



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

CANDIDATE PACK

Dean of School

April 2025

WELCOME

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for expressing your interest in joining Birmingham City University (BCU).

For almost two centuries, BCU has shaped thousands of lives. We have helped redefine a city, influenced the region, and impacted further afield. From our roots as the Birmingham Government School of Design, we have forged a formidable history. At the heart of this journey are our people – our staff, students and wider community. Together we have built an institution that thrives on collaboration, innovation and a shared commitment to make a difference in our communities.

As a teaching-intensive University, our courses are rooted in practice-based learning, and we provide wider support that sets our students up to succeed after graduation. While this is our core focus, we recognise and value the enduring importance of research and enterprise endeavour, which is acknowledged within our newly-launched strategy.

Our strategy sets us on our path to 2030 and beyond, making it an incredibly exciting time to join our University. [Rooted in Birmingham, Reaching Beyond](#) articulates how we will be outstanding at what we do, as an anchor institution in the city. The strategy has three pillars at its core:

Develop talent for tomorrow

Our students are at the centre of everything we do, and we deliver a transformative, practice-based education focused on innovation, inclusion, and industry excellence. Our top priority is ensuring that our graduates have the knowledge and skills to lead and excel in their respective fields.

Create knowledge for good

We will discover, share, and apply new knowledge to benefit our students, region, and the world - this remains core to our mission as an anchor institution. Our underpinning research strategy will define key themes to provide clear focus, and enable the University to tackle real-world problems and make a positive impact on people's lives.

Power prosperity

Our place at the heart of the city and region, and our international connections, are fundamental to what we do. Powering prosperity means transforming people, places, and businesses. We will address local skills gaps and bring together communities, civic leaders, and industry to achieve shared goals and advance the region.

Our people are fundamental to our success, and we are committed to becoming the inclusive higher education employer of choice for our region. If we are to achieve our aims, we need talented and inspiring leaders across our University. We must work to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do, creating a collaborative culture in which colleagues are empowered to perform at their best to support our students.

If you can see yourself joining our ambitious journey, then we certainly want to hear from you.



Professor David Mba
Vice-Chancellor





OUR UNIVERSITY

Birmingham City University is an institution with a proud heritage and a hugely ambitious future. It's also a university like no other.

We are embedded into the fortunes of this city region, our presence woven into the very fabric of Birmingham.

And just as we were founded to shape the needs of the industry around us in 1843, today we are shaping the society and economy of the future. Our strategy for 2030, 'Rooted in Birmingham, Reaching Beyond' sets the blueprint for the road ahead, demanding that we provide an outstanding teaching, research and working environment for our students and collaborators.

This ethos has led to a transformational repurposing of the Benjamin Zephaniah Building (formerly University House), creating a new gateway onto our City Centre Campus in the Eastside of Birmingham. The Benjamin Zephaniah Building has provided a dedicated home for Education and Communities staff and students, with subject-specific spaces and equipment.

It joins our other state-of-the-art buildings in the city centre, including STEAMhouse – this ambitious reimagining of a once-derelict Victorian factory provides an adaptable, visionary space which brings together entrepreneurs, creatives and academics. The building is designed to bring arts education closer to STEM subjects to find new solutions to tomorrow's problems.

The stunning Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is closely situated, showcasing talented young performers in a custom-built £57 million building. For teaching spaces where tradition and heritage provide the inspiration, we have our School of Jewellery at the heart of Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and our School of Art right at the centre of the city.

As you move to the North of Birmingham, close to our former Perry Barr campus, you will find the Alexander Stadium. This iconic location was once home to the hugely successful Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022, and now houses our sport courses. Students who study here will benefit from the very best facilities in which to test their developing skills.

With an ambitious strategy in place - with more than £500 million invested in our estate - and a new Chancellor in the shape of broadcaster and activist Ade Adepitan MBE, there's great anticipation for the years to come at BCU. The city we are based in is undergoing something of a renaissance, and being closely situated to the HS2 development means we're primed to be central to the city's changing fortunes.

And we will be at the heart of that change. It will form part of our aspiration to become an exemplar anchor institution. To achieve this aim, we have to adapt to reflect the changing needs of our communities. We must continue to attract students from a diverse range of backgrounds. And we will make a difference, physically and educationally, in our city, region and beyond.

Our estate must mirror this ambition. And it could be your leadership that drives us to break new ground as one of the city's leading universities.

OUR EXECUTIVE TEAM



ADE ADEPITAN MBE
Chancellor



ANITA BHALLA OBE
Chair of Board
of Governors



**PROFESSOR
DAVID MBA**
Vice-Chancellor



NICOLE LOUIS
Chief Operating Officer



**PROFESSOR
MARCIA WILSON**
Pro Vice-Chancellor



PROFESSOR IAN BLAIR
Pro Vice-Chancellor



**PROFESSOR
HANIFA SHAH**
Pro Vice-Chancellor



**PROFESSOR MAXINE
LINTERN**
Pro Vice-Chancellor



JAGRUP DHUGGA
Chief Financial Officer



ADAM RACE
Chief People Officer



KAREN STEPHENSON
University Secretary

BCU AT A GLANCE



67% of UK-domiciled students from West Midlands

61% of UK-domiciled students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Overall
SIZE **31,571**
STUDENTS

4,256 STAFF

50%

of England-domiciled full-time UG students from IMD quartile 1

EMPLOYABILITY

92%

in work or study after 15 months (or not seeking work)

TURNOVER
c.£337m

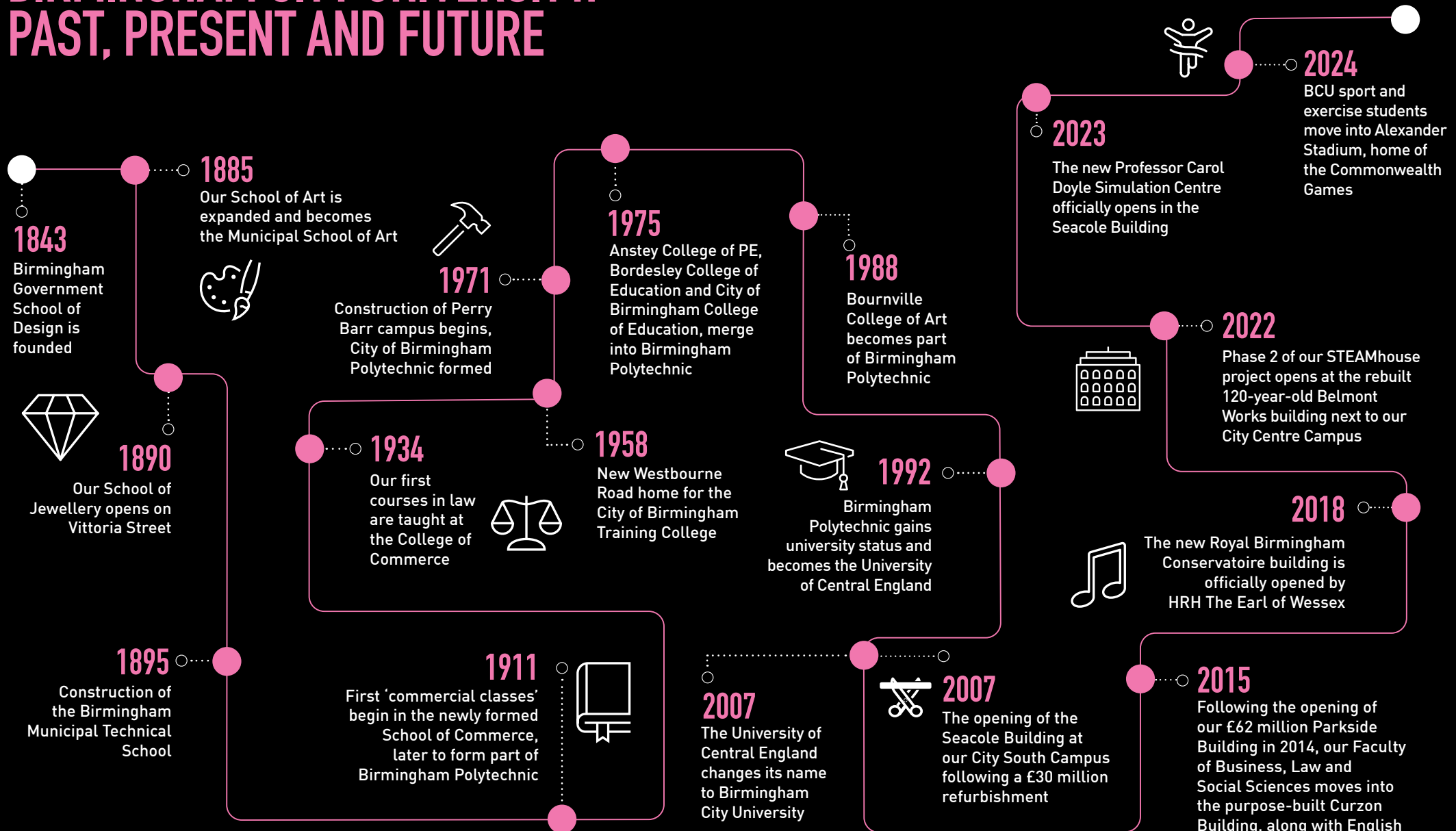
5,186

full-time international students on campus

OUR University
has been at the
centre of our city
since the opening
of the Birmingham
Government School
of Design in ***1843.***



BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



TRANSFORMING OUR ESTATE

BCU has invested over £500 million in estates and facilities in the past decade, including our City Centre Campus – just minutes from the city's Bullring and major transport links – and our City South Campus, in leafy Edgbaston, also walkable from the centre of Birmingham.

- 2025 - Our Education and Communities courses moved into the Benjamin Zephaniah Building.
- 2024 – Our sports provision moved into dedicated facilities within Alexander Stadium.
- 2023 – Our City South Campus receives a £5 million addition to its Health, Education and Life Sciences facilities, with the opening of The Professor Carol Doyle Simulation Centre.
- 2022 – We officially open STEAMhouse, a £72 million transformation of the 121-year-old Belmont Works, a derelict Grade-A one-time Victorian bicycle factory.
- 2018 – A major expansion of our City South Campus adds extensive facilities for teaching new Sports and Life Sciences provision.
- 2017 – Teaching starts in a new £57 million home for the University's Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.
- 2016 – The Joseph Priestley Building becomes a purpose built centre for our professional services staff.
- 2015 – The Curzon Building opens, housing Business, Law and Social Sciences, as well a new library, IT and student support facilities.
- 2013 – The Parkside Building paves the way for the expansion of our new City Centre Campus, adding superb new facilities for our Arts Design and Media students.

These investments consolidated our estate around two major campuses, in addition to our existing historic sites, the Victorian School of Art in the city centre and the School of Jewellery in the renowned Jewellery Quarter.



STEAMHOUSE — ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OUR EMERGING ECONOMY

The £72 million restoration of the 120-year-old derelict Belmont Works has given our University a stunning addition to our campus and breathed new life into a prominent Birmingham landmark – a Grade A-listed building, which stood derelict since being gutted by a fire in 2007.

More than bricks and mortar and its state-of-the-art equipment, however, STEAMhouse is about rethinking so much of what we do. It means aligning academic expertise with the needs of the world

around us, applying our research to the ambitions of entrepreneurs, and driving collaboration across business, academia, creative and digital communities. It is driving our pedagogy too. As well as being home to our School of Computing and Digital, BCU's STEAM agenda will increasingly underpin our teaching and learning. STEAMhouse is the physical embodiment of our recognition that genuine and sustained knowledge exchange is everything if we are to meet the needs of our future graduates, our economy, and our diverse communities.



OUR DISTINCTIVE RESEARCH

Our research is underpinned by a commitment to foster economic growth, social innovation and cultural vibrancy. Alongside discovering new knowledge, our work aims to create new processes and innovative products, as well as, crucially, applying them with purpose in the real world, ultimately to impact on people's lives.

- Take, for example, our work in breaking the taboos surrounding menstrual health. Our researchers uncovered flaws in training given to healthcare professionals around serious conditions such as endometriosis which led to delays in diagnosis. This work is shaping clinical guidance and training to improve outcomes for the 1.5 million women in the UK with the condition.
- Or our research into anti-Muslim abuse – which gave rise to the term Islamophobia. Our researcher's work, which has been cited in Parliament, has even influenced social media giant Twitter to change its policies around anti-Muslim speech, and has helped to establish guidance around hate speech for the Crown Prosecution Service.
- And our research has even sought to redefine what it means to live in an urban environment, with the development of plans for the West Midlands National Park. This work demonstrates how social, economic and environmental change can be catalysed through the celebration of a landscape.

The University's STEAM agenda is increasingly driving our research ambitions, as we invest in harnessing our creative arts expertise and heritage, and fusing it with our strengths in science and technology to enable meaningful collaboration across disciplines.

Carrying out research and discovering new knowledge makes us a university. But using our results to deliver real-world impact makes us a transformative institution, impacting lives beyond our campuses.



JUST A FEW OF THE THOUSANDS OF BCU GRADUATES MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR CHOSEN FIELDS...



CAL HENDERSON
BEng (Hons) Software
Engineering graduate

CO-FOUNDER OF SLACK



**SHAMSIYA IBAKU
MOHAMMED**
LLB (Hons) Law graduate

**BARRISTER AND SOLICITOR
FOR NIGERIA SUPREME COURT**

MARK RADFORD
BSc (Hons) Nursing

**NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF INTENSIVE
SUPPORT AND DEPUTY CHIEF
NURSING OFFICER FOR ENGLAND**



PAM SHEEMAR
BA (Hons) Government
and Law graduate

**DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL
BANKING AT NATWEST**



NICOLA COUGHLAN
MA Acting graduate

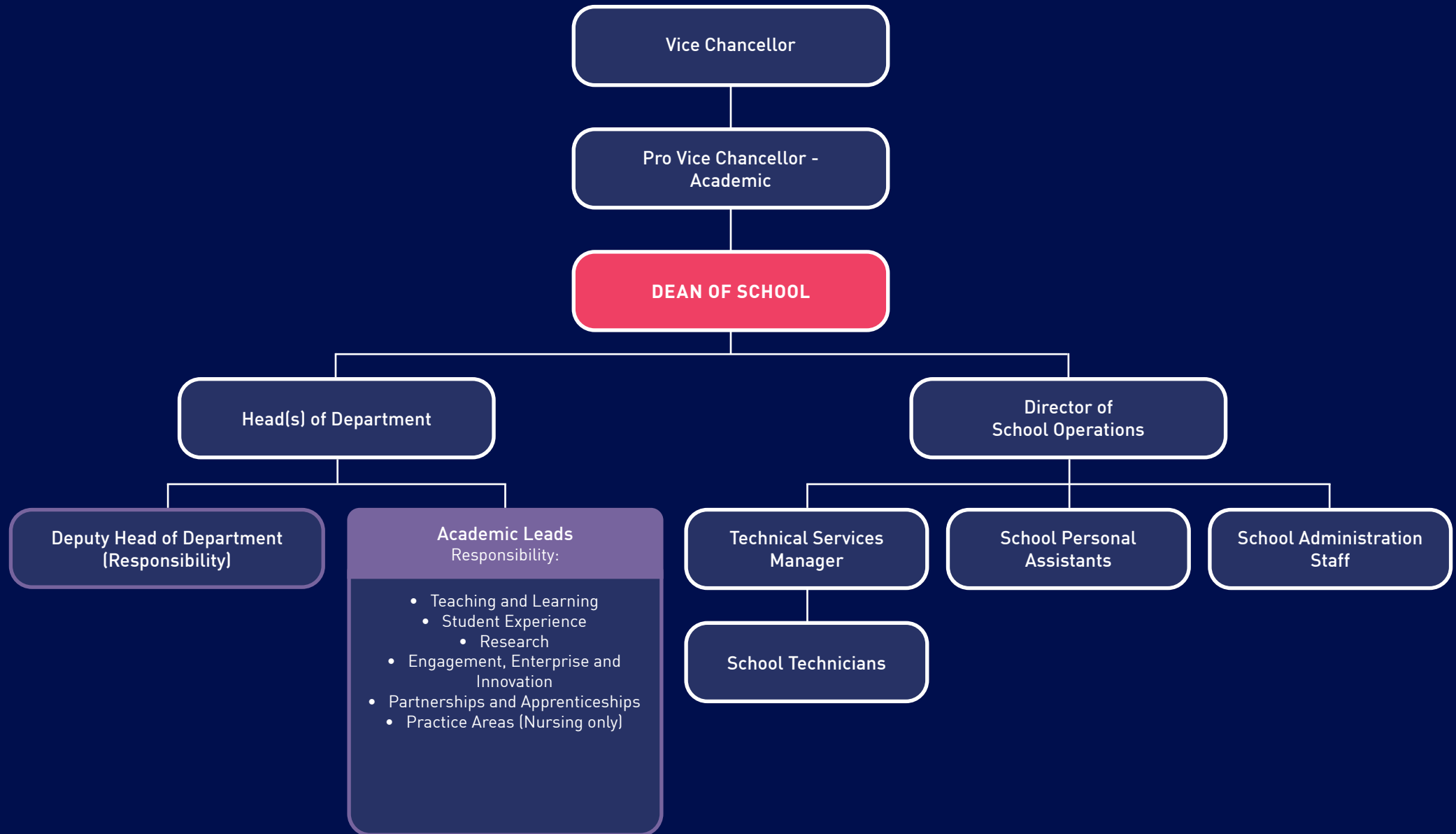
**STAR OF DERRY GIRLS
AND BRIDGERTON**

TAYYIB MAHMOOD
BSc (Hons) Film Production
Technology graduate

**WORKED ON FILMS ON TIME
TO DIE AND THE BATMAN**



ORGANISATIONAL CHART



ROLE DESCRIPTION

1. JOB PURPOSE

The Dean of School will align the School to the University Strategy 2030. The Dean will lead and focus the School on delivering strategic and operational outcomes (as measured by Key Performance Indicators, KPIs), as they relate to learning and teaching; student experience; research and innovation, international recruitment and transnational education, enterprise, and knowledge exchange.

The Dean of School will transform the culture and capability of the School and its staff to one of high performance and accountability, continually improving the service offered to the School's stakeholders, developing distributed leadership capability and the capability of staff to build careers. The Dean will line manage the Heads of the Department in the School and be responsible for the strategic development of their School's disciplines within the academic portfolio of the University and in relation to the wider UK Higher Education (HE) sector in collaboration with the university executive team, including the incubation of growth opportunities within the School's area.

The postholder will lead (as appropriate) on or contributing strategic leadership to cross university projects or strategic themes, specifically STEAM initiatives supporting matrix working and inclusion, equality and diversity.



2. MAIN DUTIES

- 1.** The main responsibility of the Dean is to ensure that the School, through strategic leadership of academic activity and disciplines, through the School's Departments and through direct interaction with the appropriate PVCs and Academic Leads in the Departments, meet and exceed the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will fulfil the ambitions of Strategy 2030.
- 2.** Develop and be accountable for the School's strategic plan aligned to the University Strategy 2030
- 3.** Work with the PVC Academic to provide strategic leadership and delivery of Strategy 2030 and supporting plans at the university level as required, including leading and promoting cross-School working and lead, as appropriate, University STEAM initiatives.
- 4.** Lead and manage the Department Heads and Business Operations Manager to be effective, empowered leaders who produce meet or exceed their KPI targets.
- 5.** Transform the culture of the School to one of high performance and accountability, focussing on student attainment and experience and serving our wider stakeholders through continual improvement fostering innovation and agility in all aspects of the School's activity and ensure that the School is committed at all times to high-quality, professional standards.
- 6.** Ensure effective communication channels across the School for both staff and students.
- 7.** Develop leaders and the staff within the School to be accountable so that they are aligned with the University's vision and feel empowered to enhance performance and deliver positive outcomes.
- 8.** Build and maintain networks with key external partners to ensure the School's portfolio, Research and Engagement, Enterprise & Innovation offerings remain relevant to the University's stakeholders.
- 9.** Responsible for the management, leadership and effective deployment of the School's human (including the allocation of workloads and staff satisfaction), physical and financial resources across the School's departments, budgeting, supply and demand.
- 10.** Responsible for the long-term financial sustainability of the School, adopting a commercial approach and appropriate financial management, consistent with the University's commitment to quality.
- 11.** Responsible for health, safety and wellbeing within the School, fostering a culture of good practice and compliance.
- 12.** Responsible for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outcomes and activities within the School, addressing School specific issues, where appropriate, coordinating School submissions for awards such as Athena SWAN and developing a collaborative, collegiate and inclusive culture.
- 13.** Chair or participate in relevant School, university and external groups and committees undertaking international travel to represent the University and School
- 14.** Maintain own academic standing and authority as appropriate, through teaching, research and scholarly activities, and maintain an external profile.
- 15.** Undertake any other duties as appropriate to the role and agreed with the PVC Academic.



3. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be asked to respond to the essential and desirable criteria that are marked as **Supporting Statement** at the point of application, and these responses will determine which candidates are invited to the selection process. The remainder of the essential and desirable criteria will be assessed during the selection process.

4. ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

- 1. Proven and sustained ability to deliver excellent academic results in a strategic leadership role (Supporting Statement).**
- 2. Proven ability to transform organisations through the development of leaders and academic staff capabilities and culture (Supporting Statement).**
- 3. Proven ability to provide clear and effective strategic leadership to the School, promoting a sense of collegiality and ambition, encouraging productivity to ensure that the key aims, and objectives of the University and School's various relevant strategies in a coherent and consistent way (Supporting Statement).**
4. Proven ability to work with the University Executive Team or equivalent, with the ability to contribute and potentially lead University wide projects as appropriate.
5. Proven ability to think strategically at a university level through a sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to a high-quality student learning experience.
- 6. Sound knowledge and understanding of the changing regulatory environment including OfS, DfE, HO, UKVI, EPAS, Ofsted and their implications for quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice. In addition, experience and understanding of other relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements (Supporting Statement).**

- 7. Extensive knowledge and understanding of appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessment; how students learn; the use and value of appropriate learning technologies; employability; student satisfaction and engagement; and methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching (Supporting Statement).**
- 8. Ongoing engagement in continuing professional development in subject / discipline and in pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and/or the evaluation of professional practices. Successful co-ordination, support, supervision management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) (Supporting Statement).**
9. Significant experience of people management, budgetary control, curriculum and programme development and allocation of resources.
- 10. Commitment to a strong and robust inclusion, equality and diversity agenda in all aspects of teaching, education and the student experience (Supporting Statement).**
11. Strong interpersonal, communication and team working skills.
- 12. A willingness to undertake further training and personal development as appropriate and to adopt new procedures as and when required.**

5. DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

- 1. Knowledge and awareness of the broad context of research in Higher Education and government policy in the UK and the current and forthcoming challenges and opportunities it presents (Supporting Statement).**
2. Doctoral level qualification in a relevant or cognate discipline.
3. Principal Fellowship under the Advance HE's UK Professional Standards Framework (PSF).
4. Professorial status, or the eligibility to be awarded professorial status upon appointment.
5. Research active, and research engaged with evidence of external contribution to discipline and knowledge creation.
- 6. Experience of successful interaction between Higher Education, industry or commerce, research, and professional bodies (Supporting Statement).**
7. External examining experience.
8. Involvement with external quality assurance agencies.
9. Successful incorporation of subject and/or pedagogic research as part of an integrated approach to academic practice.
10. Experience of working with collaborative, validated and franchised.
11. Successful engagement in the design and delivery of continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment, scholarship and related academic or professional practice.



APPOINTMENT DETAILS AND HOW TO APPLY

If you are ready to apply to join Birmingham City University and play a key role in delivering our ambitious strategic plan, visit <https://jobs.bcu.ac.uk> where you will find the advertisement for the role you wish to be considered for.

As part of your application, you will be asked to complete a number of supporting statements aligned to the essential criteria for the role as detailed on page 15, giving examples to demonstrate your knowledge, skills or experience where you feel it is appropriate to do so. We also ask that you to provide an up-to-date CV (including your research and publication list where applicable).

All applications will be scored by a panel of senior colleagues at the University, and this scoring will determine which applicants are invited to attend the selection process.

Birmingham City University is deeply committed to equality, diversity, and inclusivity at all levels in the organisation, and to addressing underrepresentation in our workforce to ensure we are truly representative of the community we serve. We welcome applications from applicants from all backgrounds and communities for this role, and particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic applicants.

Selection

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend the selection process, with the date to be confirmed but expected to be between 19 May and 23 May.

Details of the selection process will be provided to shortlisted candidates in advance.