Job Description – Product Development Manager

About the role
The Learning Systems team are responsible for the management and development of the Open University's award-winning digital learning environments.
Our goal is to work collaboratively to create great user experiences, applying professional digital product management standards to enable our academic colleagues to realise their teaching vision and allow students to achieve their learning objectives.
The Product Development Manager will support this work across a variety of exciting and innovative teaching and learning tools and platforms.

Key responsibilities
Planning, managing and delivering services:

- Liaise with internal and external developers and/or managers to define, scope and develop new and innovative learning tools, products and services to enhance the student experience at the Open University.
- Work with external service providers, monitoring against the service-level agreement (SLA).
- Work with Senior Product Development Managers to establish schedules, budgets, prioritisations, and specifications for new tools and projects
- Work closely with other units and stakeholders across the OU to understand and interpret their requirements and to incorporate these into the development of new tools, software and approaches, whilst identifying and addressing the constraints of existing OU offerings.
- Support and contribute to the roll-out and adoption of new and innovative learning tools, products and services to stakeholders and provide appropriate guidance and support to academic teams, students, and LDS colleagues.
- Be persuasive when presenting concepts and new prototypes to stakeholders at different levels.
- There may occasionally be some international tele-conferences that take part in the evening
- Liaise with IT and assist or lead with product testing as required, which can involve accessibility and usability work.
- Assist the Learning Systems team with project tasks and operational support objectives, as and when required.

Communication skills:
- Communicate with internal stakeholders using a range of methods, from email to presentations.
• Handle more general communication, from stakeholder engagement comms to contributing to the team blog.

Strategic development:
• Work closely with other units and stakeholders across the OU to understand and interpret their requirements and to incorporate these into the development of new tools, software and approaches, whilst identifying and addressing the constraints of existing OU offerings.
• Take part in horizon-scanning activities, carry out research into current and emerging tools and trends in educational technologies, and to proactively plan this into future projects.

Person Specification:
Demonstrate a passion for creating great user experiences.
Manage time effectively, working to agreed deadlines and budgets, adjusting priorities and escalating issues as appropriate.
Ability to build and develop productive working relationships with colleagues across The Open University, and to manage external relationships.
Good communication and presentation skills: communicates with confidence and credibility in face-to-face situations and in writing.
Develop knowledge and expertise through continuing professional development and shares expertise and knowledge with others.
A demonstrable interest in continuing self-development.
Apply specialist expertise appropriately, offering a range of solutions to problems.
The ability to cope with pressure and unforeseen problems and offer pragmatic solutions to these.
Ability to work as part of the team as well as on own initiative – to be self-motivated and proactive.

Skills and experience
Higher education (Bachelors) qualification, or equivalent demonstrable experience.
ECDL or equivalent in Microsoft Excel.
Knowledge and experience of contemporary online and distance learning, educational technology and pedagogy.
Knowledge and experience of media production (e.g., AV, editorial, or UX)
Some familiarity with online content production (e.g., HTML, CSS) and Python.
Appreciation of the use of pedagogic tools and services in a learning and teaching context and their application.
Demonstrable experience of identifying, researching and analysing emerging trends and technologies, and the ability to present these findings clearly, concisely and persuasively.
Demonstrable experience of contributing to multi-stakeholder workshop sessions to gather and prioritise requirements.
Demonstrable experience of delivering results that conform to agreed project specifications, budgets, schedules and standards.
Demonstrate knowledge and experience of various learning environments, most importantly Moodle. Familiarity with Open EdX advantageous.