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>14333</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Senior Assurance Manager, Portfolio Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Portfolio Office Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£39,992 to £47,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>Academic Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>Fixed Term Contract until July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>37 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Walton Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing date:</td>
<td>Midday, 05 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of application form accepted:</td>
<td>Standard application form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of referees required:</td>
<td>External Candidates - Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal Candidates - One (line manager)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit recruitment contact:</td>
<td>Lucy Goddard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Summary of duties

Purpose Statement

The Open University is making a significant amount of change to its processes, ways of working and systems over the coming years, in order to make our learning and research activity even better for our students, colleagues, and wider society. It is essential that the organisation gets the most value possible from all of this change.

The Portfolio Office plays a key role in building the capability of the Open University to deliver change and improvement effectively. This role will be a critical part of the Portfolio Office team supporting assurance, capability development and delivery of project outcomes.

The Senior Assurance Manager will work closely with project and change teams across the Open University to drive real and rapid improvements in how projects delivered and how benefits are realised, through the proactive use of assurance tools and techniques. With a key role in building change capability of the organisation, through hands-on support and advice to project teams and sponsors, learning and development activities, communities and networks, methodologies and tools.

It is a new role, with considerable scope for the role-holder to shape how they want to make this step-change happen in practice. It is an exciting, varied role that requires close working with teams across the University and at different levels of seniority.

And it’s the perfect time to join us, because the need for the organisation to be able to adapt successfully, with pace and focus, is greater than ever. We have a refreshed institutional strategy (to put our students first and foremost in our decision-making and actions, and better support the staff who most directly help students to achieve their goals), but making it happen requires the organisation to change – and realise the benefits from that change - like never before.

You will have a good handle on the theory of project and change methodologies and techniques, but even greater practical experience and know-how to make it happen in reality. You will be able to build trusted relationships with teams across the university; you will be a good communicator – able to facilitate discussions, and challenge where appropriate; and you will be tenacious and pragmatic. You will have experience of delivering change in complex environments or building change capability in others. Plus, you will be excited about - and motivated by - the Open University’s mission and the opportunity to play a key part in making it happen.

Main responsibilities

This role-holder will drive real and rapid improvements in project delivery through filling a vital role in project assurance working with OU project teams on a prioritised basis. Their responsibilities will include:

1. Providing proactive and pragmatic guidance and advice to project teams, sponsors and other stakeholders during assurance activities and outcomes improve project performance and benefit realisation
2. Providing consultative support and hands-on working with project sponsors and project teams to help them develop and initiate their projects and where useful facilitating discussions and workshops with project teams and their stakeholders to address project issues and provide expert advice
3. Leading efforts to improve project tracking and monitoring to ensure the right changes are being delivered effectively
4. Managing activities to increase our capability to oversee and prioritise the OU’s change portfolio
5. Helping to interpret and use strategic key performance indicators (with support from specialists from the Strategy and Information Office) to inform project decisions development and delivery
6. Finding practical and pragmatic solutions address real project and change problems
7. Supporting project teams, sponsors, Finance and other stakeholders in engagement with the university’s emerging approach in relation to decision-making about project approval and funding decisions
8. Designing and arranging engaging and useful events for the OU’s Change Community members
9. Improving the OU’s project management methodology, tool and other guidance
10. Identifying potential improvements to the OU’s project management learning and development curriculum (for OU staff) Coordinating healthcheck reviews of projects, as part of a small team
11. Other ad-hoc duties as required.

Key perks of the job

This is a great role that needs a great person. In return, you will be:

- Encouraged and supported to grow and develop in your career;
- Making a difference for the Open University with its important mission and its fantastic students;
- Working alongside talented and fun team-mates as part of an APM accredited and award winning team;
- Enjoying our beautiful, green campus environment and its facilities; and
- Balancing work and life with an almost-unbeatable holiday allowance.

3. Person specification

Requirements  (E = Essential/ D = Desirable)

Education, qualifications and training

- Essential: One or more project, programme or portfolio management qualifications (such as APM qualifications, Prince2, MSP, MoP etc).
- Essential: demonstrable knowledge of the role and importance of assurance in project delivery
- Desirable: A degree or equivalent level qualification.
- Desirable: A professional auditing or assurance qualification

Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

**Essential:** Knowledge and experience of:
- Managing and leading projects or programmes
- Delivering an assurance role within projects or programmes
- Providing advice and guidance to improve the assurance and effectiveness of projects or programmes

**Desirable:** Knowledge and experience of:
- Building change management capability in others
- Designing and implementing assurance activities
- Achieving change in the Higher Education sector
**Personal abilities and qualities**

**Essential:**
- Great communication skills (project documentation, business cases, representing information visually, informal written communications such as blogs, and presentation skills)
- Facilitation skills
- Relationship building and influencing skills
- Pragmatic approach to project management, focusing on what matters most
- Demonstrate commitment and ownership of responsibilities
- Flexibility to accommodate changing priorities

**Desirable:**

---

**4. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working**

N/A

---

**5. About the unit/department**

**About the Portfolio Office**

The Portfolio Office forms part of the Open University’s Strategy and Information Office. The Strategy and Information Office, led by the Director of Strategy (a member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive) provides critical leadership and support that enables others in the university to be successful in supporting the OU and its students.

We have responsibility for ensuring the Major Change Portfolio is fit for purpose, delivering the right change in the right way. Providing project assurance across all Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects, supporting Major Change Board in the approval and prioritisation of University wide change.

We are also responsible for establishing and maintaining the University’s change and project management framework, methodology and tools and The Change Community. Providing hands on support or advice to existing and new members of staff involved in or effected by change. Supporting the university is building its change and project capability.

The work we do is complex and University wide, we pride ourselves in being accessible, transparent and plain speaking. Role modelling values that support team and university success.

---

**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 Susie Palmer-Trew or email: susan.palmer-trew@open.ac.uk
If you have any questions regarding the application process please contact:

LTI-Translation-Recruitment@open.ac.uk

7. The application process and where to send completed applications

Please ensure that your application reaches the University by: Midday, 05 February 2018

A CV and covering letter are not required and will not be used as part of the selection process.

Post it to: As follows

Name/Job title: Staffing and Recruitment Co-ordinator

Department/Unit: Learning & Teaching Innovation

Address: Level 1, Perry Building, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

Post Code: MK7 6AA

Or e-mail your application to: LTI-Translation-Recruitment@open.ac.uk

8. Selection process and date of interview

The interview panel will be chaired by: Susie Palmer-Trew, Portfolio Office Manager, Strategy & Information

The other members of the interview panel will be: TBC

The interviews will take place on: 15 February 2018

The selection process for this post will include Further details will be given to shortlisted candidates.

If you do not hear from us by 12 February, 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.