

Job Description

Job Title	Policy Director
Directorate	Policy & Communications
Reports To	Executive Director, Policy & Communications

Job summary

The Policy Director provides strategic leadership and operational oversight to Sport England's Policy team based in the Policy & Communications Directorate. The role leads Sport England's approach to shaping and influencing national policy and investment priorities, ensuring that our ambition to increase participation in sport and physical activity is reflected in national government strategy.

This role connects Sport England with government departments and the wider public sector. Through building strong relationships with government officials and other key stakeholders the role positions Sport England as a trusted partner in national policy development in the sporting, health and physical activity sectors.

Role of the collective leadership team:

All members of Sport England's Leadership Team share collective accountability for the organisation's success and the delivery of Uniting the Movement and. They empower staff, promote a positive and inclusive workplace culture, and champion cross-functional collaboration. Leadership Team members are expected to break down silos, encourage joined-up working, and inspire collective action in pursuit of Sport England's mission: ensuring everyone in England can benefit from sport and physical activity.

Dimensions

Direct Reports:	This role will have direct reports within the Policy team
Budget:	TBC
Accountability:	Organisation-wide national policy development
Location:	Flexible
Key Contacts:	ELT, Board and key external stakeholders e.g. senior civil servants, ministers and other public officials.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Government Influence & Policy Leadership

- Lead a coherent, organisation-wide approach to policy development and delivery, working across Directorates and with senior stakeholders. Accountable for defining and agreeing Sport England's overall policy approach, acting as the central authority to ensure alignment and consistency with organisational strategy while recognising subject matter experts retain ownership of specific areas.

- Build consensus on policy development across Sport England by influencing, aligning, and convening policy ideas with subject matter experts and senior stakeholders rather than direct ownership of all policies.
- Work with the Insight team and other stakeholders to ensure decision-making and policy development are grounded in robust evidence, supported by high-quality position papers, consultation responses and strategic submissions that shape public policy initiatives and influence decision-makers
- With support from the External Affairs team, develop and deliver a clear external engagement strategy that mobilises key stakeholders to help shape government policy, legislation and spending priorities in line with Sport England's strategic priorities and organisational policy position, and
- Build strategic relationships to position Sport England as a prominent stakeholder within government to influence policy agendas within government departments, local government and the wider public arena, and bring insight on the perspectives of external stakeholders into Sport England.
- Represent Sport England in high-level meetings, cross-government forums, and public platforms to advocate for Sport England's agenda.
- Advise the Board on Sport England's approach to influencing government, including how best to advance organisational policy positions in response to the evolving political landscape.
- Horizon scan across government to anticipate and interpret legislative and non-legislative policy developments, assessing their implications for Sport England's policy positions and influencing activity.

Partnership Leadership

- Build alliances with sector bodies, local government, national organisations, and advocacy groups to strengthen Sport England's influence in the public sphere.
- Lead cross-sector coalitions within the sporting sector to advocate for shared policy goals that increase participation in sport.

Leadership & Line Management

- With support from the Executive Director create, lead and develop Sport England's Policy team, setting the strategic direction for policy development across Sport England.
- Manage the Policy team to ensure that policy officers are deployed across the public arena to effectively support Sport England's strategic ambitions.
- Set clear strategic direction, objectives and performance expectations for direct reports, ensuring alignment with organisational priorities and values.
- Conduct regular performance reviews and development conversations, supporting the growth, effectiveness and wellbeing of team members.

- Drive a culture of empowerment, innovation and professional excellence, ensuring teams are supported to deliver high-quality outcomes.
- Manage and support teams through organisational change, ensuring clear communication, engagement and alignment with transformation priorities.
- Champion organisational values, promoting a culture of integrity, inclusion, psychological safety and accountability.

Financial & Resource Management

- Ensure effective stewardship of the Policy team's resources, delivering value for money and alignment with organisational priorities.
- Ensure compliance with financial, legal, regulatory and ethical standards across all areas of responsibility.

Ad hoc

- Contribute to organisational-wide projects as required, ensuring successful implementation and review.
- Work flexibly to carry out any other duties that are within the colleague's skills and abilities whenever reasonably required.
- Ensure compliance with the Employee Handbook and organisational policies to model high standards of conduct, promote consistency across the organisation and uphold legal and ethical responsibilities. This includes setting the tone for accountability and ensuring that all practices align with the organisation's values and regulatory requirements.

Selection Criteria

The additional skills, knowledge and experience required.

Essential

1. Experience working with and successfully influencing central government or arm's-length bodies.
2. Demonstrable experience of successfully developing, delivering and evaluating strategic plans in area of expertise over a one-to-three-year horizon.
3. Demonstrable ability to successfully develop and operationalise policy and/or programme delivery in area of expertise.
4. High levels of judgement and political awareness, with the ability to navigate ambiguity and make sound decisions in a public or regulated context.
5. Demonstrable ability to engage with and influence internal and external senior stakeholders to support functional strategy.

Desirable

1. Knowledge of the sport and physical activity sector and its system-level challenges and opportunities.