



Candidate brief for the position of Head of Communications PGMOL

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About PGMOL

Formed in 2001 to improve refereeing standards, Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL) officiate across all the Premier League, English Football League (EFL) and Football Association (FA) Competitions – with all three organisations funding it.

The training, development and mentoring of more than 600 match officials and observers, is run by Managing Director Mike Riley (a former PGMOL referee) and a team of managers, coaches, sports scientists, psychologists and analysts.

There are currently four levels of PGMOL match officials:

- **Select Group 1** – Officiate Premier League, matches, operating on-field as well as VAR. Some Select Group 1 officials are appointed to the FIFA list and officiate Champions League and Europa League matches. There are 22 full-time professional Select Group One referees and 28 full time professional Select Group 1 assistant referees.
- **Select Group 2** – Officiate EFL Championship matches and occasionally EFL League One and League Two games. Select Group 2 can also operate as fourth officials at Premier League matches. There are 18 professional Select Group 2 referees.
- **National Group** – Officiate EFL League One and League Two matches and are occasionally fourth officials in the Championship. There are almost 200 referees and assistant referees operating at this level.
- **Women's Select Group** – PGMOL recently confirmed the transition of officiating in the women's professional game from the FA to PGMOL. From the start of next season, PGMOL will take responsibility for officiating in the Women's Super League and the Women's Championship, with additional funding investment secured from the WSL.

Select Group 1 referees and assistant referees and Select Group 2 referees meet every fortnight for two days at training and development meetings at St George's Park. At these meetings, incidents are analysed and debated, with sports scientists directing the physical training and general wellbeing of the group. All other match officials participate in regular online and periodic face to face training and development meetings.

As full-time referees, the groups are better prepared for matches than ever before. Many professional match officials are also involved in community work in schools, with local referee associations and at football clubs.

Breaking Barriers

Most recently, the PGMOL have been working on a new webinar series called 'Breaking Barriers' and consulting on its wider work around equality, diversity and inclusion. Links below:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0vXtXL2M5c>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byID9Kqx-M4>



Opportunity

Reporting to Managing Director Mike Riley, this newly created role will be responsible for bringing to life the people behind the whistle. There is a rich tapestry of content to draw on, from the work of the elite match officials, to the contribution in schools and local community engagement alongside the more recent focus on diversity and inclusion. The Head of Communications will collaborate closely with the Premier League, EFL and The FA, leading the response to challenge on issues such as VAR and goal line technology and manage all match day communications. This a fantastic opportunity to establish a communication function for an organisation at the heart of a national sport of pride.

The role

The Head of Communications manages and leads the PGMOL's media relations and communications strategy, working in consultation with the Premier League, EFL and FA.

The key requirements combine a proactive programme promoting PGMOL and refereeing with delivery of a clear, fast and dependable reactive service. There will also be a requirement to lead on internal communications.

The Head of Communications is a member of the Leadership Team and, when appropriate, attends PGMOL Board meetings and represents PGMOL on the Football Communications Group. The post-holder will represent PGMOL on external bodies and at meetings as required and will be a senior advocate at external conferences and events.

The Head of Communications will:

- Take responsibility for the development and delivery of a comprehensive strategic communications plan which promotes refereeing and encourages participation from under-represented groups
- Take responsibility for the development and delivery of an internal communications plan which engages with all PGMOL match officials and staff

- Lead PGMOL's media relations and responsive news activity, and develop and deliver a proactive media relations strategy with the support of the Premier League, EFL and FA
- Take responsibility for the development of a matchday communications strategy
- Share in PGMOL values, contribute to the strategic management of PGMOL and carry out other duties as may reasonably be required by the Managing Director, Leadership Team and PGMOL Board

Main duties include but are not limited to:

Strategic communications plan which promotes refereeing

- Work with the Board and Leadership Team to devise both long-term and short-term communications strategies which promote refereeing
- Work with the relevant competition's broadcast partners to provide content which promotes refereeing
- Manage the PGMOL social media accounts
- Work with partner organisations, including the LMA and PFA, to promote the work of PGMOL
- Establish a panel of 3rd party advocates to promote a better understanding of refereeing issues
- Provide creative campaign and task briefs and develop appropriate resources to support and deliver them,



including, when required, delivering campaigns or tasks directly

Internal communications plan which engages with all PGMOL match officials and staff

- Develop and deliver an internal communications strategy to ensure the PGMOL staff and match official community are updated regularly on PGMOL events and activities
- Lead development of content for the PGMOL Portal, ensuring internal communications materials are of a high standard and published regularly, including, when required, creation and curation of digital content

Lead PGMOL's media relations and responsive news activity

- Develop and implement PGMOL's communications strategy in consultation with the Premier League, EFL and FA
- Advise the Managing Director and Leadership Team on communications matters
- Act as the principal contact for journalists and media commentators, leading on the development of statements, briefings and responses for journalists and the wider media and working with Premier League, EFL and FA on match day incidents as required
- Deliver timely and accurate responses to the daily news agenda in respect of refereeing issues

Matchday communications strategy

- Working in consultation with Premier League, EFL and FA, develop a plan for managing PGMOL's response to matchday incidents Manage PGMOL's 'referee expert' communicators, liaising with Premier League, EFL and FA on appropriate messaging as required
- Support the matchday communications needs – from news handling to preparing statements, briefs, and media

releases, liaising with Premier League, EFL and FA as required

- Act as the official PGMOL spokesperson as required

Share in PGMOL values, contribute to the strategic management of PGMOL

- Management – direct line management responsibility for 2 'referee expert' communicators
- Create, develop and maintain effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels

Location

Based at Brunel Building, but with requirement for frequent travel within UK. This includes attending the VAR Hub at Stockley Park, attending matches, visiting the various PGMOL office locations and Wembley Stadium.



The Individual

Working in a leadership role for an organisation looking after more than 600 professional match officials, the individual appointed will be both strategic in thinking, and willing in doing. They will have excellent stakeholder management skills, working alongside communication teams at the Premier League, English Football League and Football Association. Media relations experience is essential, alongside proven experience of building organisational narrative with a wide range of stakeholders, through all communication channels.

Essential criteria

Knowledge and experience

- Ability to conceptualise, create and deliver an organisational communications strategy
- Effective stakeholder engagement at all levels
- Good networks amongst sports and news media
- Working as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- Management experience gained in a fast-moving, high profile environment
- Experienced in planning budgets and managing projects to tight deadlines
- Comprehensive knowledge of professional football

Interpersonal Skills

- Able to build relationships and work collaboratively with external stakeholders, often at senior levels
- Excellent writing and verbal communications skills
- Able to present confidently across a range of audiences
- Able to work under pressure and high levels of scrutiny
- Able to make informed judgements and decisions
- Able to demonstrate adaptability and flexibility
- Values and respects others, builds relationships, collaborates

Leadership and management

- A self-starter, able to work independently and deliver content
- A personable approach and a creative mind
- Passion for working with people and working beyond the confines of the job description
- Able to lead change
- Able to build and sustain strong and effective working relationships within the Leadership Team
- Able to establish credibility and build accountability amongst staff and match officials
- Comfortable in developing a team member and empowering others



Strategic and organisational

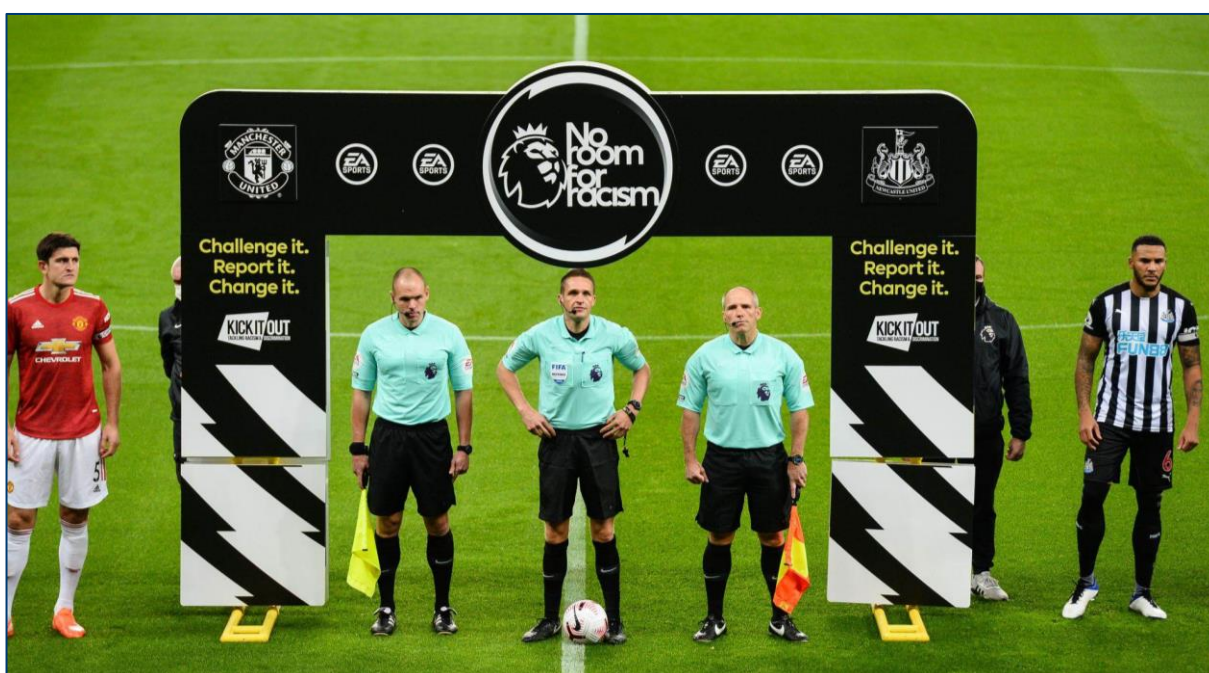
- Able to think ahead, prepare strategies and deliver creative solutions
- Respond positively, constructively and successfully to changing environments
- Strong organisational skills and ability to prioritise a mixed workload
- Strong business acumen and commercially focused
- Ability to progress day to day work while dealing effectively with tactical issues
- Generates innovative ideas
- Gets things done to a high standard with excellent attention to detail

Behaviours

- Accountable
- Resilient
- Values integrity
- Courage to challenge
- Collaborative and credible
- Driven to deliver

Desired criteria

- Understanding of and empathy for the demands of an elite football match official



Search Process

Approach candidates

We will have an initial discussion with you over the phone to determine your interest and suitability for this role, and discuss a little about your background and aspirations.

Interview candidates

Once your interest and suitability has been determined we will arrange for you to meet with the Partner leading this search.

Short listing

Having met with candidates who will differ on experience, ambition and background, we will put forward a number of candidates whom we feel most meet the criteria.

Meeting our clients

PGMOL will meet the candidates on the shortlist. This will give you the opportunity to really understand the role, the company culture and their expectations of you. You will more than likely have multiple meetings with key stakeholders to get a feel for the business.

Due diligence

As you will appreciate, you will have conducted due diligence on PGMOL and they will expect us to do the same for the candidates who they anticipate would really bring that 'something special' to the business.

Offer and acceptance

PGMOL puts together the offer which we convey to you. We will fully support you through your resignation period and beyond.

Ongoing communications

We like to maintain contact with all candidates from a search. If you have been successful in this activity we will meet with you after your first month to ensure that your expectations have been met. If you have not, we will ensure that you gain full feedback and we will maintain a relationship with you for the future.

Inclusion & Diversity

We aim to ensure that each and every stage of the search process is as inclusive as possible and we work to support PGMOL in their own commitment to inclusivity.

Confidentiality

We guarantee that any approach we make to you and any discussions we have will be in the strictest confidence. Any discussions will be conducted under the terms of a formal nondisclosure agreement.



Candidate Charter

Talented people are our lifeblood

Whether we approach you about a specific opportunity, or you contact us to share your biography and career ambitions, we want you to have a constructive experience of engaging with Odgers Berndtson.

We recognise that we have a commitment to you as well as to our client, and we undertake that our dealings with you will be professional, courteous, rigorous and honest.

We will:

- Approach you after considered analysis and in relation to roles where we think there is a strong match. Your time is valuable; we don't want to waste it.
- Work to make your candidacy as strong as it can be.
- Represent you effectively and discreetly to our client, based on accurate information that you give us in confidence.
- Be inclusive, open and fair-minded.
- Keep you informed, communicating outcomes promptly, and giving fair and honest feedback where we can.
- Celebrate your success in the event of a successful outcome, and share any lessons in the event of disappointment.
- Take a long-term view, recognising that you have a multi-year view of your own career. Where possible, we will help you fulfil your ambitions.
- Embrace continuous improvement, for example by carrying out regular independent audits of those we shortlist for roles.

If ever you feel we have not lived up to the letter or spirit of this charter, please tell us. We want to know. Email KScrope.CEO@odgersberndtson.com.



Contact details

Contact details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

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