

## FURTHER PARTICULARS OF ROLE

### Vice Principal – Education, Skills and Learner Success

Edinburgh / Hybrid

Permanent / full time

£102,844 – £130,542 per annum

Reference: AWP/EXE/O40/26

Closing date: midnight on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2026

#### DEPARTMENT

Executive Leadership Team

#### ROLE REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Detailed below are the job description, person specification and qualifications listing the essential and desirable requirements for the post, which will be used as the basis for shortlisting.

#### About the team

The ELT support the Principal & CEO in leading SRUC towards its strategic objectives to achieve its vision of becoming Scotland's Enterprise University at the heart of our sustainable natural economy by creating and mobilising knowledge & talent. Partnering locally and globally to benefit Scotland's natural economy.

Members of the ELT will:

- take an institutional and strategic approach to collaborative executive team working
- drive and make significant contributions to strategy and decision making which enhances both academic and business-related performance across SRUC
- provide sound advice to the Principal & CEO, SRUC Board and other Senior Leadership/Management colleagues
- ensure that an effective service is provided to the wider organisation, including during major organisational change initiatives.
- be accountable to the Principal & CEO but will work mainly autonomously in their own operational domain but will also be responsible for driving culture change and process changes through collaborative working across the ELT.

#### About the role

SRUC is seeking an exceptional and visionary leader for the newly created role of **Vice Principal (Education, Skills and Learner Success)**. As SRUC's senior education leader and a

member of the Executive Leadership Team, the postholder will shape and deliver a bold vision for education, driving excellence in student experience, educational quality, innovation and institutional performance while supporting the delivery of SRUC's strategic ambitions.

The Vice Principal will provide strategic leadership for education across SRUC, leading the development of a future-focused, multi-modal tertiary portfolio that responds to evolving learner needs, employer demand and opportunities within the natural economy. Combining strategic vision with strong execution and change leadership, the postholder will deliver organisational, cultural and technological transformation that strengthens SRUC's position as a leading tertiary institution.

Working collaboratively across the organisation and with external partners, the postholder will lead the development of a distinctive tertiary enterprise university model that integrates education, research, innovation, knowledge exchange and industry engagement to maximise impact for learners, employers and the sectors SRUC serves.

The Vice Principal will also act as a senior ambassador for SRUC, building strategic relationships across government, funding bodies, sector agencies, industry and international partners. The postholder will strengthen SRUC's influence, profile and partnerships, ensuring the institution plays a leading role in shaping the future of tertiary education, skills development and workforce priorities.

Championing a student-centred approach, the Vice Principal will ensure students are supported to thrive academically, personally and professionally throughout their journey. Key priorities will include enhancing the quality and relevance of education, promoting engagement, belonging and wellbeing, improving retention, progression and outcomes, and ensuring equitable opportunities for all learners to succeed.

## **Key Responsibilities:**

### **Strategic Leadership and Transformation**

- Lead the strategic development and delivery of SRUC's education, skills and student experience agenda, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities and long-term ambitions.
- Shape and oversee a future-focused educational portfolio that responds to learner demand, industry needs, workforce priorities and opportunities within the natural economy.
- Provide executive leadership for major organisational, cultural and technological transformation programmes that enhance institutional performance, sustainability and impact.
- Ensure effective alignment across education, research, innovation, knowledge exchange and industry engagement to deliver a distinctive and integrated SRUC offer.

### **Educational Strategy and Performance**

- Set the strategic direction for educational excellence, student success and portfolio development, ensuring appropriate frameworks, governance and accountability are in place to deliver high-quality outcomes.
- Oversee institutional educational performance, using data, insight and evidence to inform strategic decision-making, prioritisation and continuous improvement.
- Ensure SRUC's educational provision remains relevant, innovative and responsive to current and future learner, employer and sector needs.
- Ensure robust institutional arrangements for academic quality, standards, regulatory compliance and external assurance, maintaining confidence in SRUC's educational provision.

### **Student Experience and Success**

- Champion an institution-wide commitment to student success, ensuring the needs and experiences of learners are reflected in strategic priorities and decision-making.
- Influence and shape the development of a high-quality student experience across the learner journey through effective partnership with academic and professional service colleagues.
- Promote collaboration across SRUC to improve student engagement, wellbeing, retention, progression and graduate outcomes.
- Ensure equity, inclusion and student voice are embedded within institutional planning, performance and improvement activities.

### **Academic Leadership and Capability Development**

- Provide strategic leadership to the academic schools, working with Heads of School and senior academic leaders to deliver institutional priorities, educational excellence and sustainable performance.
- Foster a culture of academic excellence, innovation, collaboration and continuous improvement across SRUC.
- Ensure the development of the leadership, capability and organisational capacity required to deliver SRUC's educational ambitions, including digital and AI-enabled transformation.
- Support the development of high-performing academic teams and leadership capability, promoting succession planning, talent development and a culture of continuous learning.

### **Research, Employability and Partnerships**

- Ensure SRUC's educational portfolio is informed by research, innovation, knowledge exchange and emerging sector priorities.
- Provide strategic oversight of employability, enterprise, entrepreneurship and work-integrated learning to ensure graduates are equipped with the skills and capabilities required by industry and society.
- Develop and strengthen strategic partnerships with employers, professional bodies, universities and other stakeholders to enhance opportunities for learners, support portfolio development and strengthen SRUC's reputation and influence.

- Maximise the contribution of research, innovation and knowledge exchange to SRUC's educational distinctiveness, impact and growth.
- Strengthen engagement with employers, industry and professional bodies to inform strategic portfolio development and enhance institutional impact.

### Strategic Influence, Partnerships and External Engagement

- Lead SRUC's engagement with key external stakeholders, strengthening institutional influence, profile and impact.
- Influence national policy, funding and sector developments to advance SRUC's strategic ambitions and strengthen its position within the tertiary education landscape.
- Develop strategic partnerships that drive growth, innovation, opportunity and long-term value.
- Represent SRUC at the highest levels of government, education, industry and professional networks.
- Establish SRUC as a leading voice in tertiary education, skills and workforce development.

### Leadership, Governance and Resources

- Contribute fully as a member of the Executive Leadership Team, shaping institutional strategy, culture and organisational performance.
- Provide inspirational leadership that fosters collaboration, shared accountability and high performance across the organisation.
- Ensure resources, structures and capabilities are aligned to deliver SRUC's educational ambitions and strategic priorities.
- Promote a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and partnership working across SRUC.

### Operating Principles

Responsibilities will be delivered under the following principles:

- **Learner First:** Place learner success, experience and outcomes at the centre of decision-making.
- **Research-Informed Education:** Integrate teaching, research, innovation and knowledge exchange to enhance academic excellence.
- **Future Focused:** Anticipate and respond to changing learner, industry and workforce needs.
- **Evidence Led:** Use data and insight to inform strategy, performance and improvement.
- **Collaborative Impact:** Work across SRUC and with partners to maximise educational, academic and economic impact.
- **Excellence Through Innovation:** Foster innovation, continuous improvement and transformational approaches that enhance educational quality, student outcomes and institutional performance.
- **Inclusive Leadership:** Champion equality, diversity, inclusion and equity of opportunity, creating an environment in which all learners and colleagues can thrive and achieve their full potential.

## Scope

- Reports to the Principal & CEO.
- Serves as a member of the Executive Leadership Team with responsibility for educational model, educational performance and learner success.
- Acts as SRUC's senior education leader, providing strategic leadership to the academic schools.
- Works collaboratively with SRUC leads across research, innovation and commercialisation to maximise the impact of SRUC's academic, research and innovation strengths...
- Serves as a principal ambassador for SRUC with government, funding bodies, sector agencies, industry and strategic partners.
- Line manages the Heads of School and other designated academic leadership roles.
- Acts as the Executive Leadership Team lead for education strategy, portfolio development, educational quality and learner success across SRUC.
- Provides advice and recommendations to the Principal & CEO, Executive Leadership Team and SRUC Board on academic performance and educational strategy.
- Provides strategic direction to ensure alignment between education, research, innovation and institutional priorities
- Accountable for the effective deployment of resources and delivery of agreed educational objectives.
- Leadership and line management responsibility for key areas within scope.

The post-holder will perform additional duties as directed from time to time by the Line Manager. The post holder must use their initiative in the conduct of their work and apply sound judgement at all times to ensure that they conduct themselves within the framework of SRUC regulations and procedures.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

| Competencies                 | Essential                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Desirable                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Education/<br>Qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educated to PhD level in a related role with experience operating at a senior professorial level and a recognised record of academic achievement.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional qualifications relevant to education, leadership or organisational development are desirable.</li> </ul> |
| Skills/ Abilities            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong capability in data-informed decision-making, performance monitoring, strategic planning, resource allocation and budget management.</li> <li>• Ability to translate strategic vision into measurable educational and organisational outcomes.</li> <li>• Ability to lead educational innovation, portfolio development and institutional transformation.</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                |

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|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to engage, influence and unite diverse stakeholders behind a shared vision for educational excellence and student success.</li> <li>• Excellent communication, negotiation and relationship-building skills.</li> <li>• Strong analytical, problem-solving and decision-making capability.</li> <li>• Ability to manage complexity and ambiguity while maintaining focus on strategic priorities and learner outcomes.</li> <li>• Strong change leadership skills, driving cultural, organisational and technological transformation.</li> <li>• Ability to challenge the status quo sensitively and constructively.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
| Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrable experience leading education, curriculum and academic strategy within a large and complex tertiary, higher or further education environment.</li> <li>• Significant senior academic leadership experience with responsibility for educational quality, student success, organisational performance and continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Proven track record of developing and delivering innovative educational strategies, including multi-modal, flexible and digitally enabled curriculum transformation.</li> <li>• Experience leading institution-wide educational portfolio development and organisational change, successfully navigating cultural, technological and sector-wide transitions.</li> <li>• Significant experience leading large and complex academic teams through change, innovation and transformation, fostering a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Proven success in enhancing educational quality, student outcomes, continuation, progression and overall institutional performance.</li> <li>• Extensive experience engaging, influencing and building strategic partnerships with students, staff,</li> </ul> |  |

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|                    | <p>governing bodies, academic boards, employers, industry partners, universities and external agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant leadership experience with credibility and influence at Executive, Board and governing body level.</li> <li>• Demonstrable experience of influencing policy, funding or strategic developments within the tertiary education sector.</li> <li>• Experience of representing an institution at senior level with government, funding or sector bodies.</li> </ul> |  |
| Knowledge          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong understanding of the relationship between education, research, innovation, skills development and employability.</li> <li>• Knowledge and experience of FE and HE funding systems.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
| Other Requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An inclusive and inspirational leader.</li> <li>• Commitment to people development and the embedding of organisational values.</li> <li>• Commitment to advancing diversity, inclusion and equity of opportunity.</li> <li>• A collaborative leadership style.</li> <li>• High levels of integrity, openness and honesty.</li> <li>• High levels of resilience and emotional intelligence.</li> </ul>                                                                                   |  |

## BRIEF STATEMENT OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

### EMPLOYER (Head Office)

SRUC, King's Buildings, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JG

### GRADE AND SALARY

The appointment will be made on one of the ELT scales:

£102,844 – £130,542 per annum

SRUC operates a Salary Journey Policy designed to support fair and consistent pay progression. If appropriate, on successfully completing a probationary period of 9 months, you will receive a salary rise up to the mid-point of the appointed scale. If appropriate, after a further 12 months, you will move to the top of the scale. The timing

and level of progression will be determined in accordance with the Salary Journey Policy and may take into account relevant experience and performance.

Salary scales are reviewed annually from 1 August each year.

To support SRUC's journey to become an enterprise university at the heart of the rural economy, we are currently in the process of reviewing our existing pay and grading structure. It should therefore be noted that the details provided in this document are subject to change pending the outcome of this review.

## CONTRACT TYPE

Permanent

## HOURS

Full-Time, 35 hours per week. Nominally: 0900–1700 Monday to Friday, with a 1 hr unpaid lunch break

## ANNUAL LEAVE

SRUC's leave year will run from 01 August – 31 July annually and is made up of a combination of fixed public, privilege and flexible annual leave days. Leave entitlement increases with service and is based on a full year accrued entitlement of:

From appointment: 37 days

After 2 years of service: 38 days

After 5 years of service: 40 Days

After 7 years of service: 43 Days (maximum entitlement)

The figures above include some fixed public and privilege days each year which are to be taken according to locally published SRUC arrangements

## ROLE LOCATION

SRUC operates campuses across Scotland, and hybrid working arrangements are currently in place. The role is associated with the SRUC Head Office in Edinburgh; however, candidates do not need to be based in Edinburgh. Regular travel to Edinburgh will be required for meetings and other key business activities.

## BENEFITS

View our [Recruitment Webpage](#) for further information (opens new tab).

Full-time equivalent package will include:



1. Annual Leave: SRUC's leave year will run from 01 August – 31 July annually and is made up of a combination of fixed public, privilege and flexible annual leave days. Leave entitlement increases with service and is based on a full year accrued entitlement of:

- From appointment: 37 days
- After 2 years of service: 38 days
- After 5 years of service: 40 Days
- After 7 years of service: 43 Days (maximum entitlement)

The figures above include some fixed public and privilege days each year which are to be taken according to locally published SRUC arrangements. Part-Time – All leave will be pro-rated based on the start or end date, according to the number of actual days worked in that annual leave year.

2. SRUC GFRP Pension 5% employee contribution / 10% employer contribution.
3. SRUC GPP Death in Service Benefit (4 x salary).
4. BUPA Health Scheme Membership
5. Free on-site car parking where available.
6. Additional benefits include cycle to work scheme, heavily discounted RAC membership and more.

## ABOUT SRUC

SRUC is a specialist higher education institution delivering tertiary education, research and consultancy.

We currently operate our main Higher and Further education activities from five campuses across Scotland – Aberdeen, Barony, Edinburgh, Elmwood, and Oatridge. SRUC employs approximately 1,200 staff operating from five campuses, eight farms, 25 consulting offices, six research centres and eight veterinary surveillance centres located primarily across Scotland. The organisation's annual turnover is around £85 million.

SRUC's principal purpose is to advance education, science, research, and environmental protection and improvement in rural and land-based industries, both domestically and internationally. The commercial consultancy, skills training and knowledge exchange and some commercial research activities are undertaken through SAC Consulting – part of SRUC.

It is SRUC's intention to become a fully-fledged university – a new and unique establishment for the 21st century that is regional, accessible, and responsive to a

diverse range of challenges in a transforming world. We will be a strong and unique anchor institution where research, skills and business converge. Such convergence will create new insights that deliver big strategic leaps and completely new propositions for business, society and government.

All of this activity is firmly rooted in our distinctive ethos of a Scotland-wide presence through regional centres of global excellence. Our objective is to deliver on shared goals with government, business and other partners to support transition to a fair and sustainable economy.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

AspenPeople Ltd. have a longstanding relationship with SRUC, and they have been appointed to support SRUC with the recruitment of Non-executive Board members. [To apply](#), please upload your application (CV, covering letter and equal opportunities form) All applications must include the following

All applications must include the following:

- A full CV with your education and professional qualifications and full employment history.
- A short covering letter of no more than two A4 sized pages explaining why this appointment interests you and how you meet the appointment criteria and key competencies as detailed in the candidate brief.
- Current remuneration and contractual notice period.
- Names of at least three referees. Please note, referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.
- Please provide day-time, evening and mobile telephone numbers, together with an appropriate, confidential and acceptable e-mail address for all correspondence relating to your application.

## Contact Information:

You should receive an automatic acknowledgment of your application – if you do not, please contact **Gillian Blackadder** at AspenPeople Ltd at [gblackadder@aspenpeople.co.uk](mailto:gblackadder@aspenpeople.co.uk).

## Closing Date:

The closing date for all applications is midnight on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2026**.

## Interviews:

First stage virtual interviews will be on **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December (full day) and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December (afternoon only)**.

Final in person interviews will be conducted on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2026**.

If you are aware that you are unable to attend for interview on the above dates, please inform us at the earliest possible opportunity.

Prior to any employment, you will be required to evidence your right to work in the UK. Further information is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and SRUC's [right to work webpages](#) (opens new tab).

## Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

It is the policy of SRUC to provide equality of opportunity for all applicants for employment and for all its employees.

This policy applies regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.

SRUC is committed to the development and use of employment procedures and practices, which do not discriminate and which will provide genuine equality of opportunity for all employees.

## Links to Supplementary Information on SRUC

The following links provide additional information that may be of interest to prospective candidates.

The SRUC website, [Home | SRUC](#), provides a significant amount of information about the organisation which may be of interest to prospective candidates.

**Strategy:** [SRUC | Strategy 2026 – 2031](#)

**Accounts:** [sruc-financial-statements-2025.pdf](#) (SRUC changed its year end to 31 July from 31 March in 2025. The 31 July 2025 financial statements report on a 16-month period)

**Governance:** Information on the current Board members of SRUC and SRUC Innovation Ltd can be found at [Governance | SRUC](#)

**Studying at SRUC:**

[SRUC | Study options](#)

[SRUC | School of Veterinary Medicine and Biosciences](#)

[SRUC | Student life](#)

[Study in Scotland](#)

**Research at SRUC:**

[Challenge Centres | SRUC](#)

[Research areas | SRUC](#)

[Research impact | SRUC](#)

**Business Services:**

[SAC Consulting \(sruc.ac.uk\)](#)

[Veterinary & laboratory services \(sruc.ac.uk\)](#)

[Enterprise Academy for the Rural & Natural Economy | SRUC](#)

[Commercial opportunities | SRUC](#)

## DISABILITY POLICY STATEMENT

Please inform Human Resources if any adjustments or support are required for interview, or whether any adjustments or adaptations may help you overcome operational difficulties presented by the job. Although disabled applicants are not obliged to inform employers of their disability, they will still be covered by the Equality Act 2010 once their disability becomes known.

## DISCLAIMER

These particulars are issued by Human Resources, SRUC, Edinburgh. They are intended to represent a description of the duties at the time of writing, although this accuracy cannot be guaranteed. SRUC reserves the right to vary these particulars or make no appointment at all.