



# CANDIDATE BRIEFING PACK

Regional Director –  
Secondary Academies



**United Learning**  
The best in everyone™

[unitedlearning.org.uk](https://unitedlearning.org.uk)



## WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in joining our Secondary Education team as a Regional Director.

As a senior role within United Learning the successful candidate will report directly to the Director of Secondary Education. With line management responsibility for a group of Headteachers you will work in close partnership with these Headteachers to provide the best education for all the young people at our schools.

As a Group we aim to offer more by working together than any single school could on its own. We aim to support and develop leaders, provide excellent professional development for all staff and offer broader experiences for young people.

This will be a diverse and challenging role working with a group of unique and individual schools at different stages of their school improvement journey.

This role will have a national profile. Whilst our Regional Directors tend to work with specific school clusters (schools close to one another geographically), the exact location for this role has yet to be determined although it is expected to have a national reach and national travel will be required. In addition, all our Regional Directors lead on a national strand such as attendance or Pupil Premium achievement. We work closely as a school improvement team meeting every week electronically and in person on a half termly basis.

If you are an energetic leader with high expectations, experience of headship and real understanding of what outstanding looks and feels like then this could be the role for you.

It is absolutely fundamental that we never lose sight of what the standard should be and never settle for anything but the best.

We are an inclusive employer and are looking to improve diversity of our leadership, particularly in relation to Black, Asian, and minority ethnic leadership and we welcome and value all applicants.

I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Dame Sally Coates  
Director of Secondary Education  
United Learning





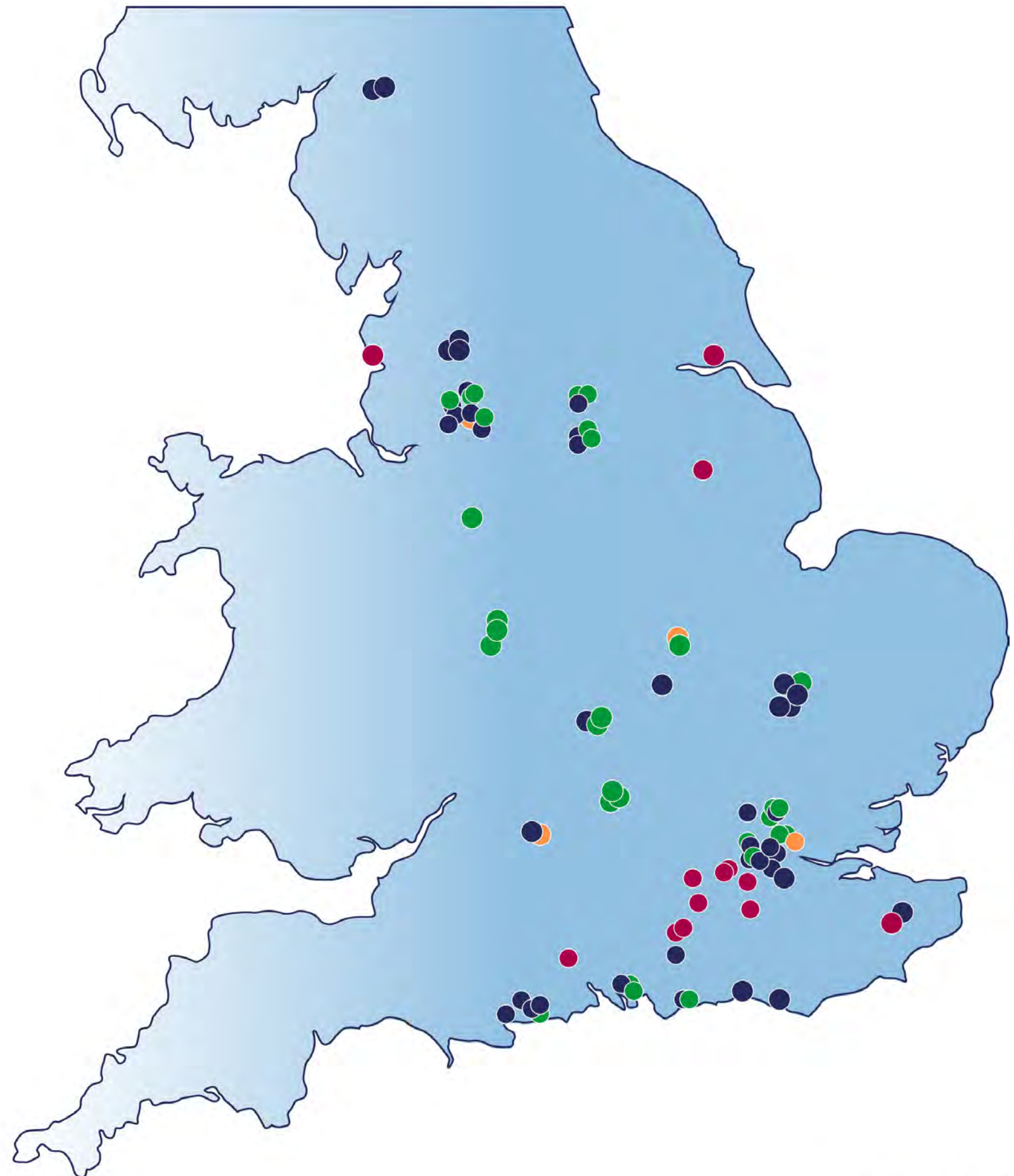
## SECONDARY ACADEMIES

Although United Learning is a national group of schools, we recognise the powerful impact formal collaboration and partnership has on driving school improvement and back office efficiencies. Our approach to clustering means that wherever possible, our schools form local clusters, sufficiently close to one another to allow the sharing of resources and expertise. Schools in our Group are finding out first-hand how effective this collaboration and partnership can be; be it benefitting from joint CPD, collaborating on developing resources, or securing economies of scale through collective procurement.

Across the country we have a number of established clusters and a number of schools working collaboratively within regions, as the Group moves towards a cluster structure. This includes groups of schools in Bournemouth, Cambridge, Carlisle, Lancashire, London, Manchester, Oxfordshire and the Midlands, Salford, Swindon, the South Coast, the South East, and Yorkshire. As a new Regional Director, you will have responsibility for a number of these.

### Our Schools

Primary Secondary All-Through Independent



Accurate as of June 2021



## ABOUT UNITED LEARNING

United Learning is a group of schools which aims to provide excellent education to children and young people across the country. We seek to improve the life chances of all the children and young people we serve and make it our mission to bring out 'the best in everyone' – students, staff, parents and the wider community. We uniquely comprise schools in both the state and the independent sectors. We currently educate over 60,000 students and employ over 9,000 members of staff including over 4,000 teachers.

As a group, we can offer more to both staff and young people than any single school could offer alone. The growing range of outstanding group-wide activities that we can provide will mean that more young people will have truly exceptional and inspiring experiences. We believe that our Group contains the most developed relationships and practical interaction between independent and state schools in the country, creating benefits for all the schools involved.

United Learning comprises both United Church Schools Trust, which operates our fee-paying independent schools, and United Learning Trust, which operates our state-funded academies.

To find out more about United Learning, please visit the website: [www.unitedlearning.org.uk](http://www.unitedlearning.org.uk)

As part of United Learning, our Secondary Education team shares the objective of bringing out 'the best in everyone', enabling each student to become a balanced, happy and articulate person with intellectual freedom, confidence, compassion, integrity and a lifelong love of learning.



## OUR ETHOS

Our approach to education is underpinned by a sense of moral purpose and commitment to doing what is right for children and young people. We believe in supporting our colleagues to achieve excellence and in acting with integrity in all our dealings within and beyond the Group. We believe the safety and welfare of all children and young people is paramount. We summarise this ethos as 'the best in everyone'.

This ethos underpins our core values:

AMBITION – to achieve the best for ourselves and others;

CONFIDENCE – to have the courage of our convictions and to take risks in the right cause;

CREATIVITY – to imagine possibilities and make them real;

RESPECT – of ourselves and others in all that we do;

ENTHUSIASM – to seek opportunity, find what is good and pursue talents and interests;

DETERMINATION – to overcome obstacles and achieve success.

As a single organisation, we seek to bring together the best of independent and state sectors, respecting both traditions and learning from each other. We believe that each of our schools is and should be distinctive – committed to developing its own strengths and identity while sharing our core values to promote service, compassion and generosity.







## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We believe that successful organisations make a priority of developing their staff; all the more so in education, where the people of the organisation are its most important asset. Whilst the development of all staff is important, we make support and professional development of Regional Directors, Headteachers and senior leaders a particular priority, given the impact they have on our schools.

We work on the basis that each of us, however effective, can always improve. Regional Directors set personal development objectives with the Director of Secondary Education each year and are supported to achieve them. Regional Directors are expected to take a role in supporting the leadership of the whole organisation, working with other leaders in the Group, and sharing ideas and practice with one another.

United Learning has also commissioned training programmes from major universities. We provide 360-degree feedback as part of professional development and leadership programme for our system leaders.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION TEAM

As a Regional Director you will be a part of United Learning's Secondary Education Team, led by the Director of Secondary Education. Alongside the national team of Regional Directors, our schools are supported by a team of subject specialists led by the Deputy Director (in English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, MFL, Music and Sport) as well as specialists in Sixth Form, SEND and Careers.

The Team also provides operational and administrative support to Regional Directors. The Team works flexibly to address its priorities and meets together regularly with the Director to discuss key issues, review strategy and agree goals for the year ahead.

United Learning's Central Office includes Data, HR, finance, technology, marketing, safeguarding, estates, and health and safety, which provide expert, professional support and guidance to schools, allowing Headteachers and Regional Directors to focus on educational support.



# OUR FRAMEWORK FOR EXCELLENCE

To achieve our mission, our schools prioritise five key principles:

## ‘THE BEST FROM EVERYONE’

Our aim is to bring out ‘the best in everyone’. So, we must expect the best from everyone, all the time. Every child is a special individual, capable of extraordinary things. Who can know the limits of any child’s potential? So, we expect unreasonably – we constantly encourage children to do what they think they can’t, to persist, to work hard and to be at their best.

From every adult we expect the same: that they are at their best, expect unreasonably of themselves, are determined and resilient and pass those expectations on to the children in all they do. We act with the utmost love, care and good faith – the highest standards come with the greatest attention to the wellbeing of all.

## ‘POWERFUL KNOWLEDGE’

Our most important purpose is to teach young people things they would not learn outside school, which free them to think and act more powerfully in their lives. Words and numbers are our most powerful ways of representing the world. Mastery of language and fluent mathematical skills are therefore our top priority. We aim to prepare young people to make a success of their lives: a core entitlement to subject-based learning; the development of talents; an understanding of work and society.

Worthwhile learning is often hard. Inspiring teaching is what gives access to difficult concepts and the thrill of intellectual discovery. Powerful knowledge is not static or backward-looking. It includes the ability to critique, challenge the status quo, think and learn.

## ‘EDUCATION WITH CHARACTER’

Academic success is very important. Exam passes are an important aspect of that. But there is more to a good education. Our schools also aim to develop character, compassion and service. Young people are expected to contribute to their school and to society; to try things which they think they cannot do; to persist in the face of difficulty; to become resilient in overcoming obstacles; to manage themselves; to work independently on things which stretch them; to work with others and in teams; to be courageous and caring; to lead.

We want young people to look back on a joyful schooling which has inspired and challenged them, given them wide opportunity and prepared them for the ups and downs of life.

## ‘LEADERSHIP IN EVERY ROLE’

Our children are leaders of the future. We expect them to start today – taking advantage of structured opportunities to lead and taking responsibility for themselves and others. Every adult in the school is a leader. In every word, tone and gesture, they set direction and expectation. We expect every adult to take responsibility and the initiative to do what is right for the children.

All those in formal leadership positions create the climate in which others work. They demand the highest standards, build an inclusive performance culture, develop their teams and create the space for others to lead. All leaders listen, grow relationships, act with integrity and care and expect the best from themselves and others in building a happy, confident school.

## ‘CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT’

However good we are, we can be better. We constantly look for improvements and implement them with pace. We look for ideas for improvement inside the organisation and out; we observe one another; we steal good ideas with pride and look to make them better; we work together to improve.

We always look at the evidence and are rigorous in evaluating impact. We stop or change things which aren’t working; we improve things which are. We aim for high leverage: high impact for low effort and low cost. We constantly look to have more impact for less cost and effort and to spend every pound wisely.



## JOB DESCRIPTION

Reporting to the Director of Secondary Education, the Regional Director will have overall responsibility for leading the school improvement of a group of secondary academies. They will: define and develop support for leaders of secondary academies; have line-management responsibility for Headteachers; report on the progress of school improvement activities; develop and capacity build school clusters; help implement The United Learning Way (which outlines the guiding educational principles of our Trust); and contribute to the growth of the organisation. Working flexibly with commitment and passion will be key to achieving these goals.

The Regional Director will oversee Group-wide strategic projects to help develop secondary school improvement provision and meet the Group's objectives. This presents exciting opportunities to innovate and implement support programmes for our schools in a number of key areas across the Group, including: building cluster capacity and growth; developing the quality of teaching and learning; supporting schools in preparation for external inspections; and contributing to Group-wide Education Forums which are held throughout each academic year and provide CPD for our heads.

The successful candidate will work directly with a group of secondary academies. This offers a significant and unique opportunity to line manage multiple Headteachers in a variety of contexts and support them in their respective schools, while simultaneously fostering strong support networks in regional areas which share expertise and strengthen collective leadership across the Group.

This work will be supported by a network of internal and external colleagues. This may include Subject Advisers, who provide regular, 'on-the-ground' bespoke challenge and support to individual schools either across a range of provision or in subject specific areas. The successful candidate will demonstrate the skills required to draw on the work of these specialists when assessing school performance and quality assuring recommendations for school improvement activities.

Additionally, working alongside the schools will require close collaborative working with members of United Learning's Secondary Education team, who provide project expertise and administrative co-ordination for senior colleagues, and members of our core Central Office teams who provide support in key areas including finance, HR, technology, estates, safeguarding, and health and safety.

In all their activities the successful candidate will have the ability to develop strong working relationships with individuals and when operating as part of a team. They will use all their experience to create a positive and engaging working environment, which encourages a shared expectation of outstanding service among colleagues for our pupils both at school level and in the wider organisation.

We believe that schools are at their best when autonomous and able to develop a distinctive ethos, reflecting the needs of their pupils and the context within which they work. The Regional Director will help define and deliver a vision for secondary provision within the Group which supports individual school leaders to deliver outstanding educational provision, while strengthening United Learning at both the cluster, regional and national level.





## ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Deputising as required for the Director of Secondary Education;
- Directing, influencing and implementing the secondary school improvement strategy, developing support to schools within a culture that promotes imaginative and effective solutions to drive school improvement;
- Providing high quality strategic input and operational support and guidance for secondary school improvement;
- Contributing to raising standards of achievement across our secondary schools;
- Aligning to and implementing The United Learning Way;
- Promoting collaboration between schools, within clusters and between sectors;
- Line managing specific secondary academy Headteachers, within a regional cluster model, providing challenge and support to secure school improvement;
- Liaising with our People Development Team, ensuring that the programmes of professional development for staff across the Group continue to improve and have impact;
- Working closely with functional heads in Central Office (such as finance, technology, HR, data, marketing and events, estates) to ensure that the needs of the academies are understood and met so that the potential of a single highly professional back office is fully realised;
- Liaising with our external support partners (such as legal and PR);
- Providing advice and guidance on policy requirements, including safeguarding and statutory compliance;
- Working with the Director of Secondary Education to:
  - I. improve the performance and improvement of academies;
  - II. ensure that the right challenge and support are in place to support Headteachers.
- Supporting the building and maintaining of a culture of learning and development at every level of the organisation;
- Contributing to the continuous improvement of existing Group systems for performance monitoring and quality assurance;
- Working collaboratively with Headteachers in the identification and transfer of knowledge and practice across the Group;
- To contribute to the strategy for growth of the Group, ensuring that the expansion of United Learning in the secondary phase is well thought-through, coherent and consistent with our aim of doing an outstanding job of supporting each new secondary school that joins the Group;
- To ensure that processes of induction and improvement for secondary schools are effective.







## SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To coach and support Headteachers, getting behind their efforts and helping them to accelerate improvements;
- Conduct termly meetings with Heads, Senior Leadership Teams and Local Governing Body chairs to review the impact of school improvement strategies;
- Reviewing and promoting school participation in Group wide activities;
- Setting personal development objectives for Heads and academic targets for schools;
- To develop strong partnerships within the Group and with external organisations to support and accelerate the development of excellence in secondary education;
- To spend sufficient time in schools and academies in the Group to review and evaluate provision, understand their existing progress, the live issues and the next steps being taken, and to coach and support the leaders as required;
- To monitor, interrogate and understand reported performance data from schools and academies in order to secure appropriate support to school leaders;
- To monitor and advise on the resourcing of secondary education;
- To work in partnership with leaders in the field of secondary practice in order to ensure that the Group is constantly learning and improving.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- Headteachers and senior staff – so that schools receive high quality strategic input and operational and support;
- Director, Regional Director colleagues, Deputy Directors, Subject Advisers and the support team, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to all work;
- CEO, on behalf of Director of Secondary Education to progress ongoing work without delay;
- Functional heads and teams in Central Office (such as finance, IT, HR, data, marketing and events, estates) to ensure that the needs of the academies are understood and met.



# PASSION POSITIVITY POTENTIAL

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### TRACK RECORD

- You will have a strong record of educational leadership, ideally as a school leader (Headteacher / Principal level) or as a senior strategic leader in an educational organisation: raising standards, achieving outstanding results and having personal impact;
- You will have achieved high levels of professional credibility with leaders in schools;
- Desirably, you will have recent inspection experience;
- Desirably, you will have experience of a specialism area, for example most able, EAL, SEND, disadvantaged.

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- You will have significant understanding of and expertise in leading school operations;
- You will be skilled in developing a culture of outstanding performance and supporting improvements in standards, in teaching and learning and in behaviour;
- You will have effective partnership working skills – able to build and draw on the strengths of others to generate outstanding results;
- You will have a thorough understanding of latest legislation to ensure that all young people are safe and thrive;
- You will be capable of building strong relationships with adults and young people, analysing data and qualitative information, observing practice with insight, working with experts in curriculum and qualifications and analysing and setting longer term policy, strategy and direction;
- You will have shown the ability to innovate systematically and in a disciplined way in order to achieve results.

### PERSONAL QUALITIES

- You will be committed to United Learning's ethos and values and The United Learning Way;
- You will be committed to the safeguarding of all children and young people;
- You will be able to work flexibly and creatively, looking for ways to bring improvement and a fresh perspective to challenging issues;
- You will be a learner – always looking to develop your skills and practice, listen to feedback and adapt as necessary to achieve results;
- You will readily build effective relationships which allow you to both challenge and support, and will deal with staff, students and others with wisdom and with sensitivity to the situation;
- You will be a determined and resilient leader, who understands how to draw out great leadership from others, but will also take on with courage the challenges that need to be addressed;
- You will be a skilled communicator, capable of adapting to a situation, equally able to represent externally, drive performance and work in partnership;
- You will be skilled in achieving outcomes through working as part of a central office team which has a diverse range of expertise, recognising and valuing the important contribution other professionals can make to driving school improvement;
- You will embody relentlessly high expectations while being open, energetic and enthusiastic and retaining a sense of humour;
- At the centre of this leadership role will be the promotion of a culture of learning, integrity, moral purpose and high standards.





## HOW TO APPLY

For your application to be considered, we will need you to:

1

### REGISTER YOUR PROFILE

Using our online portal via:  
[unitedlearning.current-vacancies.com/OneAccount/account/Login](https://unitedlearning.current-vacancies.com/OneAccount/account/Login)

2

### COMPLETE AN ONLINE COVERING LETTER

You will be prompted to complete an online covering letter after completing your profile; which explains your motivation for applying and outlines your suitability for the role including how you satisfy the requirements of the Person Specification. Please confirm in your letter that you are available for both interview dates (see below) around which there is no flexibility. This supporting statement should be no longer than 8,000 characters.

3

### PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH 2 REFEREES WHEN PROMPTED TO DO SO

Including one of whom must be your current or most recent employer. In line with our practice on safer recruitment, we will take up references for all those candidates who proceed to interview, as well as asking those candidates to complete a further standard application form.

The deadline for receipt of applications is midnight Friday 3 June.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

To arrange an informal discussion about the role please contact Debbie Goodwin, via email [Debbie.goodwin@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:Debbie.goodwin@unitedlearning.org.uk).



## THE SELECTION PROCESS

We will treat all enquiries, formal and informal, in confidence. The selection process will be as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by email. If you have not received acknowledgement that your application has been received within two working days of sending it, please contact [Charlotte.Howard-Moran@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:Charlotte.Howard-Moran@unitedlearning.org.uk). Shortlisting will occur during week commencing Monday 6th June 2022.
- The selection process will take place on the 13th and 14th June 2022. You do need to be available for both dates.
- Candidates will be offered full feedback on their application and/or interview.



**EMPLOYER**

United Learning

**POSITION**

Secondary Regional Director

**JOB TYPE**

Full time

**REPORTING LINE**

Education Director – Secondary

**LOCATION**

Field-based

**START DATE**

1 January 2023 (or sooner, if agreed)

**STARTING SALARY**

Competitive six figure salary plus private health care & TPS

**ILL HEALTH**

United Learning's sick leave and pay policy will apply. The policy allows for a three years' sliding qualification period, at the end of which you will be entitled to full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days.

**HOLIDAYS**

30 days annual leave plus bank holidays. You are entitled to take holidays during the normal school holidays except where your presence is required for proper execution of your duties as Regional Director.

**PENSION SCHEME**

Teachers' Pension.

**HEALTH INSURANCE**

The Regional Director is eligible to be a member of United Learning's medical insurance scheme, currently with BUPA. It is also possible for other family members to be included within the policy but, when this happens, there is a charge.

**SAFEGUARDING**

United Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. DBS (previously CRB) check is required for all successful applicants.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

United Learning's normal terms of conditions of employment for the position of Secondary Regional Director. The final detailed terms and conditions are subject to agreement between United Learning and the successful candidate and will be reflected in the formal employment contract.







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