Job Description – Editorial Production Manager

Key responsibilities

- To lead, manage and develop the Editorial team of Digital Development Editors and Production Editors to deliver effective learning experiences for students at the appropriate quality, time and cost.
- To ensure that development and production work is allocated and completed effectively and to quality standards.
- To ensure that production and workflow tools, repositories and processes are used consistently and efficiently.
- To lead the embedding of technical and process changes in Editorial production.

Line management

- The Editorial Production Manager is the line manager for Digital Development Editors (G7), and where necessary Production Editors (G6).
- The Editorial Production Manager facilitates the outsourcing of freelance editorial work through:
  - ensuring the freelance database contains sufficient freelancer suppliers
  - holding editors accountable to manage their workload effectively through the outsourcing of appropriate editorial tasks and projects.

Team leadership

- To lead a team of Digital Development Editors and Production Editors in the production of rich learning material, including websites, books and ebooks, that meet agreed requirements of timeliness, quality and cost.
- Motivate team members to work collaboratively to ensure coherence and integration across services.
- Determine and communicate objectives and responsibilities.
- Allocate tasks according to service requirements and skills of team members.
- To be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and control of production tasks.
- Assist Resource Managers in the planning and allocation of work to editors.
- Ensure freelance creatives and suppliers (editors, designers, interactive media developers, sound and vision producers and others) are briefed effectively by production staff on the requirements of the tasks contracted to them, briefing directly on occasion.
- Carry out longer term planning to ensure editorial resource and skill levels match forecast activity.
Specification and design

- Obtain relevant and accurate information on production requirements from Senior Project Managers and advise SPMs how these can be met using agreed processes.
- Identify and address any constraints imposed by partners, technical development and organisational requirements in the delivery of production work.
- Create and update documentation which conforms to organisational requirements and standards.

Delivery of production services

- Ensure work flows through D&P in accordance with the priorities for activity set by Senior Project Managers and Commissioners.
- Liaise with a wide range of LDS staff to address their requirements and advise on appropriate approaches to the use of production services.
- Ensure that production services correctly match the agreed specifications, schedules and quality standards.
- Identify and resolve departures from specifications and quality standards.
- Determine appropriate working methodologies to successfully deliver production services within wider LDS systems, standards and service levels.
- Resolve any shortfalls between required and allocated resources by following organisational procedures.
- Ensure that editors comply with the OU brand, house style and other standards in the tasks they perform.
- Contribute to ensuring learning materials meet standards for accessibility.
- Keep informed of relevant developments in educational technology.
- Maintain and keep updated project documentation where required.
- Contribute to OU best-practice and knowledge-sharing networks.

Technical leadership

- Lead the technical delivery of production services, including working with other Editorial Production Managers to roll out and embed workflow, asset management and production tools and systems.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of LDS’ publishing/content strategy.
- Oversee and embed change in production processes.
- Make a major contribution to the provision of documentation for new or improved production processes and standards.
- Lead the application of agreed best practice in production services and manage exceptions to ensure controlled flexibility.
Skills and experience

Education, qualifications and training

Essential
- Higher-education qualification or equivalent professional experience.
- Experience in the development, production and integration of media products.
- Knowledge of developments in higher education and learning technology.

Desirable
- Experience in the development, production and integration of editorial products.
- A relevant, recognised qualification in publishing or media.
- Experience in the development, production and integration of editorial products.

Skills, capabilities and abilities

Essential
- Strong IT skills, especially MS Word, Outlook and Excel.
- Leadership and performance management capabilities in establishing and motivating teams and developing their skills.
- Strong communication and negotiating skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to influence those in senior positions including academic authors.
- Ability to work as part of a team towards common goals and collaboratively across functional and institutional boundaries.
- Ability to elicit, understand and record complex requirements.
- Ability to think creatively and imaginatively.
- Attentiveness to accuracy and detail even when under pressure.
- Excellent time-management skills.
- Commitment to own professional development and learning.
- Commitment to continuous improvement in processes and ways of working.
- Knowledge and understanding of brand values.

Desirable
- Understanding of learning design principles and pedagogy.
- Experience of using XML editing software and workflows.
- Experience of using content management systems.
- Experience of at least one of the following media specialisms: Publishing; Graphic design; Web development; Software development; eBook and ePub production to ePub3 standard.
About the Unit/Department

Development and Production (D&P) is a large unit within Learner and Discovery Services. It is responsible for the design, development, production and delivery of innovative and pedagogically effective learning materials and experiences for Open University students. D&P works with academic colleagues to plan, design and produce quality learning products and with other operational units within the University and external partners to produce a diverse range of assets and resources. D&P also oversees the procurement of media materials and manages the University’s Intellectual Property.