

Job description

Senior HR Advisor

About the role

This is a newly created role within the HR team, reflecting CSE's growth and the increasing demand for proactive HR support, manager guidance, and project delivery. Sitting between the HR Officer and Senior HR Manager, the role strengthens the team's ability to deliver both day-to-day HR support and strategic initiatives.

As Senior HR Advisor, you will work closely with the Senior HR Manager and HR Officer to support around 150 staff and 60 line managers. You will provide timely, consistent advice on HR queries, offer guidance and coaching to line managers, and collaborate with the Senior HR Manager on employee relations matters.

You will play a key role in delivering HR projects and initiatives that support the organisation's HR strategy, ensuring these reflect CSE's aims, values and culture. You will also share responsibility with the HR Officer for triaging and resolving HR enquiries, maintaining accurate HR data, and ensuring staff and managers receive a reliable and consistent service.

You are collaborative, approachable and solutions-focused, someone who builds trust with managers and staff, communicates clearly, and is always looking for ways to improve systems and processes.

You will bring curiosity, resilience and professionalism, and share our passion for making CSE a great place to work.

The Senior HR Advisor is a pivotal role which will strengthen the HR function and help CSE move from reactive to proactive HR service delivery, enabling managers and staff to feel supported and empowered.

Key responsibilities

HR partnering and advice

- Provide clear, consistent and well-informed HR advice that builds trust and enables managers and staff to act with confidence.
- Coach and support line managers to navigate people management matters in a way that is fair, consistent, and helps build their confidence and capability.
- Support the Senior HR Manager with employee relations matters.
- Contribute to line manager development by supporting training sessions, workshops or briefings on people policies and practices.

Employee lifecycle

- Partner with hiring managers early in the recruitment process to help shape job briefs, interview approaches and selection methods, ensuring these reflect CSE's values and are inclusive.
- Work alongside the HR Officer and Operations team to ensure onboarding is engaging, consistent and values-led, giving new staff the best possible start.
- Support line managers and staff through key stages of the employee lifecycle including onboarding, offboarding, probations and appraisals.
- Draft and issue contracts, variations and LOA's in collaboration with the HR Officer.
- Prepare accurate employee change data for payroll processing and maintain accurate employee records and HR information in the relevant systems, ensuring compliance with GDPR and data retention policies.

Policy, compliance and improvement

- Collaborate on the review and refresh of HR policies, ensuring they are legally compliant, reflect CSE's values.
- Keep up to date with changes in employment law and best practice, and support their practical implementation across policies, guidance and processes.
- Work with the Senior HR Manager to identify and deliver improvements to HR systems, processes and practices, drawing on feedback, HR data and manager experience to enhance efficiency, consistency and the overall employee experience.
- Help manage and embed new HR systems (including Employment Hero, Monday.com HR ticketing system and SharePoint HR Intranet), rolling up your sleeves to work out solutions, test processes and support adoption across the organisation.
- Contribute to the design and delivery of HR communications that help staff and managers understand and apply policies and processes with confidence.
- Support equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across policies, processes and practice.

Projects and initiatives

- Work closely with the Senior HR Manager to deliver the HR strategy, taking responsibility for specific projects and initiatives as agreed, and ensuring these reflect CSE's aims and culture.
- Contribute to the design, development and delivery of initiatives that strengthen staff engagement, wellbeing, retention, and performance, supporting a positive and values-led culture.
- Use HR data, feedback and reporting to identify trends, inform decisions and track progress against HR priorities.

Collaboration and team support

- Share responsibility with the HR Officer for triaging and resolving HR enquiries, escalating complex matters as needed.
- Provide resilience across HR operations, ensuring staff and managers receive a reliable, timely and

solutions-focused service.

- Support continuity within the HR team by providing cover for the Senior HR Manager or HR Officer when required, ensuring a consistent and professional HR presence.
- Act as an ambassador for HR, modelling CSE's values and helping build confidence in the HR function.

Working relationships and contacts

You will report to the Senior HR Manager.

You will work closely with colleagues across the organisation, building strong relationships with staff and line managers to support their day-to-day work.

You will collaborate regularly with the wider Finance & Operations team which includes Finance, Ops, HR and IT.

You will contribute to the Employee Voice and EDI groups, and step in as the HR lead representative when required.

You will provide ad-hoc HR support to Retrofit West when required.

The responsibilities and reporting structure of this role will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain aligned with organisational needs.

Key competencies

Competency	What this looks like in the role
HR knowledge and judgment	Provides clear, confident and accurate HR advice, applying employment law and CSE policy appropriately. Builds trust with managers by helping them handle staff concerns fairly and consistently. Knows when to escalate to the Senior HR Manager.
HR business partnering	Acts as a proactive partner to line managers, understanding their challenges and supporting them to apply people-processes effectively. Provides coaching that builds confidence and capability, and ensures consistent, values-led decision-making.

Project delivery and improvement	Contributes to the delivery of HR projects and initiatives (e.g. HRIS and Sharepoint HR intranet rollout, engagement, wellbeing, EDI, policy refresh). Takes a hands-on approach to embedding new systems and processes such as working things out, testing improvements and supporting adoption. Uses HR data and feedback to identify opportunities, inform decisions and track progress, and follows through on agreed actions to deliver positive change.
Problem solving	Investigates the root cause of people-related issues and proposes practical, compliant and people-centred solutions. Balances risk, fairness and organisational needs in decision-making.
Communication and influence	Communicates clearly and professionally in all formats (verbal, written, training, notes). Adapts style to suit the audience and explains HR processes in ways that build understanding and confidence. Helps managers and staff engage positively with HR policies and initiatives.
Process ownership and delivery	Collaborates with the HR Officer on key HR processes ensuring these are accurate, consistent and values-led.
Attention to detail and accuracy	Produces accurate contracts, letters, payroll inputs and HR records. Checks data thoroughly, spots inconsistencies and resolves errors promptly.
Discretion and integrity	Handles sensitive information confidentially and with professionalism. Demonstrates fairness, integrity and ethical practice in all work.
Collaboration and teamwork	Works constructively with HR colleagues to share workload, provide resilience and coordinate priorities. Contributes to a proactive, reliable and solutions-focused HR service.
Inclusion and values alignment	Champions equality, diversity and inclusion in daily work. Demonstrates CSE's values in interactions and contributes to building a positive, supportive workplace culture.

Success in this role looks like

As a Senior HR Advisor, success means offering clear, trusted, solutions-focused HR advice and leading initiatives that improve how we work, support and empower line managers, and help CSE to be a values-led, inclusive and engaging place to work.

The following indicators offer a shared reference point for what strong performance could look like in the role over time:

- HR queries are triaged and resolved effectively, with timely, clear and consistent advice that builds trust and confidence among staff and managers.
- Line managers feel equipped and supported to navigate people management, applying policies fairly and with growing confidence.
- HR projects and initiatives are delivered to a high standard, reflecting CSE's aims and culture and showing visible impact on staff experience and organisational effectiveness.
- Policies and staff guidance are refreshed, accessible and well communicated, enabling consistent and confident application across CSE.
- Engagement, wellbeing and inclusion activities are coordinated effectively, with actions followed through and staff seeing HR as a positive, proactive driver of culture.
- Improvements to HR systems, processes and communications are identified and implemented, making HR support more efficient, consistent and user-friendly.
- The HR function is viewed across CSE as approachable, reliable and solutions-focused, aligned with the organisation's values and strategic aims.
- The Senior HR Manager is able to focus more on strategy, culture and leadership, supported by strong mid-level advisory capacity and project delivery.

Person specification

(See over)

Area	Essential	Desirable
HR knowledge and judgment	Strong knowledge of UK employment law, HR policies and best practice. Experience advising managers on people matters, and supporting policy review and implementation. Able to balance risk, fairness and organisational needs, knowing when to escalate.	CIPD Level 5 qualified (or equivalent experience). Working towards or achieved CIPD Level 7.
HR business partnering	Experience providing day-to-day advice and support to line managers, building their confidence and capability in applying people processes.	Experience in a values-led or mission- driven organisation.
Project delivery and improvement	Experience contributing to or leading HR projects and initiatives (e.g. systems rollout, policy review, engagement, wellbeing, inclusion).	Experience supporting change initiatives and embedding new HR processes.
Problem solving and digital capability	Strong problem-solving skills, able to identify root causes and implement practical, people- centred solutions. Confident using HRIS and digital platforms. Able to learn new systems quickly, troubleshoot and help embed them.	Experience supporting the implementation or optimisation of HR digital systems.
Communication and influence	Excellent written and verbal communication skills, able to adapt style for different audiences (staff, managers, SLT). Able to prepare clear contracts, letters, case notes and reports, ensuring accuracy and professionalism.	Experience of delivering manager briefings, workshops or training.
Process ownership and delivery	Experience managing HR processes across the employee lifecycle (e.g. recruitment, onboarding, payroll inputs, HRIS, offboarding). Strong organisational skills with the ability to prioritise, coordinate and deliver accurate outputs on time.	
Attention to detail and accuracy	High level of accuracy in HR documentation, payroll inputs and employee records. Able to check data thoroughly, identify inconsistencies and resolve errors promptly.	
Collaboration and teamwork	Experience working as part of a small team, sharing workload and providing resilience across HR operations. Constructive, approachable and solutions-focused, building positive relationships with colleagues at all levels.	
Inclusion and values alignment	Committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in practice. Demonstrates alignment with CSE's values and contributes to a positive and supportive workplace culture.	