Job Description

This form summarises the purpose of the job and lists its key tasks. It is not a definitive list of all the tasks to be undertaken as those can be varied from time to time at the discretion of the School, in consultation with the post holder.

Job title: Platform Specialist (Azure / Microsoft 365 / Windows)

Department/Division: Data & Technology Services   **Accountable to:** Head of Platforms

Job Summary

Working within the Platform Services team to supply highly available and functional Microsoft cloud and on-premise services.

The role will be responsible for assisting in the delivery of services including but not restricted to:-

- Azure and Microsoft 365 platform administration, security and operation.
- Design, deployment and operation of Azure infrastructure and platform services.
- Automation of Microsoft 365 cloud workflows and 'shift left' of operational and support activities.
- Operation of Active Directory and Azure Entra ID identity services including SSO federation for other systems.
- Ensuring coordination and complementary operation and alignment of Azure and Microsoft 365 services and applications.
- Applying and coordinating security features and principles across Azure and Microsoft 365 services.
- Ensuring synchronisation between Azure and on-premise directory services.
- Operation of on-premise Windows based systems and services.
- Decommissioning of legacy Windows on-premise systems and migration to cloud hosted environments.

All members of the Data and Technology team will be driving the services to be delivered in a more optimised and utility fashion, freeing up internal resources to focus on adding value to the rest of the LSE. This role is no exception and will be expected to drive for a shift left approach through use of trusted third parties for utility activity.

The role will also deliver operational projects as determined by the infrastructure maintenance plan and will contribute to the reviewing and updating of this plan and also will engage in resource mapping exercises to ensure the total cost of services is accurately reflected.

Duties and Responsibilities

Operations and Service Delivery
- To be responsible for the design, operation, security, monitoring and maintenance of Microsoft server or cloud-based systems for which the post holder is the subject matter expert such as Active Directory or Microsoft Entra ID, and to ensure a highly available, resilient and fault tolerant system design and appropriate server performance and scalability specification where applicable.
- To provide subject matter expertise in the technical strategy, design, architecture, documentation and operation of Microsoft cloud services deployed through Azure Resource Manager.
- To provide subject matter expertise in the technical operation, interoperation, coordination and alignment of Azure and Microsoft 365 applications and services such as Entra ID, Exchange, SharePoint, Purview, Intune, Fabric, Power Platform etc.
- To provide access to resources and applications via expert operation of key authentication services such as Active Directory and Azure Entra ID while running access and permissions reviews and monitoring and maintaining the synchronisation between the two.
- To utilise best practice and industry standards for automated deployment techniques and tools, such as Azure ARM, to configure and deploy Azure resources.
- To provide subject matter expertise for third line support referrals covering the range of Microsoft cloud-based technologies such as Entra ID, Microsoft 365, Azure infrastructure and platforms, and supply knowledge transfer and training to Data and Technology Services colleagues.
- To work with other subject matter experts in the Platforms Team in the provision of on-site and cloud-based enterprise storage services such as Azure Files and Blob storage.
- To deploy or configure appropriate service and security monitoring, reporting and alerting of Microsoft-based systems while optimising or securing services to meet agreed service levels or standards.
- To work to industry standard and best practice security principles, such as zero trust and least privilege, in the design and operation of systems and services.
- To provide technical support, trouble-shooting/fault-resolution and/or escalation to suppliers as necessary, for servers, systems and services operated by the Platform Services Team, in order to maintain the provision of high-quality server-based services as defined in agreed service levels and ensuring that all support calls are appropriately logged.
- To provide technical specification, installation, management, monitoring and effective operation of other servers, systems and services operated by the Data and Technology Services Team in line with operational planning targets and agreed service levels.
- To provide subject matter expertise in the development and ongoing review and update of business continuity arrangements, plans and exercises.
- To provide Microsoft cloud subject matter expertise for projects where required, including supporting transition to live.
- To keep expert knowledge and technical skills up to date and evaluate related innovative technologies the School could benefit from deploying.
- To ensure the protection of data assets stored and processed on servers by implementing appropriate security policies, software updates and patches, threat protection and ensuring all data is effectively backed up, in accordance with Data and Technology Services policies and guidelines.
- To provide cover for and assist other Platform Services team personnel with their work, when required.

Communication
- To maintain a customer focus in the communication of technical information and documentation of services.
- To convey and discuss specialist technical and operational information to team colleagues, operational managers and departmental representatives as required.

- To produce detailed architectures, standards, plans, specifications and documentation for IT systems and servers in compliance with relevant Data and Technology Services and LSE policies, and/or other regulatory, compliance and disaster recovery best practice.
- To communicate and liaise with external suppliers, consultants, maintainers, and sector partners to ensure the provision of high-quality server based services as defined in published service levels.
- To compile and present service performance statistics and reports for server or cloud-based systems or services.
- To document, to a high technical standard, the system architecture, server configuration and disaster recovery plans for systems for which the post holder is the lead specialist.

Teamwork and Motivation
- To work as a member of the Platform services Team, supporting other team members and liaising closely with colleagues in Data and Technology Services and elsewhere.
- To act as a lead member and support the needs of project teams and working groups as determined by the Head of Platforms.

Liaison and networking
- To communicate and liaise with external suppliers, consultants, maintainers, sector partners and community peers to obtain high quality provision of equipment, services and information relating to the delivery of Data and Technology Services, services to the School.
- To build and maintain working relationships with colleagues in IMT and other departments for the mutual exchange of information, the delivery of IT infrastructure services and projects, and for the rectification of faults.
- To represent Data and Technology Services at internal and external meetings and events.

Planning and Organisation
- To play a leading role in the evaluation, testing, architecture, planning, specification, procurement, deployment and documentation of IT infrastructure for business-critical services and projects for which the post holder is the lead specialist.
- To implement and administer effective operational and monitoring procedures and processes to ensure a very high degree of stability, availability and performance, as directed by the Head of Platforms.

Initiative and problem solving
- To anticipate problems which would seriously compromise the success of business-critical IT projects and to take the initiative to identify and present potential solutions to the Head of Platforms and team colleagues.

Investigation, Analysis and Research
- To maintain a high degree of expertise and staying up to date with technical, industry, legislative and other developments for systems for which the post holder is the lead specialist.
- To maintain awareness of new and emerging technologies and to develop such skills and knowledge as are required to evaluate, introduce and develop new technologies for the long-term benefit to the School.
- To effectively maintain expertise in infrastructure and systems technologies deployed at the School through ongoing evaluation, testing and research, working with vendors and external sources of information where appropriate.

Flexibility
To deliver services effectively, a degree of flexibility may be required in the duties performed in order to meet the exigencies of service. Job roles may also naturally develop over time and ongoing substantial changes to a role will be discussed between line managers and their staff, with job descriptions updated as and when appropriate.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
LSE is committed to building a diverse, equitable and truly inclusive university. All posts (and post holders) will seek to ensure diversity and inclusion, while opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or social and economic background.

Ethics Code
Posts (and post holders) are assumed to have a responsibility to act in accordance with the School's Ethics Code and to promote the principles and values that the Code enshrines. The Ethics Code clearly states that the whole LSE community, including all staff, students, and governors of LSE, are expected to act in accordance with the principles which are set out in the Code. As such you are required to read and familiarise yourself with it. The School's Effective Behaviours Framework is designed to support this Code. It sets out examples for the six behaviours that all staff are expected to demonstrate, these can be found on the following link: click here

Environmental Sustainability
The post holder is required to minimise environmental impact in the performance of the role, and actively contribute to the delivery of the LSE Environmental Policy.