

**Passenger Focus
Job description**

Title:	Head of Research
Grade / Band:	E
Line Manager:	Chief Executive
Salary:	£55,000 to £65,000

Purpose of the job

To help Passenger Focus get the best deal for Britain's rail and bus passengers through the delivery and communication of high quality passenger research, providing evidence for our campaigns to drive service improvements for passengers.

Outline

This is a pivotal role within Passenger Focus and the post holder will be expected to effectively lead a team and manage a budget. Other duties include the planning, commissioning and delivery of high-quality passenger research, including mystery shopper projects, as well as managing the National Passenger Survey, which is used as an industry benchmark. They will manage all Passenger Focus's research activities and will provide advice to the organisation on research issues and ensure it has access to all the information it needs to make informed decisions and comments. It will be essential to promote cross-team working to ensure maximum use of Passenger Focus's resources. Communication of the organisation's research work to internal and external audiences will be crucial. In addition, the Head of Research will assume the roles and responsibilities required as a Government Social Research Head of Profession.

Tasks and responsibilities:

Research

- planning, commissioning and delivery of Passenger Focus's annual research programme - including the maintenance of high standards of rail research, development and delivery of a new research agenda responding to the needs of bus and coach passengers, and an ability to position the organisation's understanding of air passengers
- to ensure the effective delivery of the twice yearly National Passenger Survey, which is the largest ongoing survey of rail passengers, and is used by industry stakeholders as a benchmark of performance
- to set the direction and lead the collection and distribution of data about railways, bus and coach routes and passengers - including the identification of new research projects and themes
- to quality assure and take responsibility for the integrity of our research
- to ensure that the delivery of the Bus Mystery Traveller Survey and the Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey (as of April 2010) complies with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics

- as Head of Profession - you will be responsible for implementing the provisions set out in statistical legislative policies, safeguarding the integrity of national and official statistics produced by Passenger Focus
- as Head of Profession - you will also be required to play a major role in statistical planning, considering both Passenger Focus and Governmental requirements and take part in the formulation of statistical policy
- you will be required to take on responsibility and tasks as appropriate in the role as Passenger Focus's Head of Profession for statistical purposes.

Head of Profession

Responsibilities specific to this role can be found as a separate document on the 'Jobs' homepage.

Relationship management

- to build and maintain high-quality influential relationships with industry research partners such as the Department for Transport, Network Rail, train operating companies, the Office of Rail Regulation, the Association of Train Operating Companies, Transport for London, Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly Government, and academics. In addition, there will be a need to establish new relationships with bus and coach industry research partners
- to promote the work of Passenger Focus and network effectively to maintain its reputation as the 'authoritative' passenger voice
- to interpret, translate and present ongoing statistical research to key industry stakeholders and media representatives
- to maintain the trust and confidence of stakeholders in our research findings when faced with challenges from service providers
- to give sensible, practical high-quality advice to the Chief Executive and Board on passenger research issues. This will often be at short notice and under pressure from the media
- to be effective in this role, you will need to develop relationships with other Heads of Profession, Chief Statisticians and other analysts to promote and enable data sharing for statistical purposes.

Leading the team

- to lead, coach and manage the team of researchers in a changing and expanding environment to ensure the integrity of the research is maintained
- ensure staff are motivated and committed to Passenger Focus and its aims
- ensure staff are equipped appropriately to enable them to achieve their objectives and increase personal effectiveness by identification of development needs and delivery of personal development opportunities
- maintain and improve the statistical competency of Passenger Focus through targeted recruitment, training and development
- identify personal, team and organisational successes and ensure these are recognised, communicated and celebrated.

Budget

- manage the research budget of £1.8 million per annum, to include undertaking the National Passenger Survey, the Bus Mystery Traveller Survey, and the Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey (as of April 2010) whilst ensuring value for money, financial probity and best value
- managing any funding secured through partnership working
- ensure budget bids and project plans are prepared in line with organisational guidelines.

Travel

- the nature of the role requires national travel and frequent time spent out of the office.

Passenger Focus Person specification

Education / professional knowledge and relevant experience:

Essential

- educated to degree level
- relevant experience in a similar role, including experience of successfully leading a team and commissioning and managing suppliers
- extensive knowledge and experience of market research techniques / statistical practises and their application including effective management and analysis of large amounts of data
- a proven ability of successful contract management techniques and implementation of procurement procedures, including demonstrated experience in managing research agencies and competitive tendering processes
- experience of using Microsoft Office (particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook) to an advanced level
- working knowledge of statistical packages such as SPSS, SNAP and Quanvert.

Desirable

- experience of managing large scale, ongoing research projects
- knowledge of, or interest in, the transport industry.

Skills and competencies

- **Communication and influencing** - an ability to effectively interpret and translate research, communicating with credibility to key stakeholders. Persuasively presenting information with clarity, adapting style to different audiences, promoting the value of the research
- **Relationship management / networking** - an ability to build rapport and respect in order to develop and sustain trusting working relationships and networks both in and outside of the organisation. Should have an ability to position the organisation's understanding of air passengers when necessary

- **Resilience** - an ability to deal with a variety of challenging stakeholders and competing priorities directly and in a controlled manner. Handles challenges confidently and objectively under pressure, maintaining the integrity of the research
- **Inspirational leadership** - proven ability in leading and developing a team, to set clear objectives and high standards for everyone, including self, and achieve these through an inclusive leadership style. Openly supportive of staff and able to work with minimum supervision
- **Strategic planning** - the ability to formulate, communicate, and monitor clear strategic plans that deliver organisational objectives by clearly linking research plans and objectives to the overall business strategy
- **Change management** - an ability to positively drive change while promoting an environment of continuous improvement. Is a self starter who strives relentlessly to deliver business results, using a flexible and effective approach to adapt to strategic changes in research focus
- **Analytical / critical thinking** – an ability to consider the business impact of both internal and external issues and use this information to formulate strong evaluative arguments to influence key decision-makers and build trusting and consistent relationships with all network contacts, including the Chief Executive and Board.

Important working relationships

- Chairman, Board and Chief Executive
- National, Regional, online and specialist media contacts
- Passenger link teams
- Policy and research team
- Agency suppliers
- Key industry stakeholders, including colleagues at the Department for Transport, Network Rail, train operating companies, bus and coach operators, local government and regulators
- National Statistician.