

## **The Mary Erskine School**



### **Head of Modern Studies**

#### **Job Description**

##### **Purpose of Job**

The Head of Modern Studies will teach Modern Studies and Politics at all levels, up to and including Advanced Higher. They are also responsible for providing leadership to, and management of, members of the department.

##### **Authority and Direct Reports**

The Head of Modern Studies will report to Deputy Head (Academic), who will also assign responsibilities to them.

##### **Key Relationships**

The Head of Modern Studies will work alongside the other teachers in their department.

##### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The post holder is expected to play a full and active part in the extra-curricular life of the school.

##### **The Department**

The department enjoys a high profile within the school, and we have an excellent uptake in S5. Four Higher Modern Studies sets are timetabled this session. There is also one Advanced Higher set, one Higher Politics set and a small National 5 set for S5 pupils. Additionally, the department is responsible for providing materials for the S1 Current Affairs course. The department currently consists of one full time member of staff and one part time member, though plans are in place for this role to become full time. From August 2026, pupils in S3 will begin National 5 Modern Studies. This will be a new course.

The department takes an active role in raising awareness of politics and citizenship issues throughout the whole school. There is a weekly Politics Club for pupils of all ages. Modern Studies teachers promote engagement with the Scottish Youth Parliament, and two of our pupils were recently elected to the new parliament. Last session the department organised a large Politics and International Relations careers event, with pupils attending from across schools in Edinburgh and many universities sending representatives.

## **The Post:**

### **Key Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Lead and co-ordinate the work of the department
- Allocate the work of the department to individual teachers
- Prepare suitable courses with appropriate resources for students at all stages and attend to administration required for assessment of these courses
- Attend to all paperwork in relation to public examinations and the presentation of candidates and liaise with external assessors and moderators
- Organise the setting, production and marking of internal examinations
- Be responsible for the ordering, maintenance, safety and development of departmental resources and the planning, presentation and monitoring of the departmental budget
- Attend Heads of Department meetings and subject choice evenings
- Keep abreast of the latest developments in teaching within the subject area and with curricular issues around the country
- Define policies and plan strategies to promote effective, lively teaching to pupils throughout the ability range
- Monitor pupil performance and liaise with guidance staff and Support for Learning staff, as appropriate
- Hold and record regular Departmental meetings
- Organise Departmental INSET
- Support, encourage, and monitor teachers in the Department, including student teachers
- Keep and maintain appropriate Departmental records, such as the Departmental Handbook
- Produce an annual departmental development plan as part of the annual report to the Principal, relating to all departmental matters
- Co-operate and liaise with teachers at The Mary Erskine School, Stewart's Melville College, the ESMS Junior School and other educational establishments as appropriate
- Encourage and lead co-curricular activities associated with the department
- Identify professional training needs and take on responsibilities that will contribute to their professional development.

### **Vision and Values**

- Promotion of ESMS values of Kindness, Confidence, Resilience, Integrity, and Curiosity in all aspects of the role
- Promotion of role modelling behaviours that align with the three school pillars of Ambition, Innovation, and Community
- Fostering an environment that supports the development of these values among students and staff.

### **Working with Others**

- Compliance with all ESMS policies and procedures

- Treating people fairly, with dignity and respect to maintain a positive school culture
- Ensure effective planning, delegation and support of responsibilities
- Developing a culture of high expectations for all and taking action when performance does not live up to these
- Taking responsibility for personal development, both personally and of team members.

### Community

- Positive relationships with parents and the wider ESMS community
- Communicating clearly with parents and carers to engender a climate of mutual respect
- Working in collaboration with other schools to promote effective initiatives and share good practice.

### Learning

- Leading a culture of challenge and support to allow every student to be the best they can.

### Safeguarding

- Adhering to the principles and guidelines of “Getting It Right For Every Child” (GIRFEC) to ensure every child receives timely and appropriate support with their welfare as paramount.

### Person Specification

	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
<b>Experience</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity with Scottish Qualifications (SQA N5, Higher and Advanced Higher)</li> </ul>
<b>Education/Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) registered</li> <li>• Subject specific degree level qualification.</li> </ul>	
<b>Skills/ Abilities/ Capabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent communication and analytical skills with a commitment to delivering excellent educational provision</li> <li>• Ability to multi-task and prioritise own workload</li> </ul>	

	with good attention to detail	
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent, self-motivated and organised; with an ability to work as part of a team</li> <li>• Positive, confident personality and an enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of, children's company</li> <li>• Passionate about Modern Studies and Politics and about promoting these to young people</li> <li>• High professional and personal standards and a commitment to the values of The Mary Erskine School</li> </ul>	

### **Personal Qualities**

- Boundless energy and resilience to allow challenges to be viewed as opportunities
- Dealing with every situation calmly and professionally
- Strong commitment to seeing and bringing out the best in students
- A desire for fairness, dignity, and respect in every interaction
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Excellent self and time-management skills
- Active listening and authenticity
- The highest level of personal integrity
- Ability to deliver constructive feedback.

### **Leading and Managing**

- Leads from the front and by example
- Coaching style of leadership
- Has courage and flexibility to identify and implement change effectively
- Has sound budget management skills
- Plans, prioritises, organises and delegates
- Has strong analytical skills
- Ensures School compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements
- Undertakes School evaluation
- Implements diversity, inclusion and access strategies.

### **Development of Self and Empowerment of Others**

- Appreciates the impact of change on the school and individuals
- Challenges, influences and motivates others
- Nurtures professional interpersonal relationships with staff and students
- Develops individuals' capabilities

- Empowers and sustains an effective team
- Uses courage, care and curiosity to deal with conflict.

## **REMUNERATIONS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

As an equal opportunities employer, ESMS is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership. We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join ESMS.

<b>The post</b>	This is a permanent, full-time position available from August 2025, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. From August 2026, and next session in preparation for the move, you will be responsible for leading the Modern Studies Department at Erskine Stewart Melville Senior School when The Mary Erskine School and Stewart's Melville merge to become one Senior School.
<b>Salary</b>	Remuneration will be on the ESMS Teaching Staff Scale Grade C (£56,331 to £57,282 per annum) and is dependent on qualifications and experience.
<b>Location</b>	The post holder will be based at the Mary Erskine School on the Ravelston site. Please note that from August 2026, your location will move to the Queensferry Road site.
<b>Eligibility</b>	ESMS is unable to sponsor the employment of international workers in this role. International applicants will therefore be unable to apply for and secure a Skilled Worker visa. The successful candidate will only be able to take up this role if they can demonstrate an alternative right to work in the UK.
<b>Pension</b>	All teachers are automatically enrolled into the Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme.
<b>Staff Benefits</b>	Staff are offered a range of benefits including: use of the Schools' swimming pool and fitness room outside school hours and membership of the ESMS Discount and Benefits Scheme, including a range of discounts at 130,000 retail and entertainment locations, as well as access to our EAP provider, Care First.

The closing date for applications is 12pm on Thursday, 6 February 2025. We anticipate interviews will be held week commencing Monday, 24 February 2025.