open awards

Changing lives through learning

Head of Product Development

Job Vacancy Information Pack

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in working at Open Awards.

This pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work at Open Awards.

In this pack, you will find:

- Our Values
- How to Apply
- Information about Open Awards
- Job Description
- Person Specification

If you would like an informal conversation about this vacancy, you can contact Nina Hinton on nina.hinton@openawards.org.uk

How to Apply

To apply for this role, please complete the application form together with a supporting statement outlining how you meet the criteria for the post (max two sides A4).

Completed forms should be returned to:

Nina Hinton
Open Awards
Estuary Commerce Park,
17 De Havilland Drive
Speke
Liverpool

Email application to:-
nina.hinton@openawards.org.uk

The **closing date** for applications for the post is 17:00 on Monday 12th October 2026.

Mission, Vision and Values



At Open Awards, our **learners' aspirations** are at the heart of what we do.

As a not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity, we are passionate about our mission to **change lives through learning**.

This manifests in our flexibility and creativity when it comes to working with our providers and learners. We know our providers want to support their learners to **achieve the very best outcomes** and, as a small team, we pride ourselves on having the **flexibility, knowledg**e and **passion** to react quickly and intelligently to individual **learners'** and **employers' needs.**

Open Awards seeks to:

- improve education and training opportunities for learners;
- ensure flexibility of learning opportunities;
- provide progression opportunities; and
- provide and enhance equality of opportunity in all aspects of the learning environment.

Who are Open Awards?

We are an Awarding Organisation approved by Ofqual and an Access Validating Agency approved by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). We provide Ofqual regulated qualifications and units across a range of sectors, QAA Access to Higher Education Diplomas and also offer bespoke quality endorsed units and flexible learning solutions. Open Awards is also a regulated End-point Assessment Organisation for a wide range of apprenticeship Standards.

Our qualifications, units, and online courses are used across a range of education settings including Further Education Colleges, schools, sixth-form colleges, prisons, private training providers and third sector organisations.

Open Awards Services

Open Awards offers a high-quality accreditation and certification service for education and training. We are committed to offering:

- Value for money, including reasonable recognition and certification charges and a not-for-profit ethos.
- Contact with knowledgeable and responsive staff, who have curriculum expertise and offer detailed professional support.
- Access to a network of education and training organisations.
- An efficient administrative and certification service, with clear service standards.
- A commitment to promoting wider access to learning, equality of opportunity and recognition of achievement.
- Access to a comprehensive range of services, support workshops and training.

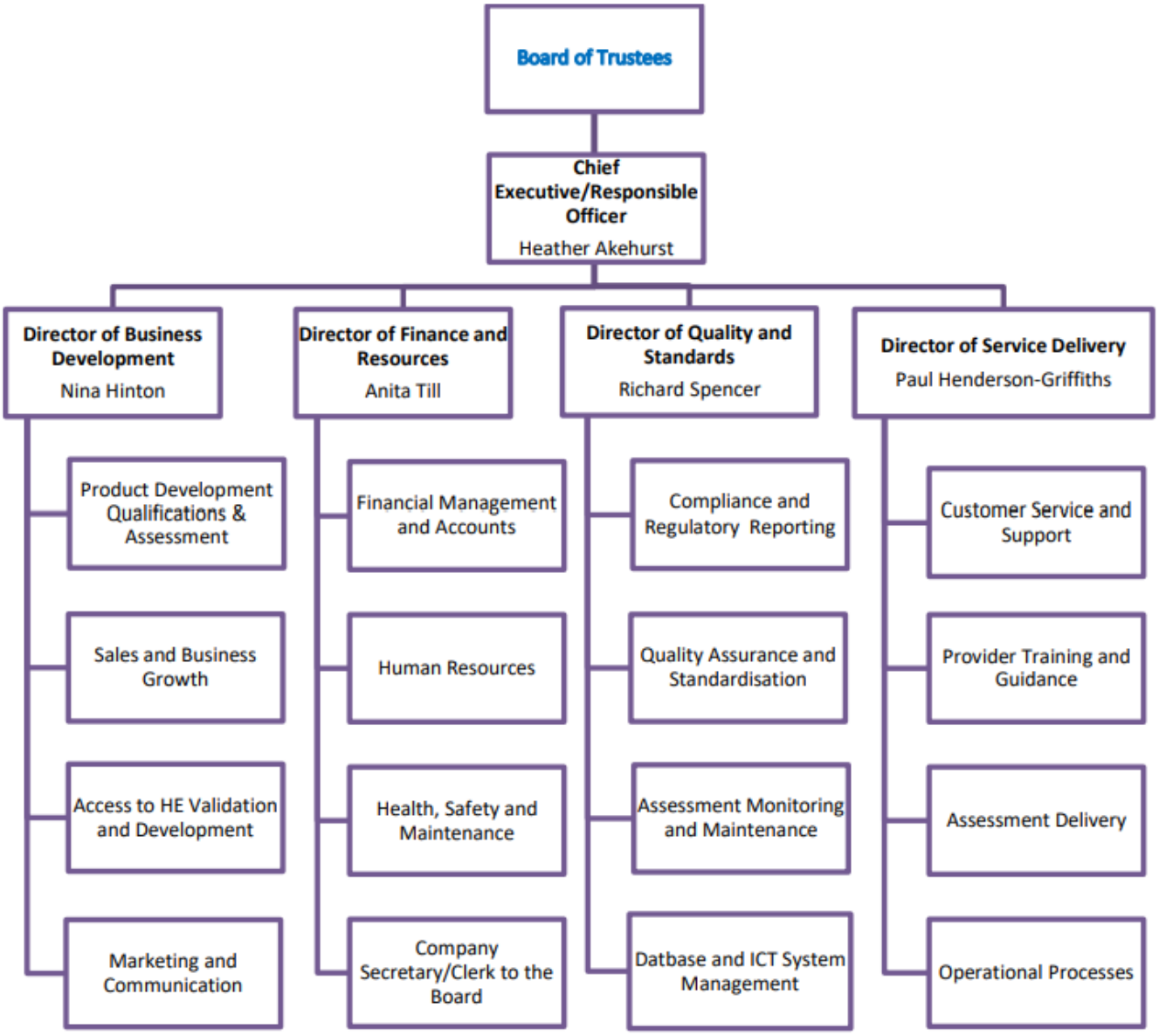
In particular Open Awards offers access to:

- Full advice and support for Open Awards accreditation, units and qualifications.
- A bank of approved units of achievement and qualifications.
- Staff development activities and curriculum forums to support networking, good practice and collaboration, and a range of specific training activities.

Meeting the Team

The role you are applying for is based within the Business Development team.

We are a small organisation and encourage all teams to work together across the wider structure. As such you will be working, on a daily basis, with a wide range of colleagues across the team structure.



Equality and Diversity

Open Awards is committed to making the recruitment process as affair as it can be. We want our workforce to reflect the diverse customer and learner base we support and we continue to work to create an inclusive culture where everyone is valued for who they are and the contribution they make to our mission and vision.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion and redeployment are based solely on objective, non-discriminatory criteria. In accordance with current legislation and codes of practice we aim to ensure that no councillor, employee or prospective employee will be treated unfavourably on the grounds of marital status, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, trade union membership or activity, political or religious belief and unrelated criminal conviction.

We are a disability confident employer; if you have a disability and your application meets the minimum criteria for the post, we guarantee you will be interviewed.



Safeguarding Statement

Open Awards is committed to our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all employees, independent workers, and volunteers to share this commitment.

We are committed to recruiting candidates who share this commitment to safeguarding, and therefore we apply robust recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that the people selected are right for the job, and that all candidates are appropriately screened prior to appointment.

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken as applicable to the role:

- References
- DBS check
- Barred list check
- Section 128 check
- Overseas criminal records check
- Identity check
- Right to work in the UK
- Evidence of qualifications applicable to the role

You will need to provide details of referees including your current and previous employers, covering the last 5 years. These will not be contacted prior to interview.

All job offers will be subject to the satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

Please note that providing false information is an offence and could result in your application being rejected or your dismissal from employment if you are appointed. The matter may also be referred to the police.

Job Description

TITLE OF POST: **Head of Product Development**

RESPONSIBLE TO: **Director of Business and Development**

SALARY: **£47,360 per annum**

FUNCTION OF THE POST:

We are seeking a dynamic and experienced Head of Product Development to lead our product development function at Open Awards all qualification types, including Apprenticeship Assessment and technical qualifications, and non-regulated products. This pivotal role involves overseeing the entire product lifecycle, from conception to launch, ensuring that our portfolio meets market needs and drive business growth.

The role is responsible for leading the team, ensuring all developments are completed to the required standard and in line with agreed timelines/ deadlines (internal and external) and project objectives. Whilst this is a leadership role, there is an expectation that the role also contributes to the day-to-day activities required to meet the ambitious development plan at Open Awards.

1. To provide strategic and operational management of product development, validation and revalidation activities, across regulated qualifications, controlled assessments, and nonregulated accreditation products.
2. To lead the product development team to implement the product development operational plan, including being responsible for meeting deadlines and key performance indicators.
3. To stay up to date with and provide guidance on regulatory policies, conditions and guidance and government policies (including funding) to inform Open Awards' product development plans and processes.
4. To be responsible for ensuring that all product development projects comply with Open Awards criteria, procedures and guidelines and meet regulatory requirements.
5. To be responsible for ensuring that internal qualification and controlled assessment development and maintenance processes are fit for purpose.
6. To support the planning and resourcing of new product and assessment opportunities.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Team Leadership and Management

1. Lead and motivate the product development team and be a role model for professional standards and best practice in qualification and assessment development.
2. Manage individuals and project teams, ensuring performance is managed and adequate resourcing is planned to meet agreed objectives.
3. Drive the delivery plans for your own areas of responsibility, report on progress against KPIs, and identify and action any areas of concern.
4. Drive continuous improvement in qualification and assessment expertise across the product development team, and wider Open Awards team.

Product Development

5. Lead all product development activities (including End-point Assessment qualifications) in line with agreed project timelines and objectives and ensuring regulatory compliance, including:
    - Use intelligence from labour market and Open Awards' providers to identify opportunities
    - Coordinate the completion of initial proposals
    - Project manage product developments to agreed timelines
    - Lead the development of all required qualification materials (as required by each qualification type), including assessment strategies and sample assessments, in conjunction with Quality Assurance, Assessment Delivery and Operational teams.
    - Present developments to validation and revalidation panels.

6. Responsibility for reviewing development policies and associated processes to ensure ongoing regulatory compliance and operational efficiency.

7. Lead revalidation activities for Open Awards' portfolio of qualifications and assessments to ensure they remain fit for purpose and continue to meet stakeholders needs.

8. Lead submissions of qualifications to regulatory and funding bodies.

9. Maintain up to date knowledge of qualification and funding policy.

10. Monitor trends in qualification and assessment in order to ensure Open Awards proactively responds to the market.

Compliance of controlled assessments

11. To ensure that controlled assessments comply with Open Awards' and regulatory criteria, procedures and guidelines regulatory requirements on an ongoing basis.
    - Take a proactive approach to the identification and minimisation of risks to assessment validity, acting or escalating where appropriate.
    - Review and set improvement actions regarding assessment instruments and delivery guidance to ensure compliance with Open Awards' and regulatory requirements.
    - Provide advice and guidance to colleagues on issues relating to assessment including internal training and standardisation events.
    - Lead on the production of reports and quality improvement action plans relating to assessment maintenance to ensure compliance with assessment plan or strategy requirements.
    - Review and amend reports drafted by colleagues to ensure they are valid, compliant and deliver consistent and comparable outcomes across all organisations delivering controlled assessments.

Validity of assessment instruments

12. To ensure the effectiveness of externally set assessment tools developed by Open Awards:
    - Work with assessment writers, subject specialists and members of the Assessment Development Team to commission, design, develop and maintain externally set assessments to ensure they meet the requirements of relevant assessment strategies and regulatory requirements.
    - Oversee the implementation and effectiveness of Qualification Paper Evaluation Committees and Scrutiny Panels.

Internal processes

13. To lead on the hand-over of qualifications (including End-point Assessments to ensure effective and efficient delivery or availability to customers in line with agreed timescales.
    - Review and improve internal processes to ensure they are fit for purpose and aligned with regulatory requirements and stakeholder needs.
    - Develop, implement and review policies and procedures relating to assessment development.

14. To support the ICT Systems team to ensure that product development processes align with IT systems to facilitate effective and innovative assessment.
    - Identify and lead on developments needed to assessment platforms for new question types etc.
    - Maintain a current awareness of assessment systems and platforms, identifying opportunities to enhance assessment provision.

15. To support colleagues to ensure all provider guidance and support materials comply with assessment strategies and regulatory requirements addressing any amendments required with colleagues as appropriate.

16. Work collaboratively with other Open Awards staff, organising and attending case conferences as necessary.

General Responsibilities

17. Represent and promote Open Awards at a local and national level.

18. Provide high quality customer service to centres and other stakeholder.

19. Deliver training and standardisation activities required to support product development and implementation activities.

20. Maintain up to date records of activities in databases in accordance with policies and procedures.

21. Travel to and work from Open Awards offices and any site that the duties may reasonably require to undertake the duties of the role.

22. Carry out any other duties as specified, from time to time by the Management Team.

23. To support the organisation's commitment to equality and diversity and to promote nondiscriminatory practices in all aspects of the work undertaken.

24. It must be understood that every employee has a responsibility to ensure that their work complies with all statutory requirements and with Open Awards policies, and to ensure that all work functions are undertaken in accordance with health and safety legislation, codes of practice, Open Awards Health and Safety policy, and the Mission, Vision and Values of Open Awards.

This job description is not intended to be either prescriptive or exhaustive; it is issued as a framework to outline the main areas of responsibility at the time of writing.

Person Specification

Criteria	Knowledge and Skills	Essential/ Desirable Criteria
Qualifications and Training	1. Minimum Level 4 qualification. 2. Recognised assessment qualification (e.g., PGCA), status (e.g., CEA), or evidence of training in educational assessment or qualification development. 3. Assessor qualification (e.g., D32/D33/A1 or equivalent). 4. Recognised teaching qualification or status (e.g., QTS/QTLLS).	Essential Essential Desirable Desirable
Experience	5. Minimum five (5) years' experience in the education or awarding sectors in a role associated with qualification and/or assessment development or delivery. 6. In-depth understanding of the role and responsibilities of a regulated awarding organisation/ End-point assessment organisation. 7. Have current knowledge of regulated vocational and technical qualifications, and controlled assessment. 8. Experience of using IT-based assessment tools and platforms. 9. Experience of implementing and maintaining effective assessment strategies within learning and training setting. 10. Have current/recent experience of developing vocational qualifications and assessments. 11. Have current/recent experience of delivering and assessing vocational qualifications and/or apprenticeships. 12. Project management experience.	Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential

Skills/Abilities	13. Ability to demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of regulated vocational and technical qualifications, and controlled assessment (including principles such as validity, reliability and fairness). 14. Ability to work with and apply IT systems to achieve efficiency e.g., use of database systems spreadsheets and other Microsoft Office products in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes. 15. Strong verbal communication skills and the ability to communicate with a variety of audiences. 16. Ability to provide clear and concise written statements that simplify complex issues. 17. Ability to understand and analyse assessment data. 18. Ability to develop and implement processes to meet requirements. 19. Excellent project and time management skills. 20. Ability to work as part of a team. 21. Ability to create and maintain good working relationships with internal and external stakeholders. 22. Ability to work unsupervised, be self-motivated and use own initiative. 23. Ability to implement changes and communicate to others. 24. Ability to produce written materials to a high-quality standard. 25. Ability to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of own work. 26. A quality approach to work with a passion for accuracy and attention to detail.	Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential
Commitment	27. A commitment to Equality & Diversity. 28. An understanding of and a personal commitment to the Mission, Vision and Values of Open Awards. 29. Commitment to customer service. 30. Willing to undertake staff development activities. 31. Be adaptable, flexible and open to change.	Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential
Other	32. Willingness and ability to travel nationally to meet the needs of the role. 33. Must be prepared to undertake occasional overnight stays to meet the needs of the role. 34. Confident professional person. 35. Suitable and reliable internet connection. 36. Declare any conflicts of interest that could impact on the role. 37. Full Driving Licence. 38. Subject to Standard DBS Disclosure.	Essential Essential Essential Essential Essential Desirable Essential