Job Description – Assistant (Research)

About the role

The post holder will be part of a team responsible for the day-to-day running of the Faculty Research Office/Centre’s/Groups including supporting Centre/Group Directors, Senior Research Managers and Faculty Research Co-coordinators.

The post holder will be required to work flexibly and collaboratively with all members of the team, and to provide general secretarial support to the Faculty Research Office, working closely with colleagues in School academic support and the Resources Team to ensure the smooth and efficient support of Faculty research activity.

Key responsibilities

1. To give full secretarial support to several Research Group leaders by carrying out routine office duties including coordinating the day-to-day activities of the Group, acting as first point of contact for the Group, handling general enquiries from internal sources, external organizations and partners, via email, post and telephone. Responsible for processing membership applications and maintaining up-to-date membership lists. Works closely with colleagues in School academic support where required.

2. Provides secretarial support to the Faculty Research Office carrying out routine office duties – types general correspondence, answers telephone and e-mail enquiries, diary management, and maintains and updates filing systems.

3. Sets up and manages the electronic filing system and co-ordinates records management (to include contracts, correspondence, record of event, creating and updating mailing lists, etc.)

4. Events organisation: Responsible for, preparing papers and PowerPoint presentations, producing posters for forthcoming events, organising rooms on and off campus, ordering audio visual equipment, plus arranging travel, accommodation and catering.

5. Responsible for arranging venues, catering, ordering and setting up of equipment (video conferencing and telephone conference) setting programmes, circulating papers and coordinating attendees travel and accommodation.

6. Supports PhD student processes where required, including activities such as recording applications, organising interviews, recording supervision meetings, recording probation and progress reports.

7. Contributes to the effective working of the Faculty Research Office by effectively prioritising own work, having an awareness of the workload of the team and supporting colleagues when necessary.

8. Services research related meetings, arranging rooms, catering, ordering and setting up of equipment (video conferencing and telephone conference) setting agendas, circulating papers and taking minutes of meetings as required.
9. Responsible for maintaining up-to-date records of expenditure, logging future commitments and producing quarterly forecasts against designated budgets. Raising purchase requisitions, checking and processing expenses claims. The post holder is required to use TSE, FRODO, Opus, Click and other finance systems relevant to the role.

10. Acts as back up to the other Research Assistants during periods of leave or sickness absence and assists with other work in the Faculty Research Office or projects as required. May also act as back up and provide support for Assistants (Academic Support) in certain circumstances.

11. Works collaboratively with others in the Deanery team and makes an active contribution to the wider work of the Deanery and Faculty.

12. Member of Faculty and University Groups as appropriate.

13. Works collaboratively with others in the Deanery team, particularly Academic Support and the Resources Team and makes an active contribution to the wider work of the Deanery and Faculty.

14. Member of Faculty and University Groups as appropriate.

15. Undertakes other such duties within the Faculty as reasonably required.

Skills and experience

Education, qualifications and training

Essential:

1. Good level of general education (GSCE ‘O’ level or equivalent) to include English and Maths at Grade C or above

Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

Essential:

2. Experience of working in an office-based environment and a willingness to keep up-to-date with specialist knowledge and skills.

3. Excellent IT skills to include high level of competency in word-processing, Excel, PowerPoint, electronic diaries, spreadsheets, databases, the internet and Outlook.

4. Flexible, adaptable and responsive to changing duties and working practices.

5. Ability to use initiative and work independently in a pro-active manner.

6. Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills. Ability to communicate well with people at all levels.

7. Methodical with high level of accuracy and proof-reading ability.

8. Experience of taking and producing accurate typed minutes.

Desirable:

9. Experience of using TSE, POSY, FRODO and Click Travel systems.

10. NVQ Level 2 Administration or equivalent.

Skills, capabilities and qualities

Essential

12. Effectiveness as a team member.
13. Ability to plan and prioritise own work.
14. Ability to work under pressure to agreed timescales and within delivery standards.
15. Experience of providing service to internal and external customers such as when dealing with student enquiries.
16. Commitment to principles of improving diversity and equal opportunities within the work environment.

Desirable:

17. Possessing a working knowledge of The Open University and its objectives.