

Candidate Pack

Head of Region

wea.org.uk



WEA

Adult Learning
Within Reach

Introduction and welcome



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this new role, which is essential to the delivery of our vision to bring adult education within reach.

If you are passionate about the power of adult education, an expert in your field, and a born leader able to inspire and empower your team, this could be just the role for you.

Founded in 1903, the WEA (formerly the Workers' Educational Association) is a charity dedicated to bringing high-quality education into the heart of communities across England and Scotland. Initially WEA's focus was to bring access to the liberal arts, otherwise inaccessible to workers. Now, we deliver a hybrid of arts, crafts and essential employability training from English as a second language, digital skills, literacy and numeracy, opening doors to opportunity.

We are here to serve those who need us, often in some of the most deprived communities in the UK. Unlike other educational institutions, our students do not need any previous knowledge or qualifications to join most of our courses, only a willingness to share with others their curiosity, ideas and experience.

In 2020 we fast-tracked the conversion of our teaching and learning online. This has proven essential through the pandemic. Though we look forward to returning to face to face delivery, which we know many of our students prefer, online delivery will continue to be a core part of our offer.

The opportunities for the WEA, even in challenging times, are endless.

In 2020, I set out a bold One WEA strategy and designed a new leadership team to bring our mission to life.

Simon Parkinson is the CEO and General Secretary of the WEA. Simon was previously CEO and Principle of the Co-operative College and previously worked for 19 years at the Royal Mencap Society, including as Director of Education, Learning and Work. Passionate about education and its ability to empower and inspire, Simon believes that through working together, individuals can have a hugely positive impact on their own lives and the wider community.

As Head of Region, you will be responsible for building on the success of our rich and popular community-based adult learning provision in your region, supporting our Director of Education: Community Learning who will be your line manager. You will also support the delivery of our employability curriculum in your region, lead by the Director of Education: Employability & Skills.

You will be an advocate for the organisation, developing relationships with funders, community leaders and partners. You will also manage the finance, governance and regional educational team to ensure student number and financial targets are met and all our learners receive an excellent learning experience.

You will need to balance long-term strategic improvements, medium-term development of new curriculum and services, while maintaining robust operations which mean our tutors deliver an excellent experience every day for our students.

Reporting to the Director of Education: Community Learning you will be welcomed into a dynamic, creative, quality and target-driven team of fellow Heads of Region and my extended leadership team.

We are determined to maximise the impact of the WEA, whilst ensuring sustainability in a post-Brexit and pandemic economic environment. To achieve this we are building a positive, collaborative and supportive culture, focussing our teams on delivering our One WEA mission.

Inspired by this challenge? Then, please do apply. I very much look forward to welcoming you to the team

Simon Parkinson
CEO and General Secretary

Who we are

The WEA has been providing high-quality educational opportunities to communities since 1903. Today, our Vision, Mission and Values inform everything we do.

Vision

“A better world - equal, democratic and just; through adult education the WEA challenges and inspires individuals, communities and society”

Mission

- ▶ Raising educational aspirations
- ▶ Bringing great teaching and learning to local communities
- ▶ Ensuring there is always an opportunity for adults to return to learning
- ▶ Developing educational opportunities for the most disadvantaged
- ▶ Involving students and supporters as members to build an education movement for social purpose
- ▶ Inspiring students, teachers and members to become active citizens

Values

- ▶ Democratic
- ▶ Equal
- ▶ Inclusive
- ▶ Accessible
- ▶ Open

Approach to Education and Learning

The WEA is committed to adult education for social purpose and to achieve social justice. To find out more, [click here](#) to download the WEA Approach to Education and Learning.

We deliver our mission by developing partnerships to meet individual and collective needs, using active learning and a student centred approach in which teachers and students work as equals. We constantly strive to adapt our services to meet people's needs, making full use of technology.

No rush, no pressure



The WEA has made so much possible for me now

Here at WEA, we are passionate about giving our students an excellent learning experience and supporting them to make the most out of their life. One student who exemplifies this is Vicky.

Vicky completed our Include IT course at Change Grow Live in Widnes. During lockdown, she received support from the WEA, including the use of a tablet. She has now progressed to studying maths and English, and is completing an accountancy course at college.

"I've had a tough time with my health in recent years, and I was out of work and badly lacking in confidence. I've always been a worker and so really wanted to take baby steps towards getting back on the job ladder. My tutor Jill at the WEA has been amazing. I can't speak highly enough about her. She got me going again.

The course was an introductory guide to IT, and I found it really enjoyable. You can take your time. No rush, no pressure. In a way, the lockdown was a blessing, as I couldn't rush back into life. I had to go slow. I did a lot of walking with my dog Walter. It meant I could recover properly. I count myself lucky.

I have since done courses in English and maths in college. I applied for a job as an account assistant and came second out of more than 200 applicants. The feedback was so good for my confidence. My son tells me I'm a changed person. Without Jill, I really wouldn't be where I am today. The WEA has made so much possible for me now."



Our students

Never too late to learn

WEA student Margaret's teacher taunted her as a child because she couldn't read. Her confidence evaporated. 40 years later, encouraged by her WEA tutor in Falkirk, she is now a published poet... and a WEA Student Award winner as well.

I was dyslexic growing up. When I was at school, I did my best to hide it, but you can't, can you?

I was good at maths, and was moved up a class. But when my teacher found out that I couldn't read, she called me a stupid girl, and that was that. When your teacher calls you that, you just lose all confidence in your ability to learn.

It was my daughter Debbie who first suggested coming to the WEA in Falkirk for a literacy class. I wasn't sure. I'd hated teachers. I'd hated school. But we could go to the class between shifts and Ross, our tutor, was amazing. I left that first class feeling: I can do this. He made us feel so positive about ourselves.

After the first class, we'd really got the bug, so we both pushed Ross to do some more with us.

He got us writing these wee stories and poems. And, you know what? They were good!

And that's when he suggested publishing a book of our work.

I went up the road when the book was first published, and I felt like the Queen of England.

I just thought nobody can beat me now!

You're never too old to learn. Never. If I could speak to my 13-year old self, I'd tell her to ask for help. If you can openly admit you have a problem, your life will change – definitely. I wish I'd heard of the WEA years ago. My life would have been so different.



Job description

Job title:	Head of Region	
Business unit:	Education	
Grade:		FTE 1.0
Reports to:	Director of Education: Community Learning	
Direct re-ports:	Area Education Managers, other regional staff in line within regional staffing structure	
Place of work:	Region	
Purpose of the role:	<p><i>Leading adult education charity, The WEA empowers adults through learning at all stages of life. We bring teaching to local communities, reaching around 50,000 students a year across England and Scotland.</i></p> <p>The post holder will lead, manage and develop the Regions educational activities, profile-raising, financial, governance, human and physical resources and activities across the Region. The post holder will have responsibility for the successful delivery of the Regional plan within budget and will lead the management and development of key strategic relationships and partnerships across the Region to support business development and sustainability and to build the profile of the Association.</p> <p>The post holder will lead the Region to ensure that educational standards, innovation, and people resources across the Region are exemplary, in order to challenge disadvantage and create positive outcomes for individuals, communities and partners. The post holder will also be responsible for leading the region's work with Regional Committees, branches, ambassadors and the voluntary movement to ensure the development of a vibrant educational movement. They will play an active role in shaping policy and direction and will be a part of the Extended Management Team and REM group. As appropriate, the post holder may have some Association-wide responsibility in relation to specialist areas or partnerships.</p>	

Job description

Key areas of responsibility

- ▶ Lead the delivery of the Association's education provision across the Region, ensuring it meets internal and external quality standards, adheres to the Association's policies, provides opportunities for progression and recognition across the four themes and delivers an outstanding experience for students.
- ▶ Build and support diverse and effective governance for the Region, ensuring governance contributes to the development of strategic regional plans and scrutinise and monitor their effective implementation.
- ▶ Lead the development and manage the delivery of the regional business plan and area plans in line with Association strategic objectives, key performance indicators and any external outcome measures. Monitor and report on attainment against KPIs for Association and regional planning and performance management.
- ▶ Manage Regional budget and ensure the Regional Business plan is delivered to agreed budgets and that the Region contributes to the financial sustainability of the Association. Exercise due diligence with respect to management of all resources and contracts and the professional reputation of the Association.
- ▶ Ensure the Region contributes to the development of a vibrant curriculum offer with outstanding quality across the Association in line with the Association's Approach to Learning and participates fully in self-assessment activities that ensure a culture of continuous improvement.
- ▶ Play an active role in the development of Association strategy and continuous improvement across education, sustainability and profile raising. Ensure that regional and local innovation; models of best practice, outstanding student case studies are disseminated for consideration and adaptation both across and outside the Association to raise profile and influence.

Job description

Key areas of responsibility

- ▶ Manage, support and develop regional staff in line with the Association's commitment to Investors in People and Association policies ensuring their health and safety and act as a role model in management practice.
- ▶ Lead branches, members, volunteers, learning champions and ambassadors to build a vibrant educational movement at regional and local levels reinforcing the Association's commitment to diversity. Recruit new ambassadors amongst students, tutors and external supporters, to improve profile and influence.
- ▶ Lead key strategic relationships with stakeholders and strategic partners in the region and at Association level in order to influence and respond to local outcome agreements, and other important areas of work, deliver high quality outcomes for students, and secure new business in line with Association, external and funders' priorities.
- ▶ Lead delivery of region-wide business development strategy in conjunction with the Association Business Development Team, in order to ensure the development of income streams outside the SFA (Skills Funding Agency) contract.
- ▶ Lead regional profile raising and represent the Association on regional fora and policy groups. Act as an advocate for adult and community learning across the Region and with partners, Association students and members in particular.
- ▶ Undertake such duties as reasonably requested by your Line Manager.

Person specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method (for recruitment only)
			A Application Form I Interview T Test
Education & qualifications			
Degree level	Yes		A/I
Experience			
Experience of teaching	Yes		A/I
Managing teaching and learning, understanding the needs of adult students.	Yes		A/I
Experience of managing staff and working with volunteers.	Yes		A/I
Leading and managing successful programmes in the field of adult education, preferably in the context of adult and community learning.	Yes		A/I
Experience of developing cross functional coherent business plans and project planning within an agreed budget.	Yes		A/I
Successful management of externally funded projects.	Yes		A/I
Experience of public speaking.		Yes	A/I
Knowledge & Skills			
A deep understanding of teaching, learning and assessment.	Yes		A/I
A thorough and continually updated knowledge of national policies on lifelong learning.	Yes		A/I
Effective strategic and operational planning based on a sound working knowledge of pedagogy / andragogy, selfassessment, quality improvement, student support and the continuing professional development of staff.	Yes		A/I
Excellent leadership and management skills.	Yes		A/I
Ability to lead and work collaboratively and flexibly with range of internal stakeholders including remote staff, committees and volunteers.	Yes		A/I
Strong interpersonal, negotiating and listening skills to network, engage, build and sustain internal and external relationships and partnerships	Yes		A/I
An understanding and appreciation of the value of Adult Education in society.	Yes		A/I
Additional requirements			
A willingness to travel within the UK.	Yes		A/I

To be used in conjunction with relevant person specification


The WEA

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European Union
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Social Fund



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**