Job Description – Manager, Student Operations and Fees (Ref: 16886)

About the Role

The role holder will work within the Student Recruitment and Support Scotland (SRSS) team and will manage the delivery of student facing operations to help students and prospective students make study choices leading to successful module completion, study progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction. The key duties are:

1. To manage a team of Team Managers and student facing staff effectively, ensuring that quality and service standards and Key Performance Indicators are met.
2. To deliver and develop the Information & Fees service within Student Recruitment and Support Scotland as part of the University’s Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) model, by collaboration with other managers/senior managers within SRSS and with a range of staff across the wider University.
3. To work with the SRSS management team and the wider University to ensure an integrated approach to operational delivery of curriculum appropriate recruitment and support for students.

Key responsibilities

1. Leadership and performance management of a team of Team Managers and student facing staff, including:
   • Recruit, train, performance manage and develop staff in line with guidelines and ensure individuals are supported and developed to help them fulfil their potential.
   • Communicate with individuals and the team, to share information and direction, and to maximise productivity levels and quality standards.
   • Manage resource challenges, minimising attrition and absences wherever reasonable.

2. To oversee Team managers as part of a flexible management team with a focus on providing study and fees information and on course support to students and potential students within agreed timescales, ensuring that all activity is dealt with promptly and effectively and within agreed service levels.
   • Oversee complex workflows, allocation and capacity to ensure that student and prospective student interactions are responded to efficiently and effectively and in as seamless a way as possible.
   • Actively monitor performance and quality to ensure that agreed service standards, performance targets and operating procedures are met and exceeded.
   • Contribute to the regular evaluation and development of these standards.
   • Exercise judgement in dealing with complex issues, interpreting and applying procedures and guidelines with judgement and initiative.

3. Develop SRSS, team and personal expertise and knowledge across all areas of the curriculum to provide an expert point of referral. Contribute to relevant practitioner and working groups, both within The Open University in Scotland and the wider service, established to promote informed, efficient, effective and consistent support services to students and prospective students to enable them to make successful study choices, leading to study progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction.
4. Liaise closely with relevant staff and managers/senior managers within The Open University in Scotland and within the Information, Advice and Guidance Service in other locations, and with staff and managers/senior managers in central teams to provide excellent service to students and prospective students to enable them to make good study choices and to adopt successful behaviours.

5. To proactively support the Senior Manager, (Operations & Fees) in the development and continuous improvement of good internal and inter team working and service provision:
   - Attending and actively participating in team meetings and developmental activities.
   - Exploring service improvements and enhancements.
   - Contributing to business improvement ideas and initiatives, making recommendations to Senior Leaders as appropriate.
   - Showing initiative and judgement in helping the team to run smoothly, and working with and supporting other teams as required.
   - Engage actively in the support and development of new team members.
   - Provide holiday and absence cover for the other Manager, Student Operations and Fees.
   - Undertaking other activities as directed by Senior Management.

6. To continually develop skills and knowledge to maintain and improve personal performance, in the spirit of continuous improvement and to adopt correct and evolving business practices and procedures:
   - Undertaking all duties in accordance with internal policy and external legislation.
   - Working with the Senior Manager, (Operations & Fees) to understand personal performance and areas for development.
   - Providing feedback to contribute to colleagues’ performance development.
   - Accepting feedback from colleagues to improve personal skills and knowledge.

7. Leadership and management of a specific area of work/areas of work, such as work with students in secure environments, proactive study campaigns, funding, disability support, retention and progression activities, complaints etc. (the list is not exhaustive):
   - Ensuring procedures and guidelines are followed.
   - Monitoring workflows and quality
   - Facilitating briefings and training.
   - Ensuring any issues are reported appropriately.
   - Liaising with central colleagues/staff in other areas of the University.

The role holder may be required to undertake any other duties reasonably required within the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the role, subject to the proviso that normally any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the Job Description in specific terms.

All staff are expected:
   - To comply with the University’s Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities policies in the performance of your duties.
   - To take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of yourself and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work.
   - To co-operate with The Open University in ensuring as far as is necessary, that Statutory Requirements, Codes of Practice, University Policies and Departmental Health and Safety arrangements are complied with.
   - To demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.
Skills and Experience

**Essential**

- Highly developed interpersonal skills with the ability to influence, establish credibility and assert authority.
- Proven ability to resolve problems with expediency, intelligence and sensitivity.
- Excellent time-management skills using a range of strategies to ensure that work is carried out effectively and efficiently.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Ability to self-start whilst operating in an environment with standardised systems and procedures.
- Good numerical skills and ability to interpret complex management information.
- Confident and highly proficient user of IT - particularly MS Word, Excel and Outlook, including custom built databases and the internet – and ability to pick up new systems quickly.
- A proven commitment to continuous professional development.
- An understanding of team working and the ability to work as part of a team.
- An understanding of Equal Opportunities issues and a commitment to promoting diversity.
- Commitment to excellent customer service and continuous service improvement.
- Commitment to and role model for the University’s values.

**Desirable**

- Ability to adapt interpersonal style to suit different people or situations.
- Evidence of understanding of the roles that individuals play as part of a team.
- Understanding of business continuity planning and management.
- Understanding of the higher education sector and the place of part-time, distance learning within it.

Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

**Essential**

- Demonstrable experience of managing effectively across multiple services and channels, including workload planning and workforce management within a customer focused environment.
- Experience of leading and managing a team including: recruitment and selection; operational performance planning and control to quality standards; staff development and performance management.
- Experience of managing the provision of information and advice.
- Experience of working co-operatively with others to achieve organisational goals and service level targets.

**Desirable**

- Experience of working in an educational environment.

Education, qualifications and training

**Essential**

- SVQ Level 4 qualification in management and/or advice and guidance, or substantial equivalent experience.

**Desirable**

- Five Standard Grades or equivalent.
**Role specific requirements e.g. shift working**

- Role holder may be required to attend meetings/events at various venues across the UK for business, training and evaluation purposes.
- Appropriate office equipment will be provided to facilitate effective working on the telephone and for Skype/Lync conferencing.

**About the Open University in Scotland**

The Open University in Scotland is an integral part of the Scottish higher education community and actively involved in the development of HE policy alongside the other 18 higher education institutions in Scotland. Since 1 April 2000, the teaching of OU students resident in Scotland has been funded by the Scottish Funding Council. With approximately 16,000 students, Open University students can be found in virtually every postcode district and community in Scotland. Social justice and equality of opportunity are at the heart of everything the OU does and widening access to higher education is the ambition on which it was founded. The Open University is committed to extending opportunities for educational success to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential. The OU’s open access policy, flexible part-time delivery, its bridging programme with schools, college articulation agreements and geographical reach position us well as Scotland’s national widening access university. More than one third of our undergraduate students have qualifications below standard university entrance level when they joined the OU, over 18% have a declared disability and 17% are resident in the most deprived areas of Scotland (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

With over 70% of our students in work while they study with us, The Open University in Scotland occupies a unique place in terms of developing the Scottish workforce. We work closely with employers, trades unions, public sector bodies, institutes, private, third sector and community organisations, universities, colleges and schools across the whole of Scotland.

130 academic, administrative and secretarial and clerical staff work from the OU’s office in Edinburgh managing the University’s business in Scotland. The OU in Scotland works in collaboration with colleagues across England, Wales and Northern Ireland and, in particular, with the Academic Services Unit in providing support to our students.

More information can be obtained from The OU in Scotland website at www.open.ac.uk/scotland

**How to obtain more information about the role or application process**

If you would like to discuss the particulars of this role before making an application please contact Ali McDonald on 0131 226 3851 or email: Ali.McDonald@open.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact the Staffing Co-ordinator by email: Scotland-Staffing-Coordinator@open.ac.uk

**The application process and where to send completed applications**

As well as a completed application form, you must provide a supporting statement/covering letter, which clearly identifies how you meet the criteria in the person specification. Please ensure that you provide relevant examples as evidence to support your statements. The selection panel will consider how well the information you provide demonstrates that you meet the criteria identified in the person specification.
Please ensure your application reaches the University by 5pm Thursday 13\textsuperscript{th} February 2020.

Email your application form to \url{Scotland-Recruitment@open.ac.uk}

**Selection process and date of interview.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The interview panel will be chaired by:</th>
<th>Ali McDonbald, Senior Manager, Student Operations and Fees, OUiS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The other member of the interview panel will be:</td>
<td>Carla Anderson, Senior Manager, Student Support, Operations, OUiS. Michael Johnson, Senior Manager, Student Support, Operations, Academic services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interviews will take place on:</td>
<td>5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The selection process for this post will include:</td>
<td>Formal interview and desk exercise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We will let you know as soon as possible after the closing date whether you have been shortlisted for interview. Further details on the selection process will also be sent to shortlisted candidates.

Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.

Expenses incurred for travelling to the interview will not normally be reimbursed by the University.