

Public Relations & Communications Assistant Level 4

Typical duration: 12-18 months

Typical job titles include: Junior Account Executive, Junior Consultant, Junior Press Officer, Junior Publicist, Public Affairs Assistant, Campaign Assistant, PR Assistant & Communications Assistant.

Occupational Profile: Public Relations (PR) and Communications concerns the building, protecting and maintaining of positive reputation for brands, organisations and individuals. It also concerns the way those brands, organisations and individuals communicate about themselves, their products or their services with the public, via different methods. The industry employs over 63,000 individuals in the UK and organisations and employers come from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Typically, PR & Communications Assistants either work in agencies or in-house for employers. They communicate with different people: the media, the public, internal colleagues or any number of different audiences to get their client's or organisation's message across and influence opinions and behaviour in the most effective way.

They are responsible for researching and understanding their clients' / organisation's goals, and then using their digital and communication expertise to support the day to day delivery of effective campaigns in order to deliver specific or organisational objectives. This could take various forms including supporting social media activity, blogs, press releases or planning events. The occupation requires using one's own initiative while supporting those leading on campaigns and so involves working closely with colleagues in a team environment.

Knowledge

A PR & Communications Assistant has a keen interest in, and demonstrable **knowledge** and understanding of:

- **Current affairs, the PR industry, the media and marketing** – including sector specific insight, news, politics, contemporary culture, new consumer media technology, behavioural change theory and public relations best practice.
- **Finance processes related to PR campaigns** – managing timesheets and basic suppliers, including (but not limited to) office supplies, print production, social media advertising and event venue costs.
- **The principles of operational management** - effective planning, organising and prioritising of workloads and suppliers to meet deadlines and objectives, and key processes (e.g. status reports, databases, reporting).
- **IT**- how and when to use Word, Excel, PowerPoint, WordPress, EventBrite, Survey Monkey, Mailchimp, etc for maximum effectiveness in the delivery of campaigns.
- **Planning and production processes involved in building campaigns** – the basics of creating a communications strategy, developing communications tactics and implementing a crisis plan. Digital build and content creation timeframes, print deadlines, production lead-times and media deadlines.
- **Public Relations & Communications objectives** – how tactical targets can be set for activity, based on insight and strategy, to help meet overall individual or organisation requirements.

Skills

A PR & Communications Assistant has the skills to:

- **Use IT effectively to support campaigns** - can use bespoke social media / PR software, such as media databases and media monitoring tools to deliver activity.
- **Build effective relationships & interpersonal communications** – including developing contacts within the media and presenting ideas to stakeholders, colleagues and other interested parties in formal and informal settings.
- **Assist campaigns by carrying out many support tasks** - including desk research, event co-ordination, database management and reporting in compliance with agreed service / performance levels.
- **Produce content (including but not limited to press releases, policy statements social media posts, leaflets, op-eds, feature pitches, live events)** by using an accurate and effective written communication style tailored to different audiences and media.
- **Support production of non-written content**, e.g. film production management, producing short user generated style content, live video streaming, social image creation, infographic production.
- **Distribute content produced to maximise positive communications opportunities by:**
 - Using media relations process, pitching in stories as directed.
 - Creating media / influencer lists for use by colleagues when required.
 - Using all key digital / social channels, networks and platforms.
 - Using search marketing techniques, email marketing and paid media. Including the use of Google, Facebook and Twitter Business Manager tools.
- **Evaluate results by:**
 - Using appropriate systems and software to accurately log and archive content outputs and results (e.g. coverage, social media reach, event attendance).
 - Reporting back on findings and activity in a meaningful way to your manager.
 - Analysing the impact of communications activity, using quantitative data and updating analytical dashboards.

Behaviours

A PR & Communications Assistant demonstrates these behaviours at all times:

- Proactively updating colleagues on progress and flagging time slippages well in advance and managing your line manager's expectations.
- An awareness of pressures other members of the team may be facing and the need to offer support where necessary.
- An enthusiastic and can-do attitude, participating in all required training – and then sharing knowledge with other team members.
- Commitment to getting the job done wherever it is and however long it takes.
- Punctuality, reliability and personal responsibility.
- Creativity in the development of new ideas and in overcoming challenges which may be faced in delivery of the communications programme.

English & Maths

Apprentices must achieve level 2 English and Maths prior to taking their end-point assessment.

Professional Registration

Anyone successfully completing the apprenticeship will be eligible to apply for membership of the Public Relations & Communications Association (PRCA).

Review - after 3 years