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>14988</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Head of Student Support (Faculty of Business and Law)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Director of Student Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£50,618 to £56,950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>Academic Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>GR9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>37 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Milton Keynes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing date:</td>
<td>12:00 noon on Wednesday, 5 September 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of application form accepted:</td>
<td>Long application form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to a completed application form you must provide a covering letter of not more than 1500 words 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: | 3 |
| Unit recruitment contact:    | ss-sts-recruitment@open.ac.uk |
2. Summary of duties

The role holder will lead the work within the Student Recruitment and Support Centres (SRSCs) with specific responsibility for the work of all the Student Support Teams (SSTs) relating to the Faculty of Business and Law (the ‘affiliated Faculty’ for this post), and will be accountable for the delivery of a curriculum-appropriate student experience to help students and prospective students to make study choices leading to successful progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction. The key duties are:

- Collaborating with academic staff and their affiliated Faculty senior management to deliver and develop the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service with the SRSCs to optimise student experience and success within individual SSTs as well as the wider Faculty’s SRSC.

- Working with other senior managers, to provide leadership of the extended management team across the SSTs in the SRSCs to ensure a positive team culture and an integrated approach to operational delivery of curriculum appropriate recruitment and support for students, with particular focus on the effectiveness of support for their affiliated Faculty, and other CAU where appropriate.

- Leadership of a team of Educational Advisors and Senior Advisors specialising in curriculum-appropriate guidance and advice relating to the individual SSTs of the Faculty, through direction and oversight of the Senior Managers IAG and Operations.

- Supporting the Directors of Student Support and Student Recruitment and Fees (SRF) by contributing to the planning, development and maintenance of high quality support to students and prospective students across all channels, with specific focus on leading representation of the requirements of their affiliated Faculty across Academic Services, and SRF.

Main Responsibilities

1. Provide leadership on behalf of the SRSC for the relationship with their affiliated Faculty and their SSTs:
   - Develop Academic Services, SRSC, team and personal expertise and knowledge related to each and every SST within their associated Faculty) to provide the expert point of referral.
   - Oversee and coordinate the activity of any nominated deputy specialising on any individual SST within this remit.
   - Lead and contribute to relevant management, practitioner and working groups established to promote informed, efficient, effective and consistent support services to students and prospective students to enable them to make successful study choices leading to study progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction.

2. Lead overall liaison with relevant Faculty staff as well as the senior management across the SRSC, Academic Services and SRF:
   - To drive and develop long term capability in line with strategic objectives, contributing to the development of policy and plans to achieve service and quality enhancements.
   - Translating policy and plans into operational delivery of excellent service to students and prospective students of their affiliated Faculty to enable them to make good study choices and to adopt successful behaviours.
   - Building and maintaining effective, genuine and open relationships with external and internal stakeholders, in order to achieve and improve both student support and customer service standards.
   - Representing Student Support and/or Academic Services on appropriate groups and committees.
   - Participating in University projects and developments related to Student Support.

3. To oversee the IAG provided to students and prospective students as part of a flexible management team across the SRSCs, with specific accountability for the delivery and quality of student experience and success for one of four Faculties (in this case the Faculty of Business and Law):
   - Ensuring all activity is dealt with promptly and effectively and within agreed service and quality levels.
   - Working co-operatively across institutional boundaries, so that both student support and customer
service standards are achieved in as seamless a way as possible.

• Actively monitor performance and quality, working closely with the Head of Student Support Operations and the Deputy Director, Student Recruitment and Fees, to ensure agreed service standards, performance targets and operating procedures are met and exceeded.

• Driving the regular evaluation and development of these standards for students of their affiliated Faculty.

• Exercise judgement in dealing with complex issues, such as complaint resolution, fitness to study and exception decision making, interpreting and applying procedures and guidelines to resolve problems with expediency, intelligence and sensitivity, combining strategic and operational perspectives.

4. Leadership and performance management of the Senior Managers IAG and Operations for their particular Faculty, and oversight of the associated team of Educational Advisors and Senior Advisors that role holder manages:

• Ensuring that all staff are recruited, trained, performance managed and developed in line with guidelines and supported and developed to help them fulfil their potential.

• Communicating with individuals and with team to share information and direction, and to maximise productivity levels and quality standards.

• Ensuring that all Educational Guidance and Advice is appropriate, relevant and timely and delivered in line with professional and institutional standards.

5. To proactively support the Directors of Student Support and SRF in the development and continuous improvement of good internal and inter team working and service provision:

• Acting as the Senior Manager on site at an individual SRSC, coordinating and providing leadership to the local management for that SRSC on a day to day basis across the full range of activities and service delivery. This range will include acting as the voice of the student on behalf of their affiliated Faculty whilst also recognising the overall values and responsibilities of the Open University towards staff members.

• Attending and actively participating in team meetings and developmental activities.

• Contributing to the wider management of Student Support and SRF, as required, and to actively and constructively participate in senior management team meetings.

• Contributing to business improvement ideas and initiatives, making recommendations to Senior Leaders as appropriate, and liaising as required with senior managers responsible for other SRSC Senior Managers outside of the local SRSC.

• Showing initiative and judgement 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.

• Undertaking other activities as directed by Senior Management.

6. To adopt, champion and role model the agreed SRSC culture and behaviours, and 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 Director of Student Support 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.
### 3. Person specification

#### Education, qualifications and training

**Essential:**
- Honours degree (or equivalent).

**Desirable:**
- A relevant Postgraduate qualification.

#### Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

**Essential:**
- Considerable experience of providing IAG, or managing the provision of IAG, to diverse groups of customers, ideally to students in adult, further or higher education.
- Recent and extensive experience of leadership in a multi-channel customer service and/or contact centre environment, including performance planning and control to quality standards; staff motivation, development and performance management, and recruitment and selection.
- Experience of building relationships with internal and external stakeholders and working co-operatively with others to achieve organisational goals and service level targets.

**Desirable:**
- Significant experience of leadership within a complex team environment with particular emphasis on motivating staff to set and achieve high performance standards, ideally within the Higher Education sector.
- Experience of working closely with staff in an academic culture.
- Experience of linking organisational objectives with functional and operational planning in order to create an integrated strategy, identifying and exploiting opportunities for integration and coherence.

#### Personal abilities and qualities

**Essential:**
- Highly developed interpersonal skills with the ability to influence, negotiate, establish credibility and assert authority whilst adapting style to suit different people or situations.
- The ability to resolve problems with expediency, intelligence and sensitivity, combining strategic and operational perspectives.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills across strategic and operational matters, communicating clearly and effectively for a range of audiences.
- The ability to lead whilst also working as part of a team, and evidence of understanding team dynamics and the roles that individuals play as part of a team.
• The ability to build effective, genuine and open long-term relationships with external and internal stakeholders, working co-operatively across institutional boundaries, in order to improve both academic and customer service standards.

• An understanding of Equal Opportunities issues and a commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

• Commitment to excellent customer service and continuous service improvement, and the ability to take a longer term view, taking into account the external environment.

• Good numerical skills and ability to interpret complex management information.

• Confident and proficient user of IT – particularly MS Word, Excel, and Outlook, including custom built databases and the internet – and ability to pick up new systems quickly.

• A proven commitment to continuous professional development.

Desirable:

• Understanding of the higher education sector and the place of part-time, distance learning within it.

• Commitment and role model for the University’s policy on Valued Ways of Working.

• Excellent time-management skills using a range of strategies to ensure that work is carried out effectively and efficiently.

Additional Requirements

Essential:

• 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.

4. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working

• The role holder will be responsible for a service that works the extended hours of 8.00am - 8.00pm Monday to Friday and Saturdays 9.00am to 5.00pm.

• Please note that at certain times of the year leave booking will be restricted according to operational need.

• Role holder will occasionally be required to travel to meetings in the two other SRSCs in Nottingham and Manchester as well as the Nations, as well as for training and evaluation purposes.
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.

Academic Services employs approximately 900 staff and is led by the Director of Academic Services who reports to the University Secretary and is organised as follows:

Five units based at Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, Manchester and Nottingham

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

Along with three National Centres based in Scotland, Wales, Ireland.

Student Support

The unit offers strategic and operational leadership in supporting OU students. The unit is responsible for the delivery of frontline services to students along with the ‘back office’ functions required to ensure that student support is delivered in an efficient and timely manner that meets appropriate quality standards. Led by Pat Atkins, Director the unit is organised as follows.

There are four, Faculty-aligned SRSCs (Student Recruitment and Support Centres)

SRSC (STEMA) based in Manchester, supporting the Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Access (STEMA) faculty

SRSC (WELS) based in Nottingham, supporting the Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS) faculty

SRSC (FASS) based in Milton Keynes, supporting the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASS)

SRSC (FBL) based in Milton Keynes, supporting the Faculty of Business and Law (FBL)

The SRSC operation is supported by the SST (Student Support Team) Hub and Planning and Resources Team both based in Milton Keynes.

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 Pat Atkins email: pat.atkins@open.ac.uk.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact email: 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: 12:00 noon on Wednesday, 5 September 2018

In addition to a completed long application form you must provide a covering letter of not more than 1500 words 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.**

Post it to: The Open University
Name/Job title: Staffing & Recruitment Support Assistant
Department/Unit: Academic Services
Address: 1st Floor East
Frank Henshaw Building
Hammerwood Gate
Kents Hill
Post Code: MK7 6BY
Or e-mail your application to: SS-STS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk

8. Selection process and date of interview

The interview panel will be chaired by: Pat Atkins, Director Student Support Policy and Operations
The other members of the interview panel will be: Jane Jones, Associate Dean, Faculty of Business and Law
Information on further panel members to be confirmed to shortlisted candidates.
The interviews will take place on: Thursday, 4 October 2018
The selection process for this post will include: Further details on the selection process will also be sent to shortlisted candidates.
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 27 September 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/time will not be accepted.