

HEAD OF ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

JOB INFORMATION



RGS



HEAD OF ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School
Required from September 2024



THE POSITION

We have a unique opportunity for a highly organised, analytical, and detail-orientated individual to join us as Head of Academic Systems. This is a brand-new role at the school, from September 2024, which has been created to support and work in collaboration with the Deputy Head Academic to manage and coordinate the schools' key academic systems including academic reporting, timetabling, internal examinations, student academic tracking, and analysis of examination data.

This would provide an excellent opportunity for individuals who are seeking to gain experience of and exposure to whole-school initiatives, processes, and management. As such, it would be ideal for those seeking to move on to Senior Leadership roles in the future. However, we do encourage applications from both teaching and non-teaching backgrounds as the role could suit either depending on the experiences and skillset of the candidate.

Being 'willing to go the extra mile' is a major part of the role for all at the RGS, not merely in specialist activities but in a huge range of co-curricular sporting, artistic and cultural work. We are keen to invite applications from those who would like to make their own distinctive contribution to this ethos. We very much value colleagues who are willing to contribute to the co-curricular programme.



Job Information: Head of Academic Systems
Closing Date: 9.00am Friday 15th March 2024
Contact: Chris Quayle (Deputy Head Academic) c.quayle@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk



THE SCHOOL

Thomas Horsley, the original settlor of the Royal Grammar School Newcastle (RGS) pledged his legacy to the School in 1525. Almost 500 years later, RGS continues to flourish as the premier independent school in the North East of England and as one of the country's leading schools, and the Sunday Times' North East Independent School of the Decade 2020. Most recently, RGS was awarded the Sunday Times' 2023 North East's Top Independent Secondary School for Academic Performance. We regularly lead all northern schools in national league tables and pride ourselves on academic excellence, a high level of pastoral support, involvement in a wide range of sports and other co-curricular activities, and our commitment to bursaries and partnerships.

The RGS has grown substantially in recent years. There are now some 1,320 students, over 260 of whom are in the Junior School. The Sixth Form of 330 students is one of the largest in the independent sector. We became coeducational over 20 years ago and girls now comprise 46% of the school.

The school is based in the heart of the City, immediately opposite Jesmond Metro station. The school occupies over 30 acres of land and has state-of-the-art facilities, including five brand new art studios, a new library, a new Sixth Form Centre, a 25m swimming pool, two Sports Halls, a Performing Arts Centre, outdoor football/rugby pitches at Mooracres, an artificial turf pitch for hockey and the former County Cricket Ground.

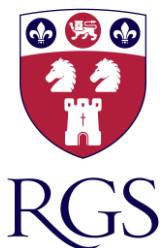


Academically the school is highly selective. Students are assessed for entry at the key entry points (Y3, Y5, Y7 and a handful at Y9, plus sixth form). The biggest entry points are Y3 (60 students), Y7 (c.75 students) and Y12 (c. 45 students). Beyond the academics, in Junior School (Y3-6) entry is assessed through activity days whilst at Y7 students are assessed through online tests and an interaction day. Sixth form entry is through interview only. Students sit baseline tests in Y7, Y10, and L6 – the average GLA CAT score for both the current Y7 and L6 is 117.

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Academic selection and excellent teaching means the school's results are exceptional. The published figures for 2023 are on the school's website. For A Level, 34% of A level grades were at A*; 71% A* - A; and 89% A* - B. For GCSE, the proportion of grade 9s was 41.2%; 9 – 8 was 67.8%; and 9 – 7 was 85.8%. These results placed the RGS 51st, nationally, in The Sunday Times Parent Power survey, up from 73rd place in 2022. Additionally, Top School Guide ranked the RGS 16th nationally for co-educational schools; and overall, 37th for A Levels and 48th for GCSEs.

In 2021 The Sunday Times Parent Power survey judged RGS Newcastle to be the North East Independent School of the Decade. Since then, the RGS has consistently ranked first for academic results in the North East. In 2023, as well as receiving accreditation for the Wellbeing Award for Schools, the RGS was awarded the overall title of Independent School of the Year for the whole of the UK, following winning the category for Outstanding Educational Partnerships. We have more recently been awarded the title of Sunday Times Parent Power North East Independent School of the Year for 2024. Furthermore, School Sports Magazine recently ranked the RGS as the 27th best sports school (independent and state) in the UK.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to the Deputy Head Academic, the Head of Academic System's overall responsibilities will include (but are not limited to) the following and may be altered from time to time:

Curriculum

- Collaborate with the Deputy Head Academic to conduct comprehensive public exam result analysis and work with the School Data Administrator / Assistant to produce reports relating to this.
- With the School Data Administrator, assume overall responsibility for the school's reporting system, managing administration, termly report timetabling, deadlines, and distribution to parents.
- Organise and facilitate parents' meetings to foster effective communication between the school and parents.
- Organisation of internal exams.



Pupils

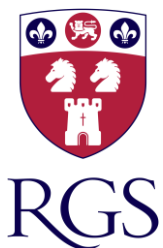
- Working with students in facilitating the subject choices and preferences process.
- Design, implement, analyse, and manage assessment and tracking data to support academic progress.
- Collaborate with Heads of Year and other pastoral leaders to develop and implement the school-wide intervention strategy.



Timetable

- Supervise the preparation, creation, and publication of the yearly academic timetable in collaboration with the School Data Administrator.
- Ensure equitable distribution of teaching, appropriate class sizes, and a suitable array and system of subject option choices.





PERSON SPECIFICATION

The following person specification indicates those areas of skills and personal characteristics, qualifications, training and experience that we are looking for:

Qualifications, Education, and Training

Essential

- Previous experience working in a secondary school environment.
- Comprehensive understanding of safeguarding requirements and best practices in schools.

Desirable

- Educated to degree level in a relevant field.

Experience

Essential

- Experience of academic systems in a secondary school environment.
- Ability to manage complex projects.
- Experience with data analytics and learning analytics.

Desirable

- In-depth knowledge of school information management systems (e.g., iSAMS) and data management.
- Comprehensive understanding of the requirements for students' feedback and reporting.
- Experience organising parent teacher events.
- Expertise with timetabling systems and managing the timetable creation process.
- Experience generating insightful student reports and managing reporting cycles.
- Ability to analyze examination results data and identify trends and insights.
- A strong understanding of data protection and privacy needs.
- Teaching experience and good understanding of pedagogy.
- Knowledge of latest educational technology innovations and trends.

Skills

Essential

- Strong data analysis skills.
- Excellent organisational abilities.
- Excellent project management skills.
- Excellent people management and collaboration skills, including ability to work with students, staff, parents and other stakeholders.
- High levels of IT competency including O365.

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Personal Characteristics

- The ability to be flexible where required and adaptable within a fast-paced environment.
- An excellent communicator, both interpersonal and public, with the ability to build and maintain quality relationships with students, colleagues, and parents/carers.
- An excellent planner with the ability to deliver on new ideas and put forward initiatives and innovations to challenge current practice and thinking.
- Committed to developing further personal professional knowledge, skills and experiences.
- Understanding of, and commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
- Understanding of, and commitment to the ethos of the school as a community.
- Tact, discretion, and diplomacy.
- A genuine liking of people and the ability to show warmth, good-humour, empathy, and sensitivity.
- An understanding of, and commitment to, the special needs of working with young people and children. These include safeguarding, Health and Safety, security and handling confidential information at times.





LIVING IN THE NORTH EAST

Whilst the North East is beloved and popular with so many, we know that not everyone will have had first-hand experience of it, so this is a short introduction to a city and region which we love and believe you will too. Newcastle is a medium-sized city with an historic centre and a vibrant life of its own. There's culture and arts in the form of the award-winning BALTIC Art Gallery and The Sage, alongside several theatres that attract national touring productions. There's music from classical to club and we are home to the Royal Northern Sinfonia. There's also a growing food culture with some fantastic restaurants.

If you like sport then there's certainly no shortage of top-class entertainment: from Premier League football being played at St James' Park and EFL at the Stadium of Light to first class cricket at Durham (a mere half hour away), and great rugby at the Falcons, not to mention basketball and even ice hockey, and then there is the annual Great North Run. The North East has also produced some of the country's finest athletes in track and field and there are clubs aplenty to get involved with, most famously in Gateshead.

The coast and the hills are minutes away from the city centre. By car you can be in the middle of nowhere in 45 minutes, the Scottish Borders is only an hour away and the Lake District an hour and a half. The coast is served by the Metro (our version of the Tube), but some of the country's best beaches are up the road in Northumberland, less than 40 minutes by car. There's mountain biking, road cycling, climbing, and endless hill walks in stunning countryside. There are green spaces all over the city too, with plenty of parks for children and dogs alike to run around.

There are three local teaching hospitals, two universities in the city with another three close by. Some pioneering medical work goes on at the RVI, Great North Children's Hospital and the Freeman Hospital.

History abounds with more castles than you could count and sites of interest for almost every period of English (and border) history. Add that to a proud, independently minded and very friendly local population and we have most things you could want.

There are excellent primary schools in the region and city as well as some good secondary schools too, but staff do get a discount at the RGS. There are also a number of good competitor independent schools as well.



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MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- This is a permanent position with the school which will start in September 2024.
- This is a full-time position (Monday- Friday) during RGS term time plus 10 days outside of term time. The additional days will be worked during the summer holiday to support the exams results period, prepare for the next academic year and will include all staff training days.
- The successful candidate will be required to work on the compulsory safeguarding training at the start of each academic year. Further details regarding staff days will be shared with the successful applicant. Payment for these staff days has been incorporated into the annual salary.
- The successful candidate may also be required to work limited special events e.g., RGS Day and Open Day, with advance notice being given by the school (conditions vary depending on offered contract).
- The normal core hours will be 8.30-4.30pm Monday to Friday, unless the Head of Academic Systems is involved in any role related duties which may incur after school hours, e.g., parent conferences, options evenings.
- RGS has a very competitive salary structure and will be offered based on the experience and skills offered by the successful candidate. The actual agreed salary will be determined by either the RGS Teacher Salary Scale or the RGS Support Staff Salary Scale, depending on the type of contract and salary review dates will be as set for each contract type- this can be discussed during interview.
- The Employee will be required to comply with a range of RGS policies, in particular, those regarding Data Protection, use of ICT facilities, Child Protection, Staff Code and Health and Safety, a copy of which will be made available.

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WHAT WE OFFER

Support Staff:

- The school offers a generous annual leave entitlement of 31 days plus Bank Holidays for all year-round support staff. Given the nature of the role and the operational requirements of the school, requests for leave within term time will not normally be permitted.
- For non-teaching staff we offer a support staff pension scheme, The Aviva Pension Trust for Independent Schools (APTIS). On receipt of a 6% employee contribution the school makes an employer contribution of 10%. There is also the option of a 3% employee and 5% employer contribution if preferred. This scheme is administered via Salary Exchange (also known as Salary Sacrifice) for those who are eligible. You can opt out of the Salary Exchange arrangement whilst remaining in the pension scheme. Further details of the scheme and salary exchange will be provided on appointment.
- Membership to life assurance scheme through Aviva which pays out 5x annual salary in the event of death in service.

Teaching Staff:

- Due to the function of this role, this will mean that your term dates will extend beyond the normal RGS term dates. This will be discussed and agreed when formulating the remuneration package. Given the nature of the role and the operational requirements of the school, requests for leave within term time will not normally be permitted.
- For Teaching Staff, the school offers an alternative to the TPS, The Aviva Pension Trust for Independent Schools (APTIS) which is a defined contribution and salary exchange scheme administered by AVIVA. There is provision for life assurance and income protection under the APTIS scheme and increased flexibility regarding employee contributions and fund management. Further information on the APTIS scheme and salary exchange will be made available on appointment.

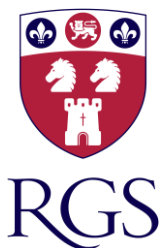
General Terms:

- During term-time, staff are provided with a free lunch, if on site.
- The employee will become eligible for sick pay under the relevant RGS Sick Pay Scheme after a qualifying period. Details of the scheme will be provided on appointment.
- The school offers an optional healthcare plan for all staff which includes optical, dental and physio cover, access to telephone GP consultations and a host of other benefits (terms and conditions apply). Further information will be available to the employee once in post.

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- As with all RGS employees, the employee will be encouraged to become involved in the wider life of the RGS community.
- It is the school's policy is to allow all eligible members of staff to educate their children at the school at concessionary rates, subject to their children meeting the academic entry requirements and subject to a place being available.



- Ongoing educational support and development of all staff with the provision of external and internal training courses, and our middle leaders training programme for existing and aspiring managers.
- We offer an interest free travel loan for a corporate Metro travel pass after a qualifying period. Further information will be available upon starting in post.
- We offer a Bike to Work scheme for qualifying members of staff. Terms and conditions apply. Details will be shared upon starting in post.
- Free use of a well-equipped gym, fitness suite and swimming pool at permitted times.
- Opportunity to see free school productions in the Miller Theatre located in our Performing Arts Centre.
- Access to our onsite confidential counselling service.
- We offer access to the school medical team (1 doctor and 2 nurses) for triage medical advice and free flu vaccinations.

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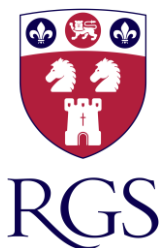
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RGS

- Invitation to join staff clubs and wellbeing activities during term-time as well as staff social events throughout the year.
- Opportunity to join in with RGS tradition and become a member of the Stowell, Collingwood, Horsley or Eldon House.





HOW TO APPLY

Candidates are advised to read the 'Information for Applicants' with particular care before applying.

If you have any queries or would like to arrange a visit to the school, please do not hesitate to email or to call Chris Quayle (Deputy Head Academic) on 0191 281 5711 or email c.quayle@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk.

If, having looked through the website (www.rgs.newcastle.sch.uk) and read this job information pack and the Information for Applicants, you think this particular post would suit you, please say so (and why) in a covering letter of application. You must complete the application form, even if you want to also attach a CV. You are welcome to apply electronically, please email all documents to jobs@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk by the closing date.

**The closing date for this role is
9.00am Friday 15th March 2024**

Interviews will be held shortly after the closing date. We will hope to make the appointment as soon as possible following interview, offering the post and gaining acceptance, so applicants should arrive for interview with a clear idea of what would be involved in moving to the area (if necessary) and working at the RGS.

Reasonable travel expenses will be considered to attend an interview if candidates live outside the local area. This is normally up to a maximum contribution of £100 on provision of receipts. If your expenses will be significantly higher than £100 and an overnight stay is required, please note all expenses will need to be booked and approved in advance. If you plan to claim expenses, please contact the Head's Secretary, Sandra Ellis S.Ellis@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk in advance of your interview, who will talk you through the policy and advise on eligibility for reimbursement.

Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment

RGS is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and those working in school to share this commitment. The school applies the Government's Safer Recruitment procedures to all candidates. More information regarding the checks can be found in the Information for Applicants and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2023).

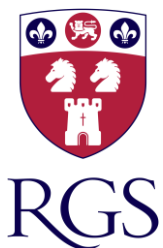
Equal Opportunities

We are looking to appoint staff from a wide variety of backgrounds. Not just because it is the right thing to do but because at the RGS we recognise that those different experiences provide fresh perspectives, opportunities to challenge existing beliefs and provide opportunities to act as excellent role models for our diverse student body. We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse school culture and our staff are at the heart of this. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief

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and marriage and civil partnerships. Whilst all applications are considered on merit, we would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in our staff community.

We encourage all candidates to complete an 'equal opportunities' form with your application. This will be sent directly to the HR team for monitoring purposes.

CONTACT DETAILS

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General enquiries: communications@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

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