Job Description – Student Recruitment & Support Advisor (Ref: 16620)

About the Role

The role holder will work within the Student Recruitment and Support Centre in Scotland to help students and prospective students make study choices that will lead to successful module completion, progression through their qualification and customer satisfaction.

Key responsibilities

1. To be the first point of contact to provide information and routine advice, across all curriculum areas for students and enquirers in registration and study with The Open University. Deal with both proactive and reactive contact through different channels, primarily inbound and outbound phone calls and emails/webform. We have limited face to face contact with students and may introduce webchat in the future. Where necessary refer on to other staff with specialist expertise, as part of our Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) model, making interactions with The Open University as straightforward as possible.

2. To undertake any administrative and operational processes to support student and enquirer requests. These will include registering students with a variety of payment methods and dealing with financial support applications. The team also supports a range of disability-related activity, schemes for different groups of students and some external recruitment events.

3. To work as part of a flexible operation to provide support and answer queries from students, potential students and Associate Lecturers within agreed timescales. To work to a rota, which schedules the working day to ensure that all activity is dealt with promptly and effectively and within agreed Service Levels.

4. To access, utilise and update university systems and databases in order to maintain student and enquirer records including qualification and module records & personal details. To follow agreed operating procedures and use the university’s Knowledge Management System.

5. To continually develop skills and knowledge to maintain and improve personal performance, in the spirit of continuous improvement. To assist proactively in the development and continuous improvement of good internal and inter team working and service provision to students and enquirers.

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**

- Good communication skills, both oral and written: e.g. effective telephone techniques, ability to use plain English to explain policies and processes and to write clearly, succinctly and correctly.
- Good organisational skills: including the ability to cope with heavy workloads in an often high-pressure environment, while still meeting deadlines, working productively and accurately.
- Ability to demonstrate a rapid understanding of newly presented information. To follow documented information and procedures: using initiative in problem-solving, whilst recognising boundaries.
- Flexibility: including adaptability to changing circumstances, duties, work-loads, practices and systems.
- Commitment to excellent customer service and ongoing personal development to deliver an excellent service.
- Strong IT skills: especially use of standard Microsoft Office packages.
- 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 equal opportunities and diversity.

**Desirable**

- Ability to use customer relationship management system.

**Knowledge, work and other relevant experience**

**Essential**

- Recent experience of working in a customer facing environment.
- Relevant office experience, including use of Microsoft office packages.
- Experience of answering and actioning diverse queries, using a wide range of information sources.

**Desirable**

- Recent experience of working within a higher education environment.
- Experience of providing information and the ability to transfer this experience to a higher education context.
- Experience of outbound calling in a complex customer services environment.
- Experience of working to personal, team and organisational targets.
- Experience of working in a multi-channel environment and coping with high volume telephone calls, emails and correspondence.

**Education, qualifications and training**

**Essential**

- Standard Grade Maths and English at Grade C or above, or equivalent.
- Ability to write clearly and appropriately in English.
Role specific requirements e.g. shift working

The post holder will be required to work 37 hours as agreed within the hours of 08.00 – 17.30 Monday to Friday and as directed by business demands (subject to change).

We have a limited number of options for flexible working arrangements owing to the nature of the team’s work.

Please note that leave during training [4 weeks at start] and in the busy peak periods is severely restricted. Current peak periods are mid – August to late September and January.

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 Hazel Robinson on 0131 226 3851.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please 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 on Thursday 7th November 2019.

Email your application form to Scotland-Recruitment@open.ac.uk

Selection process and date of interview.

The interview panel will be chaired by: Andrew Lamb, Team Manager, SRSS

The other member of the panel will be: Audrey Cairns, Team Manager, SRSS

The interviews will take place on: 27th, 28th and 29th November 2019.

The selection process for this post will include: Formal interview and desk exercise.

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.