Job Description – Project Manager

About the role

The team are responsible for the operational management of student support online self-service to ensure students get the right advice at the right time. This role is responsible for managing continual improvement changes needed to ensure self-service meets students’ needs and expectation. These changes include process and content changes. This role requires the ability to analyse and understand complex students’ needs, and business changes, to then work with others, to produce creative solutions to improve the services we are providing. It also involves working with our IT department to agree requirements for changes to systems. This includes improvement to online services delivered through the students’ online portal (StudentHome), the HelpCentre and student related digital services (for example web forms, webchat, telephony, VOICE).

The role holder will be working on multiple change improvement activities at any one time involving negotiation with colleagues across the university.

Key responsibilities

• Working with colleagues to analyse and clarify the changes needed (and business benefits to the change).

• Identifying and facilitating the evaluation of different solution options to enable the selection of an appropriate approach.

• Creating business cases using the OU’s standard process and templates.

• Developing and negotiating work plans that identifies key activities, outputs and resource requirements and that provides a basis for monitoring performance.

• Managing working groups, from staff across the university to ensure that deliverables meet defined quality, time and cost criteria. Identify, agree and implement remedial actions where necessary.

• Identifying and evaluating risks associated with the project, escalating where appropriate. Where necessary, develop, agree and implement solutions to overcome these.

• Designing communication and deployment plan, obtaining sign off of the completed products and agreeing operational and ongoing support needs.

• Ensuring quality and compliance requirements are met and monitored.

All staff are expected:

• To undertake any other duties which may reasonably be required;

• To take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of themselves and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work;

• To demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity
Skills and experience

Essential

- Experience of managing the delivery of work in a project environment
- Experience of working in a customer-focused environment.
- Experience of analysing data accurately and presenting the data in a meaningful, concise and relevant format

Desirable

- Understanding of OUPM Project methodology (or external equivalent e.g. PRINCE, APM) and project approval process at the Open University
- Knowledge of OU student systems.
- Experience of leading a team to achieve work objectives
- Experience of process mapping.

Skills & Capabilities

- Effective communication skills and the ability to express views and ideas both verbally and in writing.
- Experience of writing reports, project plans or proposals and presenting these with enthusiasm and conviction.
- Expertise in negotiating and the proven ability to influence outcomes. The ability to establish a good working relationship with colleagues from different areas of the Open University (e.g. IT, SRSC) even when views of approach and priorities may vary is important.
- Demonstrable organisational, planning, problem-solving and decision-making skills when working individually and in a team.
- Team-working capabilities in collaborating with colleagues, managers and staff across the organisation to ensure service excellence.
- Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues, stakeholders and partners to deliver campaign objectives.
- Awareness and understanding of ‘best practices’ in all aspects of project management.
- Strong IT skills and the ability to use a range of software packages including Microsoft Office.
- Ability to deliver a customer-focused approach, considering impact on students.
- High level of numeracy, attention to detail and analytical approach to problem solving.
- Ability to meet challenging deadlines while remaining calm under pressure.
- Ability to deal with ambiguity in managing multiple activities.
- Self-confident, resilient and able to deal with obstacles and challenges with minimal supervision.