# Job Related Information

This document includes information about the role for which you are applying and the information you will need to provide with your application.

## 1. Role Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vacancy reference</th>
<th>14859</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Senior Disability Support Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Manager, Disability Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£22,214 - £24,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>Secretarial and Clerical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>GR5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>Fixed Term Contract until 31 July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>Monday to Friday 37 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Milton Keynes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing date:</td>
<td>Midday on Friday 13 July 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of application form accepted:</td>
<td>Long application form.</td>
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</table>

In addition to a completed application form you must provide a covering letter outlining how you meet the criteria in the person specification. This is an important element of the application process. Please ensure that you provide relevant examples as evidence to support your statements. **CVs will not be accepted without an application form.**

| Number of referees required: | 2 |
| Unit recruitment contact:    | SS-STS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk |
2. Summary of duties

Purpose Statement

The role holder will be a member of the Disability Support Team working within the Disability Support Centre with a focus on providing integrated information, advice and support to disabled students and prospective students leading to successful progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction. The key duties are:

a. To provide proactive disability support to disabled students and potential students resident in England to maximise student success. To also act as an initial point of contact for reactive queries and requests for advice and support received via a variety of channels.

b. Where necessary to refer on to other staff with specialist expertise, particularly within the Disability Support Centre and Disability Champions in SSTs, as part of the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) model; making interactions with The Open University as effortless and seamless as possible.

c. To concentrate on the delivery of expert disability advice and support with a focus on building relationships with a particular Student Support Team (SST) through the SST Disability Champion(s) and one or more team(s) within the Disability Support Centre.

Main Responsibilities

1. To provide complex disability related advice and support to students and potential students through both proactive and reactive contact via a number of channels including inbound and outbound phone calls, emails, letters, online webchat, online forums and social media, and face to face:

   • Act as the first point of referral, including via hot transfers and pre-booked appointments, for disabled students and potential students requiring complex advice and information, using judgement and expertise to assess queries and ensure that guidance needs are identified and addressed, referring on particularly within the Disability Support Centre or to Disability Champions in SSTs where appropriate.

   • Advice provision will concentrate on, but not be limited to, a specific area of disability support provided by one of the teams within the Disability Support Centre as well as being aligned with one or more curriculum (SST) area(s)

   • Undertake student disability profiling

   • Provide information and advice to DSA and non-DSA-eligible students on equipment schemes and non-medical support

   • Provide information and advice to students receiving DSA funding through Student Finance England/Wales

   • Generic disability advice provision will also be required, using judgement and expertise as well as reference to standard operating procedures and policies, informed by use of a knowledge management system as well as briefings, training events, use of databases and printed material to access accurate and up to date information and advice.
2. To undertake associated administrative and operational processes to requests from disabled students and potential students:
   - Accurately record and maintain student and potential student details on university systems and databases.
   - Ensure all work is carried out to required standards.
   - Ensure that complex guidance needs and issues are identified and met, referring/transferring calls appropriately and effectively to other specialist staff as part of an Information Advice and Guidance model.
   - Where appropriate or necessary, book follow up appointments for those specialists at times convenient to students and potential students.

3. To work as part of a flexible operation to provide support and answer queries from disabled students and potential students within agreed timescales. To work to a rota as part of a Work Force Management System to ensure that all activity is dealt with promptly and effectively and within agreed Service Levels:
   - Participate actively in the achievement of agreed service standards
   - Contribute to the regular monitoring and review of these standards
   - Exercise judgement in dealing with complex issues, interpreting and applying guidelines with initiative whilst operating within defined boundaries.

4. To assist proactively in the development and continuous improvement of good internal and inter team working and service provision:
   - Attending and actively participating in team meetings and developmental activities
   - Contributing to business improvement ideas and initiatives, making recommendations to Managers as appropriate.
   - Showing initiative in helping the team to run smoothly and working with and supporting other teams as required
   - Engage actively in the support and development of new team members.
   - Contribute to the development of effective team delivery relating to IAG.
   - Undertaking other activities as directed by the Disability Support Centre Management.

5. To continually develop skills and knowledge to maintain and improve personal performance in the spirit of continuous improvement and to adopt correct and evolving business practices and procedures:
   - Undertaking all duties in accordance with internal policy and external legislation.
   - Working with the Management of the Disability Support Centre to understand personal performance and areas for development.
- Providing feedback to contribute to colleagues’ performance development
- Accepting feedback from colleagues to improve personal skills and knowledge.

## 6. Person specification

### Education, qualifications and training

**Essential:**

A good standard of general education including GCSE Maths and English at Grade C or above, or equivalent

**Desirable:**

Relevant NVQ to Level 2 or above (e.g. Customer Services, or Information, Advice and Guidance, or Customer Care) or equivalent.

### Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

**Essential:**

Experience of answering and actioning complex and diverse queries, using a wide range of information sources.

Experience of providing information and advice and the ability to transfer this experience to a higher education context.

Ability to maintain own knowledge bank in a coherent and systematic way and carry out research as necessary.

Ability to identify deficiencies in information sources and take proactive measures to improve and enhance clarity and accuracy for the service as a whole.

**Desirable:**

Experience of inbound and outbound calling in a complex customer services environment.

Experience of working to personal, team and organisational targets.

An understanding of the issues affecting disabled students.

### Personal abilities and qualities

**Essential:**

Good communication skills: both oral and written, with effective telephone techniques and the ability to explain policies and processes in plain English as well as to write clearly, succinctly and correctly in plain English.

Good interpersonal skills: including active listening skills and the ability to respond to identified needs through the use of varied questioning techniques.
Flexibility: including adaptability to changing circumstances, duties, work practices and systems and a commitment to ongoing development with the ability to demonstrate a rapid understanding of newly presented information.

Good planning and organisational skills: including the ability to cope with heavy workloads and to meet deadlines, working productively and accurately in a high pressure environment.

Good negotiating skills.

An ability to deal with and follow complex information and procedures: using initiative and judgement in problem-solving, whilst recognising boundaries.

Strong IT skills: including use of standard Microsoft Office packages, and the ability to learn to use a range of in-house and commercial systems.

An understanding of team working and the ability to work effectively as part of a team.

An understanding of Equal Opportunities (EO) issues and a commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

Commitment to excellent customer service and continuous improvement.

Commitment to and role model for the University’s values.

Desirable:

- Ability to adapt interpersonal styles to suit different people or situations.
- Evidence of understanding the roles that individuals play as part of a team.
- Evidence of applying EO policy in a previous role.
- Ability to use management information systems.
- Ability to use customer relationship management systems.
- An understanding of the issues affecting disabled students.

## 7. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working

The role holder will be required to work to an agreed pattern, between the hours of 8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday.

Please note that leave in the busy peak periods may be severely restricted. Current peak periods are August, September, October and January.

Role holder will be working as part of complex workflow system.

Appropriate office equipment will be provided to facilitate effective working on the telephone and for Skype/Lync.

Takes action when appropriate, to seek and deliver solutions to problems as they arise.

Recognises personal impact on others and maintains a professional manner at all times.
5. About the unit/department

ACADEMIC SERVICES

The most crucial interactions and relationships with registered students are managed through Academic Services, working in collaboration with colleagues in the University, and in particular those in central academic units. More than 900 staff are employed by the unit at or through:

- Four central sub-units based at Walton Hall, Milton Keynes
- Three National Centres based in Scotland, Wales, Ireland
- Nine English locations (under review)

Academic Services is led by the Director of Academic Services who reports to the University Secretary. The Academic Services unit is divided into four functional areas as follows:

- Access, Careers and Teaching Support
- Assessment, Credit and Qualifications
- Student Support
- Office of Director, Academic Services

Access, Careers and Teaching Support (ACTS)

Access, Careers and Teaching Support sub-unit is led by David Knight, Director and comprises the following teams;

- Associate Lecturer Services
- Associate Lecturer Support and Professional Development
- Careers and Employability Services
- Widening Access and Success Services

6. How to obtain more information about the role or application process

If you would like to discuss the particulars of this role before making an application please contact Michelle Adams on 01908 654014 or by email michelle.adams@open.ac.uk

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact SS-STS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk

7. The application process and where to send completed applications

| Please ensure that your application reaches the University by: | Midday on Friday 13 July 2018 |
| Post it to: | The Open University |
| Name/Job title: | Staffing and Recruitment Support Assistant |
| Department/Unit: | Academic Services |
8. Selection process and date of interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The interview panel will be chaired by:</th>
<th>Michelle Adams, Manager, Disability Support Team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The other members of the interview panel will be:</td>
<td>Shortlisted candidates will be notified on panel members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The interviews will take place on:</td>
<td>Monday, 6 August 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>The selection process for this post will include</td>
<td>Shortlisted candidates will receive further information</td>
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We will let you know as soon as possible after the closing date whether you have been shortlisted for interview. Further details on the selection process will also be sent to shortlisted candidates.

If you do not hear from us by (30th July 2018) you should assume that you have not been shortlisted for interview but we do thank you for your interest.

Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.