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>15099</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Senior Manager, Student Support (Operations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Depute Director (Student Experience &amp; Widening Access)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£40,792 to £48,677 (pro rata)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>Academic Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>G8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>Temporary contract for 12 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>29.6 hours per week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>The Open University in Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing date:</td>
<td>5pm on 5 October 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of application form accepted:</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of referees required:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit recruitment contact:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Scotland-Staffing-Coordinator@open.ac.uk">Scotland-Staffing-Coordinator@open.ac.uk</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Summary of duties

The role holder will work within the Student Recruitment and Support Scotland (SRSS) team, and will provide leadership in the delivery of student facing operations to enable students and prospective students to make study choices leading to successful module completion, study progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction.

The key duties are:

1. To lead and manage a team of Managers, Student Support (Operations) effectively, ensuring that quality and service standards and Key Performance Indicators are met.

2. To lead the delivery and development of the Advice service within SRSS as part of the University’s Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) model, with accountability for the delivery of an advice service appropriate to students and potential students in Scotland, enhancing retention and progression.

3. To work with the extended management team across SRSS and with the wider University to ensure an integrated approach to efficient and effective operational delivery of appropriate recruitment and support for students in Scotland.

Main Responsibilities

1. Membership of the Senior Management Team in SRSS supporting the Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access) and working closely with other managers to ensure effective running of services to students in Scotland to agreed service standards.

2. Leadership and performance management of a team of Managers, Student Support (Operations):

   - Provision of operations direction, guidance, coaching, training and support across curriculum areas and specialisms and oversight of the Advice team.
   - Ensuring that all staff within the Advice team 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 teams to share information and direction, and to maximise productivity levels and quality standards.
   - Oversee rotas to ensure that all activity is dealt with promptly and effectively and within agreed service levels.
   - Develop, deliver and embed consistent operational process changes and service improvements.
   - Ensure that fluctuations in student demand, proactive work and other workloads are anticipated and responded to.
   - Lead contingency planning for their team, including peak planning and delivery.

3. Work closely with a range of relevant staff including the Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access) in Scotland, equivalent staff in Wales and Ireland, Heads of Student Support Operations in England and other managers across the University to ensure a seamless student experience and provide excellent service to students and prospective students to enable them to make good study choices and to adopt successful behaviour:

   - Ensuring that all advice is appropriate, relevant and timely and delivered in line with professional and institutional standards.
   - 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, to ensure agreed service standards, performance targets and operating procedures are met and exceeded.
• Supporting the regular evaluation and development of service standards for students in Scotland,
• Exercise judgement in dealing with complex issues such as complaint resolution, fitness to study and
  exception decision making, interpreting and applying University procedures and guidelines to resolve
  individual student’s problems.

4. Contribute to development and continuous improvement of good working relationships and service
  provision within Student Recruitment and Support both in Scotland and the wider University:

• Attending and actively participating in team meetings and developmental activities.
• Deputise for the Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access) as required.
• Explore and develop service improvements and enhancements.
• Contributing to business improvement ideas and initiatives, making recommendations to Senior
  Management as appropriate.
• Showing initiative and judgement in helping the team to run smoothly, and working with and
  supporting other teams as required.

5. Contribute to development and continuous improvement of relevant OUiS and wider OU initiatives:

• Contribute to relevant 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 module completion, study progression, qualification completion and
  customer satisfaction.
• Contribute to the wider management of the OU in Scotland, as required, and to participate in
  management team meetings.
• Liaise closely with other areas of the University including CAUs; Assessment, Credit and Qualifications,
  Marketing, Finance and Business Development Unit staff as well as the other Managers Student
  Recruitment and Support both in Scotland and the wider University, to develop new working practices.
• Participate in University projects and developments relevant to the Scottish HE sector.
• Participate as appropriate in change processes and planning processes, when requested.
• Carry out any other duties appropriate to their grade as required by Senior Management.

6. Leadership for specific areas of work, such as work with students in secure environments, proactive study
  campaigns, disability support, retention and progression activities, complaints, young applicants in schools
  etc. (the list is not exhaustive):

• Supporting managers and staff to ensure procedures and guidelines are followed.
• Monitoring workflows and quality.
• Supporting managers and staff to facilitate briefings and training.
• Ensuring any issues are reported appropriately.

7. Lead and support continuous improvements in relation to achieving OU in Scotland’s Outcome Agreement
  (OA) targets:

• Support for activity arising from our OA in relation to advice service.
• Developing an advice service that can actively enhance retention and progression, including interface
  with careers/ employability service.

8. 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 Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access) to understand personal performance and areas for development.
• Develop personal expertise and knowledge to provide an expert point of referral for information, advice and guidance and specialist areas.
• Providing feedback to contribute to colleagues’ performance development.
• Accepting feedback from colleagues to improve personal skills and knowledge.

The role holder may be required to undertake any other duties reasonably required within the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the role, subject to the proviso that normally any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the Job Description in specific terms.

All staff are expected:

 To comply with the University’s Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities policies in the performance of your duties.
 To take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of yourself and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work.
 To co-operate with The Open University in ensuring as far as is necessary, that Statutory Requirements, Codes of Practice, University Policies and Departmental Health and Safety arrangements are complied with.
 To demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.

9. Person specification

Requirements  (E = Essential/ D = Desirable)

Education, qualifications and training

| Essential: | • A first degree or equivalent experience is required. |
| Desirable: | • Professional qualification in management. |

Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

| Essential: | • Significant experience of leading and managing teams providing customer/student services to meet recognised standards.
• Significant experience of leading an operational team with particular emphasis on motivating staff to set and achieve high performance standards, ideally within the Higher Education sector.
• Experience of leading, performance managing and coaching staff, including those on professional grades, in terms of motivation, commitment, performance and development.
• Experience of managing effectively across multiple services and channels within a customer focused, contact centre environment.
• Experience of planning and organising workloads to ensure objectives are met within resource constraints. |
- Experience of setting, meeting and reporting appropriate performance measures and standards.
- Experience in the recruitment and selection of staff, and delivering staff development.
- Experience of driving systems change from a business user perspective and of leading staff successfully through change.
- A proven commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

**Desirable:**
- Experience of delivering IAG and/or working in adult, further or higher education.
- Experience in deputising for senior colleagues.
- Experience of managing the use of on-line databases to deliver services and of interrogating databases for information.
- Experience of working in a networked team and of undertaking a management role.

**Personal abilities and qualities**

**Essential:**
- Highly developed interpersonal skills with the ability to influence, establish credibility and assert authority.
- Ability to manage, train and develop staff within the University’s policy on Valued Ways of Working, the Leadership Competency Framework and performance management framework.
- Ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines and achieve targets.
- Understanding of business continuity planning and management.
- Commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.
- Ability to resolve problems with expediency, intelligence and sensitivity.
- Excellent time-management skills using a range of strategies to ensure that work is carried out effectively and efficiently.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills including the ability to adapt interpersonal and community styles to suit different people or situations.
- Good numerical skills and ability to interpret complex management information.
- Highly proficient IT user, particularly MS Word, Excel and Outlook, including ability to use custom built databases and the internet and ability to pick up new systems quickly.
- Commitment to continuous professional development.
- Commitment to excellent customer service and continuous service improvement.
- Resilience and adaptability to deal with unforeseen work demands and prioritise and organise work effectively.
- Commitment to the university’s mission and values and ability to act as a role model in the context of the university mission and values.
- Ability to lead whilst also working as part of team with evidence of understanding team dynamics and the roles that individuals play as part of a team.
- Ability to encourage teamwork, new ideas and motivation of colleagues.
- Ability to handle ambiguity and uncertainty.
- Ability to write clearly and effectively for a range of audiences.
- Ability to build effective long-term relationships with external and internal stakeholders, working co-operatively across institutional boundaries.

**Desirable:**
- Understanding of the higher education sector and the place of part-time, distance learning within it.
10. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working

**Essential**

- The role holder will be required to work to an agreed pattern, between the hours of 8.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday, as directed by business demands – with occasional duty manager work outside of these hours particularly during peak period.
- Please note that leave in the busy peak periods is severely restricted. Current peak periods are August, September, October and January.
- Role holder may be required to attend meetings/events at various venues across the UK for business, training and evaluation purposes.

**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.

5. About the Open University in Scotland

The Open University in Scotland is an integral part of the Scottish higher education community and actively involved in the development of HE policy alongside the other 18 higher education institutions in Scotland. Since 1 April 2000, the teaching of OU students resident in Scotland has been funded by the Scottish Funding Council.

With approximately 16,000 students, Open University students can be found in virtually every postcode district and community in Scotland. Social justice and equality of opportunity are at the heart of everything the OU does and widening access to higher education is the ambition on which it was founded. The Open University is committed to extending opportunities for educational success to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential. The OU’s open access policy, flexible part-time delivery, its bridging programme with schools, college articulation agreements and geographical reach position us well as Scotland’s national widening access university. More than one third of our undergraduate students have qualifications below standard university entrance level when they joined the OU, over 18% have a declared disability and 17% are resident in the most deprived areas of Scotland (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

With over 70% of our students in work while they study with us, The Open University in Scotland occupies a unique place in terms of developing the Scottish workforce. We work closely with employers, trades unions, public sector bodies, institutes, private, third sector and community organisations, universities, colleges and schools across the whole of Scotland.

130 academic, administrative and secretarial and clerical staff work from the OU’s office in Edinburgh managing the University’s business in Scotland. The OU in Scotland works in collaboration with colleagues across England, Wales and Northern Ireland and in particular with the Academic Services Unit in providing support to our students.

More information can be obtained from The OU in Scotland website at [www.open.ac.uk/scotland](http://www.open.ac.uk/scotland)
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 Shona Littlejohn on 0131 226 3851 or email Scotland-Directorate-PA@open.ac.uk.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact the Staffing Co-ordinator by email: Scotland-Staffing-Coordinator@open.ac.uk.

7. The application process and where to send completed applications

Your covering letter or statement should clearly identify how you meet the criteria in the person specification if you have not already provided this information on the application form. Please ensure that you provide relevant examples as evidence to support your statements. The selection panel will consider how well the information you provide demonstrates that you meet the criteria identified in the person specification.

Please ensure that your application reaches the University by: 5pm on 5 October 2018

Post it to: The Open University in Scotland
Name/Job title: Staffing Co-ordinator
Department/Unit: Support Services
Address: 10 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh
Post Code: EH3 7QJ
Or e-mail your application to: Scotland-Recruitment@open.ac.uk

8. Selection process and date of interview

The interview panel will be chaired by: Shona Littlejohn, Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access)

The other members of the interview panel will be: Kate Signorini, Depute Director (Strategy, Planning & Resources)
Michael Johnson, Senior Manager, Student Support (Operations), Academic Services

The interviews will take place on: 19 October 2018

The selection process for this post will include: Formal interview and desk exercise.

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. Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.

Expenses incurred for travelling to the interview will not normally be reimbursed by the University.