

Lead UX Architect

Basic information

Terms: Contractor

Location: Cheltenham

Reports to: Head of Marketing Communications

Team: Marketing

Business unit: Customer Experience & Marketing

Additional conditions:

Some travel and offsite working required



Role purpose:

The Lead User Experience Architect is responsible for designing product interactions, information architecture, and workflows that focus on usability, accessibility, adoption, engagement, quality assurance, ongoing effectiveness, and value. Working closely with end users and business stakeholders, you will apply user-centered design principles and practices to identify problems, understand business goals, and processes, and provide the appropriate design solution and user interface requirements in mobile, desktop, and large screen formats. Working in close partnership with software development teams, product managers, product owners, and business stakeholders to ensure product feasibility and value. A passionate advocate for the end user, with deep empathy for their everyday struggles and challenges, the role holder will translate complex problems into compelling solutions, validating and iterating designs with target users.

Key duties and responsibilities:

- Manage the staff in the UX Team, including the appraisal, objective setting, and the identification of staff development and training opportunities.
- Promote overall awareness and competence in design research and design thinking, mentoring not only your own team, but all those who contribute to the user experience of our products, on the best way to deliver successful outcomes, with the customer and user lens.
- Be the champion for user-centered design process, vision, and standards across our products; always looking for opportunities to maximise the impacts of UCD.

- Apply user-centered design methods for problem solving, solution designing, creating shared understanding within cross-functional environments, as you tackle complex design problems and influence product strategy.
- Create detailed user cases, user workflows, and user interface requirements, and specifications utilising user stories, context scenarios, journey mapping, wireframes, and other design deliverables for user interfaces, for a variety of platforms including desktop, web, and mobile devices.
- Develop and implement a variety of formal and informal user research and evaluation methods and metrics, to review and test design solutions against end user and business success metrics and evangelise those metrics across the organisation.
- To monitor and proactively respond to issues identified through testing and analytics.
- Develop and execute plans to identify problems and opportunities to improve efficiency, effectiveness and overall satisfaction, benchmarking and reporting on user experience (including satisfaction studies) across all UCAS websites.
- Support the strategy and vision for consistency and cohesiveness across channels and end-user touch points.
- Mapping out complex interaction flows that take into account cross-product integration.
- To establish requirements for new developments working with key stakeholders.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with diverse teams spanning all organisational levels. Leverage your relationships to ensure stakeholders are engaged with the user experience.
- To brief development teams, and liaise with them throughout the build to ensure delivery of the project on time to budget.
- To work with the legal team and development teams to establish accessibility standards across all UCAS sites, and make plans for improvements to reach required standards.
- To manage the development of accessibility guidelines for reference by internal and external development teams.
- To ensure sites are optimised to meet search, accessibility, and legal standards.
- To work closely with the wider team to ensure content is delivered effectively.
- To manage all project documentation to track the online customer experience, and ensure team members and key stakeholders are kept informed.
- To work with external organisations as required to scope and deliver projects.
- Provide quality assurance and supervision of outputs.

Accountabilities:

Financial authorities:

- Manage any associated costs and budget (no direct budgetary authority).
- To contribute towards collective financial revenue and savings targets.

Non-financial authorities:

- Authority to develop project plans.
- Authority to scope user testing, recruit users, and carry out user testing projects.
- Authority to make improvements to the website based on analytics and user feedback.
- Authority to make changes to service in development based on user feedback.
- Authority to manage all stages within a project to achieve the overall project objectives.
- Authority to produce project documentation.
- Authority to make decisions to implement projects according to project plans.
- Authority to make decisions to improve project delivery, and make changes to projects according to customer feedback.
- Authority to manage external suppliers and staff.
- Authority to present projects to third parties and internal staff.
- Authority to represent UCAS at internal meetings and external events.

Primary customers and stakeholders:

- **Internal:** UCAS staff across all business areas.
- **External:** Pre-applicants, applicants, parents, advisers, schools, higher education providers, members, media organisations, and other external corporate stakeholders such as government and its agencies.

Person specification:

- Proven expertise across all facets of user-centered design and user experience, spanning UX strategy, experience and interaction design, user research and assessment, prototyping, user adoption, and visual design that adhere to the latest design patterns for a broad set of platforms, including web and mobile.
- Excellent knowledge of all aspects of UX, quantitative and qualitative test methods, lab testing, and report and recommendation writing.
- Able to thrive working in a cross-company virtual team, willing to constructively critique designs and have your designs critiqued.
- Experience of, and ability to overcome, the challenges of building enterprise-grade software that still 'feels' like a consumer app.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills: you can communicate conceptual ideas, design rationale, and design details both verbally and visually.
- A team player, with the ability to successfully juggle multiple projects in a compressed timeline, with competing priorities.
- Self-starter with experience working in a fast-paced, iterative, Agile development environment.
- Experience managing and motivating a multi-disciplinary team.

This role profile sets out the scope and main duties of the post at the date when it was drawn up. Such details may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the level of the post. All UCAS employees are expected to be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to their role and may be asked to perform other duties, which reasonably correspond to the general character of their role and their level of responsibility.

Our values in action

Customer – We always look through the customer lens. The logic of the customer is the logic of UCAS.

Commitment – When we commit, we deliver on time, quality, and budget, or we negotiate changed commitments for good reason. We never leave commitments uncovered.

Team – We work collaboratively. When we commit, we commit as an individual and as a team. We strive for and support team success as well as individual success.

Outcomes – We plan and do things to achieve outcomes. We define them, aspire to them, and deliver them.

Agility – We know we need to be agile when we look through the customer lens, when we make commitments, when we work in teams, and strive for the right outcomes.

Extraordinary – We are ambitious for our customers, for UCAS, and for our teams. We want more than ordinary outcomes – we strive to achieve extraordinary outcomes, extraordinary customer focus, and an extraordinary culture of high performance and quality of focus.