Job Description – Research Manager (Psychology & Counselling)

About the role

The Research Manager works closely with the School of Psychology & Counselling Research Centre Management Team and the Faculty Research Office, both based in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). The role is to manage the Research Centre currently being developed, and in the initial phase this will include managing the establishment of the Research Centre. The role involves managing the budget, completing the necessary reporting requirements, and supporting bidding activity at the strategic level. The postholder is part of the FASS Faculty Research Support Team but will work primarily with the School’s Research Centre Management Team and School staff and will engage effectively with other Faculties involved with relevant research when required.

Key responsibilities

Centre management:

1. Managing the research activities of the School’s (School of Psychology & Counselling) new research Centre. This will involve working closely with the Centre management board and the Faculty research office to support research and liaising with the University’s central research office including senior figures responsible for research (Associate Dean and Pro-vice Chancellor, as relevant).

2. Managing the Centre’s core budget, preparing forecasts and financial returns to ensure individual research projects are delivered within budget and ensuring maximum use of available budget.

3. Contributing to the development and updating of the Centre website in liaison with the Faculty’s web team. Liaising with the School’s social media team, Faculty Communications team and relevant colleagues within the Faculty Research Office to ensure that the School’s research and related activities are promoted within the OU and externally.

4. Keeping accurate and up to date records of the Centre’s research activity (e.g. bid records including submissions, outcomes and follow ups).

5. Producing Centre related documentation and completing necessary reporting requirements (annual reports, business plans, and other documentation as required for School, Faculty, University and funding bodies).

6. Liaising with, coordinating and organising researchers associated with the Research Centre for bidding and related (e.g. impact) activity; leading on managing relationships between Centre members and others (external network members, funding bodies, key stakeholders within and outside the University, the Centre management team).
Working with the Centre Director and management board to implement the Centre’s research strategy and reporting to the Centre management team. This will include supporting, monitoring and driving continuous improvement in the Centre’s systems, structures, processes and management information relevant to the post holder’s areas of responsibility.

Arranging and attending research, management and finance meetings relevant to the activities of the Centre. This will involve devising the agendas, minuting and disseminating appropriately.

Serving as a main point of contact for research teams, external funding bodies, commercial companies and national networks; acting as the first point of contact for all new Centre enquiries; providing detailed and timely responses to all enquiries.

Recruiting and line managing the Centre administrator (who will provide admin support to Centre’s management team, be responsible for organising events, research travel bookings etc).

Undertaking other such duties within the Faculty as reasonably required by the postholder’s line manager and the Centre management team.

Bidding support:

Being responsible for horizon scanning, identifying and seizing a diverse range of research funding opportunities and advising Centre members of these. This can be facilitated by regular meetings with relevant bodies like the OU’s Development Office and Fundraisers.

Working closely with the Faculty Research Office to support bid preparation and provide hands-on guidance to Centre members regarding bid identification and preparation. This will involve: costing bids and assisting on issues like ethics, impact, research protocols and letters of support, negotiating appropriate timelines for bid production with academic and other staff and working to ensure these are met by all relevant parties, and ensuring that applications have been appropriately authorised in line with University regulations.

Working closely with the Faculty Research Office to support the management of successful bids (at award and post-award). This will include: supporting academic staff in completing documents necessary for funders; meeting with PIs, Co-Is and Project Managers to outline funder and university requirements and supporting staff in meeting those requirements; working with the Co-ordinator (Research Finance) to manage project budgets; working with the Principle Investigator (PI), external collaborators and the OU’s legal team to produce collaboration agreements and other legal documents; working with the PI, Senior Managers (Research), the School and the Resource Hub on grant related staffing requirements; regularly checking project progress with the project team; liaising with other university units as appropriate.

Skills and experience

Education, Qualifications and training

- A degree, or equivalent background education, or significant work experience at a comparable level (Essential)
• A professional qualification or postgraduate qualification (Desirable)

**Knowledge, work and other relevant experience**

• Appropriate level of directly relevant administrative/management experience (Essential)
• Experience of supporting or writing grant applications (Essential)
• Project management experience or experience of supporting research grant post award and ‘at award’ activity (Essential)
• Knowledge of the UK Higher Education and research funding context, and enthusiasm to continue developing that knowledge (Essential)
• Experience of using IT systems effectively, including spreadsheets (Essential)
• A personal or professional interest in one or more of the research areas in the School of Psychology & Counselling (Desirable)
• Experience minuting formal meetings (Desirable)
• Experience with OU systems (Frodo, AMS) (Desirable)
• Experience of line management (Desirable)

**Personal abilities and qualities**

• Good numeracy skills and ability to plan and manage budgets and cost projects/activities (Essential)
• Demonstrable organisational, planning and problem-solving skills, including ability to anticipate and analyse problems and introduce workable solutions (Essential)
• Ability to organise own workload, prioritise and work to deadlines whilst remaining effective under pressure (Essential)
• Effective team working with experience of managing, organising and coordinating others to work flexibly and responsively across boundaries (Essential)
• High level of communication skills (written and oral) (Essential)
• Interpersonal and negotiating skills, with the ability to influence others over whom there is no formal authority to take particular courses of action (Essential)
• Ability to interpret, advise on, and adhere to policy and procedures (Essential)
• High level IT skills (Essential)
• Ability to reflect on personal performance and regular stakeholder feedback to drive continuous improvement (Essential)
• Commitment to diversity, equality and the values of the Open University (Essential)
• Commitment to continuing personal development (Essential)