Job Description – Learning Designer

About the role

The Learning Designer (LD) conducts, facilitates or supports the design, quality enhancement and analysis/evaluation of pedagogically effective, student-centred learning, in accordance with published OU strategies, policies and standards. This is a collaborative and consultative activity involving specialists and teams from different departments. As a member of the Learning Design Team, the LD may act as the sole designer or in support of a Senior Learning Designer (SLD) according to the nature of each project, or on other support, investigative, scholarship, presentation, partnership, commercial or cross-curricular activities.

Key responsibilities

- Lead the learning design and support of standard projects, or support SLDs and other participants on more complex or higher risk projects, delivering pedagogically effective, student-focused solutions within project time, quality and budget. This may include planning, leading and documenting formal learning design workshops/sessions with academic teams or clients.

- Lead or support the process of eliciting and clarifying requirements and decision-making by: building effective working relationships and employing influencing skills; the development/use of paper prototyping, prototyping and activity mock ups; and presenting demonstrations or exemplars.

- Provide informed, timely and credible advice, backed by evidence wherever possible, to other staff on the most suitable choice, mix and quality of learning activities, media, tools, interactivity and collaboration to provide an effective and engaging student experience.

- Represent the breadth of student needs in our design of learning – in terms of factors such as study patterns, practices and environments, threshold concepts, digital capabilities, workload, device use, connectivity, the nature and extent of collaborative activities, diversity, accessibility, employability, etc.

- Lead or support the compilation, routine analysis and presentation of data and evidence from a variety of sources in order to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of specific learning design approaches. Promote the wider dissemination and implementation of this evidence and conclusions on future projects.
- Facilitate or participate in strategic and partnership projects, representing a learning design and student perspective in cross-functional groups or activities; perform a similar role in external groups and projects, promoting effective working relationships and representing a learning design and university perspective as appropriate.

- Keep abreast of learning design, technology-enhanced learning and analytics developments, issues, technologies and practices, and their implications for the OU. Conduct or participate in investigations, testing, evaluation, benchmarking and scholarship activities relating to these, documenting and sharing or presenting findings.

Skills and experience

Education, qualifications and training

**Essential:** - A first degree or equivalent, supported by at least two years’ relevant professional experience.

**Desirable:** - Recognised qualification in a relevant discipline (e.g. education, distance learning or learning technologies) or equivalent professional training.

Experience as an OU or distance-learning student.

Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

**Essential:** - Knowledge and recent experience of:

- The application of educational principles and technology to the design of effective open and distance learning.
- Working within creative and/or cross-functional teams.
- Constructive engagement with academics, clients or subject matter experts, eliciting and analysing learning needs, and proposing appropriate and achievable solutions.
- Analysing, compiling and presenting information in ways that are robust and appropriate to a given target audience and situation.
- Delivering to agreed deadlines, budgets and standards.

**Desirable:** -

- Appreciation of a variety of pedagogies and tools in online and distance learning and teaching.
- Knowledge and experience of working in a higher-education environment.
- Knowledge and experience of designing or producing VLE-based learning activities (ideally Moodle).
- Engagement with social media.
Personal skills, capabilities and qualities

**Essential:** -

- Employs good oral and written communication skills and methods, and adapts these according to the situation and needs of the audience
- Works effectively as part of a diverse team, applying strong interpersonal and networking skills to foster and maintain productive working relationships within own team and with those in other teams and organisations
- Works toward realistic, mutually-acceptable outcomes by synthesising ideas, supporting, influencing and constructively challenging others, including whilst participating in project or design workshops
- Makes pragmatic and timely decisions supported by evidence; refers decisions upwards as appropriate
- Demonstrates good and current digital/online capabilities, including use of MS Office and other common educational and web technologies and tools
- Takes ownership for delivering outcomes, considering risks, prioritising actions and remaining effective when under pressure
- Shows proactive and ongoing commitment to own professional development; demonstrates enthusiasm, willingness and ability to respond flexibly and positively to change and to learn new skills; reflects on own practice and experiences

**Desirable:** -

- Experience of research and scholarship
- Experience of facilitation or preparing and delivering training sessions