologies such as AI tools, immersive headsets, virtual work experience and online mentoring platforms
- Train and embed awareness of future skills opportunities including AI, green jobs, sustainability and the digital economy
- Benchmark provision against national and international best practice and report progress to senior leaders and trustees

Team Leadership and Programme Delivery

- Recruit, retain and develop the Careers team to deliver an excellent service and ensure continuous professional development for the team and self
- Oversee the UCAS process and ensure high quality support for competitive and specialist pathways
- Lead careers events and employer engagement activities
- Ensure all students can access personal careers guidance and that vulnerable groups receive targeted support

- Ensure every student receives their Study Programme entitlement to work experience or work related learning, including accurate recording of placements alongside provision of virtual work experience
- Develop a structured programme of workshops and webinars for students and parents and lead a clear parental engagement strategy
- Ensure safeguarding compliance for all careers activities including external speakers, work experience and virtual events

Employer Engagement and External Partnerships

- Develop strong links with employers, apprenticeship providers, universities and professional bodies to create opportunities for students
- Work with the Development Director to build an active alumni network that raises aspiration and supports events and mentoring
- Establish an Advisory Board of employers and alumni to help shape careers strategy and provision
- Work with local organisations, employers and alumni to promote opportunities in sustainability and green industries
- Maintain current knowledge of admissions and recruitment trends and use external networks to inform and improve the college offer

Quality Assurance and Impact

- Track and report student destinations accurately for national returns and for CST and Trustees, using data analytics to evaluate impact and inform strategy
- Provide regular impact reports to senior leaders and governors on careers outcomes and progression trends
- Monitor access to and effectiveness of careers guidance and events and use data to target support and improve provision
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of careers education and guidance, with a clear focus on social mobility and widening participation
- Maintain the recognised sector kitemarks (e.g. Careers Quality Award) and ensure continuous improvement against recognised standards

Accountabilities that relate to all staff at the College

- To demonstrate behaviour and values consistent with the person specification for this role
- To promote equality of opportunity in accordance with the College's Equality and Diversity Statement
- To comply with all College policies and procedures, this includes those where each member of staff has an individual duty to act and for which the College can be held vicariously responsible for the actions of its employees:

- equality and diversity
- safeguarding the welfare of children
- health and safety

In addition to 30 to 37.5 hours per week, term time only, the Head of Careers will also be required to work for 10 additional days in order to carry out the duties required. Specifically, this will include the five days either side (Wednesday to Tuesday) of the A level results publication each August.

Person Specification for Head of Careers

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A degree or equivalent qualification • A level 6 qualification in careers education, information, advice and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A level 7 qualification in careers education, information, advice and guidance with QCG • A certificate in Careers Leadership (Level 6)
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful experience in careers information, education and guidance work • Evidence of strong organisational abilities, including attention to detail • Evidence of continuing professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of managing and leading a team • Experience of developing innovative careers programmes using digital tools and technologies

In addition, the successful candidate will demonstrate, or have potential to develop, strengths in the following areas. Evidence will be established from the application form, CV, covering letter, references, the interview or a combination of these.

Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to lead, motivate and support colleagues • Ability to contribute effectively to team work • Ability to prioritise and remain calm under pressure • Strong problem solving skills • Excellent written and oral communication skills • Competent IT skills • Ability to interpret and use data to measure impact and inform strategic decisions
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of post-16 and post-18 careers pathways including employment, apprenticeships, higher education and UCAS processes • Understanding of Gatsby Benchmarks and statutory guidance • Awareness of future skills including AI, green jobs, sustainability and the digital economy
Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organised and able to manage own time effectively to meet deadlines
Disposition and Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to relate well to staff and students • Commitment to collaborative teamwork • Ability to work methodically and remain calm under pressure • Enthusiasm and a proactive, innovative approach • Open and approachable manner • Tact and sensitivity in dealing with others • Empathy with 16–19 students and understanding of their aspirations and challenges
Focus on Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to high standards of work and accuracy with close attention to detail • Commitment to continuous improvement and willingness to attend training and development events

How to Apply

Applicants are asked to do the following:

- complete the online Hills Road Sixth Form College application form (Part 1)
- complete the online equality and diversity monitoring form (Part 2)
- write a supporting statement of application (no more than 1,000 words)
- supply a brief CV

The online application forms (Parts 1 and 2) are available on the College's webpage for this vacancy. When completing Part 1, you will have the opportunity to upload your CV and provide a Supporting Statement of Application. Once you have submitted Part 1, you should then proceed to Part 2 (Equality and Diversity Monitoring form). All documents should be submitted by **9am on Monday 23rd February 2026**.

Please note that applications received after the closing date may not be eligible for consideration. If Human Resources have not contacted you by Thursday 26th February, then unfortunately your application has not been successful.

Interviews will be held during w/c Monday 2nd March 2026.

Hills Road Sixth Form College will base its decision as to whether to invite you for interview solely on the details provided on your application and how well they match the criteria for this post.

In accordance with Home Office guidance, successful candidates will be required to evidence their right to work in the UK before commencement of employment. The successful candidate therefore must be able to demonstrate their right to work during the recruitment process.

Hills Road Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and selects staff on merit, irrespective of race, religion, sex, disability or age. You are not obliged to complete the equal opportunities monitoring form, but any information given will help us to monitor the effectiveness of our equality and diversity policy.

If you have a disability, you are invited to request any special arrangements you may require for interview, or any adjustments you may anticipate would be needed in your working arrangements, by contacting the Human Resources Team on 01223 278063 (direct line). Further information about accessibility to the site can be found on our website under 'Equality and Diversity/Site Plan' and also from 'AccessAble': www.accessable.co.uk.

Thank you for your interest in this post and in the College. We do hope that you will decide to apply, and we should like to thank you in advance for taking the time and trouble to do so. For more information about working life at the College, please go to our website <http://www.hillsroad.ac.uk>

Human Resources



**Shaping the
future through
opportunity,
quality and
achievement**



**Supported
by a caring
and learning
community.**

