

# Terms of reference for the position of principal of the Vajra Academy

The Vajra Academy is seeking an exceptional individual for the position of principal. This principal will play a pivotal role in achieving the academy's mission, namely the 'three pillars' of the Vajra Academy:

1. quality education with a dynamic curriculum, creating changemakers with creative leaders and team players needed to face the problems of the 21st century;
2. environmental sustainability;
3. commitment to social responsibility.

The principal is the administrative and professional leader of the school and as such is directly responsible for its successful operation. Together with hostel manager the principal is part of the school managing board, supervised by the director.

The principal is therefore:

- an inspiring visionary educational leader, with a heart for people and the planet;
- a professional administrative manager;
- a community liaison and advocate of the school's mission and values;
- a communicator, fluent in English, with the quality of listening, connecting students, teachers, parents and management;
- someone who creates a safe and stimulating environment and inspires others in educational developments.

## Competence

The principal must have:

- professional educational vision, knowledge and skills;
- a compatible and outspoken vision on environmental sustainability;
- flexibility and strong social, interpersonal skills;
- strong organisational, management and planning skills.

The principal must be able to understand and handle:

- educational and pedagogical issues;
- parental issues;
- school organisation and staffing issues;
- advice about construction and building issues.

## Responsibilities – in detail

The role of a principal is multifaceted and pivotal in ensuring the smooth operation and the success of the school. Responsibilities of the principal include:

### Educational leadership (see the seven Key points)

- Providing visionary leadership to the school, setting a clear educational direction and maintaining a focus on academic excellence, eco-friendly behaviour and a social attitude.
- Promoting and implementing innovative teaching methods and best educational practices.
- Enhancing quality education continuously through watchful planning and evaluation.

At least once a year:

- Making a school plan that features targets and indicators for success.
- Holding performance interviews with each teacher.

### Curriculum development

- Overseeing the development and evaluation of the school's curriculum to meet Nepalese educational standards and, additionally, aiming for international standards.
- Collaborating with teachers and national and international curriculum experts to make the curriculum student-centred, dynamic and flexible (Key point 2) and to improve and innovate educational programs, encouraging interactive teaching, project work and research.
- Making sure that green studies (Key point 6) and the development of a social attitude (Key point 5) are an integral part of the curriculum.
- Given the 'green' nature of the Vajra Academy, its curriculum, the teaching and learning activities and all activities carried out by the school, sustainability should be one of the key priorities to be integrated into planning and execution.

### Student development

- Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment that:
  - fosters the personal and academic growth of students;
  - makes students competent school graduates;
  - gives students an ecological and social attitude;
  - gives students Changemaker School skills, such as empathy, creativity, leadership and teamwork.
- Making sure nobody is physically or mentally punished or abused (Key point 3).
- Making sure that teaching and learning is student-centred with personalised attention for each student (Key point 3).
- Creating opportunities to develop the student's identity (Key point 3).

- Combating discrimination based on caste, gender and/or religion; making sure a mediator is appointed (Key point 3).
- Creating a strong focus on innovative teaching aids and methods in which students and teachers alike are challenged to use their creativity and fantasy and in which knowledge is not only taught but also discovered (Key point 3).
- Making sure the curriculum is focused on the development of the seven R's: reading, writing, arithmetic, responsibilities, religion, relationship and rights (Key point 2).
- The social attitude of all students, teachers and parents is enhanced by first-hand involvement in social activities in projects from the Vajra Foundation and other organisations (Key point 5).
- A green and eco-friendly environment is an important goal (Key point 6).
- Encouraging student engagement and participation in extracurricular activities.

#### Administrative management

- Overseeing day-to-day operations of the school, including scheduling, staffing and facilities management.
- Managing the school's budget and resources effectively.
- Ensuring compliance with education regulations and policies.
- Ensuring that proper records in all departments are kept transparently in the cloud.
- Ensuring timely reporting to the school's CEO and seeking feedback.

#### Staff management and professional development

- Recruiting, training and supervising teaching and administrative staff and fostering regular, fruitful and self-learning intercollegiate consultation.
- Evaluating and supporting professional development for teachers to stay updated with educational best (evidence-based) practices; workshops and counselling sessions for teachers and staff are organised regularly (Key point 4).
- Ensuring a positive and collaborative school culture.

#### Communication

- Effectively communicating with students, staff, parents and other stakeholders. This involves keeping the website up to date and posting messages on appropriate, select social media.
- Keeping all stakeholders informed about school policies, events and academic progress.

#### Behaviour management, crisis management

- Implementing a fair and consistent disciplinary policy.
- Addressing behavioural issues and ensuring a respectful and safe school environment.
- Preparing for and responding to emergencies and crises that may arise in the school.

- Ensuring the safety and well-being of students and staff.

### Strategic planning

- Developing a long-term vision and strategic plan for the school's growth and improvement.
- Setting goals and objectives to achieve this vision.

### Data analysis and assessment

- Collecting and examining data to evaluate and improve the school's performance.
- Implementing and overseeing assessments to measure student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

### Innovation and change management

- Encouraging and leading the adoption of innovative educational practices and technologies.
- Effectively managing change within the school community.

### Community engagement

- Building a positive relationship with students, parents and the broader community in the Kathmandu valley.
- Engaging with parents and the community to foster support for the school's mission and goals.
- Launching awareness campaigns in the community.

### Advocacy and representing the school

- Representing the school and its team (teachers, staff, students) towards relevant authorities, government agencies and the broader educational community.
- Advocating for the needs of the school and its students with relevant authorities, government agencies and the broader educational community.

### Salary

The salary of the principal is appropriate, in line with the market and negotiable.

## Selection Process

The selection process for the position of principal and vice principal at Vajra Academy involves several rounds to identify the most qualified and suitable candidates based on the hiring guidelines. A recruiting committee, consisting of five members, including board members, the previous principal and educational experts, will be overseeing the process.

### Round 1: application by candidate

Each applicant's CV must include at least three referees. The recruitment committee will conduct reference checks before finalising the selection. This step is crucial to verify the candidates' qualifications, experiences and suitability for the positions.

Criteria checklist for long-listing and invitation for presentation:

- minimum academic qualifications (master's degree for principal, bachelor's degree for vice-principal);
- minimum required years of experience (5 years for principal, 3 years for vice-principal);
- strong English-language skills;
- demonstrated leadership, communication and interpersonal skills;
- proven knowledge of current educational trends and best practices;
- outstanding organisational and problem-solving abilities;
- demonstrated ability to work collaboratively within a diverse community.

### Round 2: first short-listing

*Presentation on a given topic (at least one week for preparation)*

- Candidates will be provided with a specific topic related to school, education and environment.
- They will have one week to prepare a presentation, which they will deliver during this round.

*Written test (timed / from-home exams)*

- Written exam questions will be formulated by at least two board members and one educational expert.
- The written test will be conducted online and timed to assess the candidate's knowledge and problem-solving abilities in the field of education.

### Round 3: second short-listing

#### *Presentation and interview round*

- Candidates will deliver their prepared presentations on the given topic.
- Following the presentation, candidates will participate in an interview.
- The interview panel, consisting of members of the recruitment committee, will assess the candidates' qualifications, experiences and alignment with the school's values and goals.

#### *School's orientation presentation for candidates*

- Candidates who pass the presentation and interview round will receive an orientation presentation about the Vajra Academy.
- This will provide candidates with insight into the school's mission, culture and future plans.

### Round 4: final Interview

- Candidate(s) who successfully navigate(s) the previous rounds will be invited for a final interview.
- The final interview will include a broader discussion on educational leadership, community engagement and alignment with the school's ecological and green principles.
- The recruitment committee, along with input from the CEO and other stakeholders, will make the final decision on the appointments. A zoom session will be part of the procedure.

### Reference checks

Throughout the selection process, the recruitment committee will maintain transparency and professionalism. It will focus on identifying candidates who not only meet the minimum criteria but also align with the school's vision and values. The involvement of educational experts, board members and previous school leaders will ensure a comprehensive and well-rounded evaluation of each candidate.