

JOB DESCRIPTION

REFERENCE NUMBER:	AP1176
JOB TITLE:	Director: Employee Relations and Wellness (Permanent position)
LOCATION:	North-West University, Mafikeng Campus
BACKGROUND TO POSITION:	To provide strategic leadership and governance for Employee Relations and Employee Wellness across the University by developing and implementing effective labour relations, collective bargaining and wellness strategies that support organisational performance, employee wellbeing and positive workplace relations. The role ensures compliance with relevant legislation, policies and collective agreements, manages employment-related risks, and serves as the University's principal advisor on employee relations, labour relations and wellness matters.
KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:	Strategic Leadership and Alignment • Develop and oversee the implementation of Employee Relations and Employee Wellness strategies aligned to the University's strategy and People Strategy. • Provide strategic advice to executive leadership on labour relations, employee wellbeing, legislative developments and emerging workforce risks. • Ensure effective governance frameworks, policies and practices that promote compliance, fairness and organisational sustainability. • Monitor and report on employee relations and wellness trends, risks and strategic interventions. Employee Relations Management • Lead the University's employee relations function, ensuring effective management of disciplinary, grievance, incapacity, dispute resolution and conflict management processes. • Provide specialist advice and guidance on labour legislation, case law, policy interpretation and employee relations matters. • Oversee complex and high-risk employee relations cases, including CCMA, bargaining council and Labour Court matters where required.

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- Monitor employee relations trends and implement proactive interventions to mitigate organisational risk and strengthen workplace relations.
- Ensure compliance with applicable labour legislation, collective agreements, institutional policies and governance requirements.
- Coordinate employee relations audits, reviews and reporting requirements.

Employee Relations and Wellness Research

- Monitor and analyse developments in labour legislation, case law, higher education trends and employee wellness practices.
- Conduct research and provide strategic insights that inform policy development, decision-making and institutional practice.
- Benchmark employee relations and wellness practices against leading institutions and emerging best practice.
- Provide thought leadership on workplace wellbeing, employee engagement and healthy organisational cultures.

Employee Wellness and Management

- Provide strategic oversight of the University's Employee Wellness Programme.
- Develop and implement wellness frameworks, policies and initiatives that promote employee wellbeing, resilience and productivity.
- Monitor organisational wellbeing indicators and recommend targeted interventions.
- Oversee incapacity management processes and support services.
- Represent the University on relevant wellness, health and wellbeing forums and committees.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of wellness initiatives and programmes.

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Labour Relations and Stakeholder Management

- Lead collective bargaining, consultation and negotiation processes with recognised labour unions.
- Build and maintain constructive relationships with organised labour and key internal and external stakeholders.
- Facilitate the conclusion, implementation and monitoring of collective agreements.
- Advise executive leadership on labour relations risks, negotiation strategies and stakeholder engagement approaches.
- Represent the University on employee relations, labour relations and human rights-related forums and committees.
- Promote effective communication, consultation and dispute prevention mechanisms across the institution.

Management and Leadership Result Areas

- Lead and develop a high-performing Employee Relations and Wellness team.
- Ensure effective workforce planning, performance management and staff development within the portfolio.
- Manage budgets, resources, systems and service delivery standards.
- Ensure effective risk management, governance and reporting within the function.
- Promote a culture of professionalism, accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement.

KEY FUNCTIONAL/TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES:

- Collective Bargaining and Negotiation.
- Employment Legislation and Regulatory Compliance.
- Employee Wellness and Wellbeing Management.
- Policy Development and Governance.
- Strategic Planning and Alignment.
- Stakeholder and Union Relationship Management.
- Risk Management and Advisory Services.
- Financial and Resource Management.

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KEY BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES:

- Strategic and Systems Thinking.
- Leadership and Accountability.
- Analytical Thinking and Problem Solving.
- Influencing and Negotiation.
- Relationship Building and Collaboration.
- Service Orientation.
- Innovation and Change Agility.
- Professional Integrity and Ethical Conduct.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A Master's degree (NQF Level 9) in Labour Relations, Industrial Relations, Human Resource Management, Employee Relations, Labour Law (LLM) or a closely related discipline.
- A minimum of eight (8) years' experience in senior leadership in Employee / Labour Relations within Higher Education or comparable complex, unionised environment.
- A minimum of three (3) years' experience in management of ER function including collective bargaining, dispute resolution and policy.
- A minimum of five (5) years' experience in ER / IR practice including CCMA and disciplinary / grievance management.

Added Advantages

- Experience working in a higher education institution or a similarly complex public-sector environment.
- Admission as a legal practitioner.
- Membership of the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP) or the South African Reward Association (SARA).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- A letter of motivation stating clearly how you satisfy the requirements of the position
- A comprehensive CV
- Names and full contact details for at least 3 referees
- Certified copies of matric and degree certificates and Identity Document. Proof of SAQA verification of foreign qualifications, where relevant.
- Proof of registration with professional bodies

To apply please forward your application quoting reference number **AP1176** to Genevieve Michel c/o shireen1176@talenting.co.za

Incomplete applications will not be considered!

The University subscribes to and applies the principles of Employment Equity (EE) Act and is committed to transformation. Preference will be given to candidates from the designated groups, in accordance with the principles of the EE Act and NWU Employment Equity Plan.