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>14365</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job title:</td>
<td>Educational Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports to:</td>
<td>Senior Manager, Student Support (IAG &amp; Operations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary:</td>
<td>£32,548 to £38,833</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terms and conditions:</td>
<td>Academic Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of post:</td>
<td>Temporary contract till 8th December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours:</td>
<td>37 (full time)</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>2nd March 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

Purpose Statement

The role holder will work as part of a wider team based within the office of The Open University in Scotland and will focus on helping students and prospective students across all areas of the curriculum make study choices leading to successful progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction. The key duties are:

1. To provide proactive educational support across all areas of the curriculum, through provision of guidance and complex educational support to students and prospective students, individually and in groups (e.g. on forums) on a wide range of queries to maximise student success.

2. To act as a point of contact for reactive queries and requests for guidance and complex educational support received via a variety of channels, using an appointment system as required.

3. To offer most aspects of educational support across all areas of the curriculum referring on to other staff with specialist expertise, as part of the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) model, making interactions with The Open University as effortless and seamless as possible.

4. To offer IAG skills and knowledge leadership, training and development to Academic Services staff within Scotland and to make a significant contribution to the delivery and development of the University’s Student Recruitment and Support Service with a focus on IAG to promote student retention, progression and satisfaction. (Note: expected to equate to 20% of time over the year).

Main Responsibilities

1. To provide direct delivery of guidance and complex educational support to students and prospective students across all areas of the curriculum in relation to registration and study with The Open University, 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 a point of escalation, including via hot transfers and pre-booked appointments, for students and prospective students requiring guidance and complex support using judgement and professional expertise.
   - Assess queries and ensure that other specialist support needs are identified and addressed, referring on where appropriate.
   - Advice and guidance provision will be across all areas of the curriculum.
   - Accurately record and maintain student and enquirer details and discussions on university systems and databases.
   - Guidance and complex educational support may also be provided to groups of students and/or prospective students, through other channels such as an online environment e.g. moderating forums.

2. Leadership of an area of responsibility/areas of responsibility, such as students in secure environments, disability support, young students, qualification planning and choices in relation to specific areas of the curriculum or qualifications (the list is not exhaustive):
   - Sharing responsibility for the quality of services by working across organisational boundaries and contributing to development and application of appropriate quality standards.
   - Act as a champion, local knowledge expert and relationship contact point for appropriate specialist areas/other teams within the wider university.
   - Acting as a conduit of knowledge, and coaching and mentoring advisors and senior advisors, in relation to the specialism/s.
   - Developing IAG resources and communications as an IAG professional to support the delivery of service quality.
   - Contribute to the design, development and evaluation of online and other written information, materials and systems to meet operational needs.
• Monitor, evaluate and deliver services and implement procedures to assure the continuous quality and improvement of services to students and prospective students.

3. Contribute to the design and delivery of staff development:
   • Support induction and staff development and training of a range of staff in relation to IAG, students’ educational support and improving information and advice across all areas of the curriculum.
   • Deliver training to ALs and to other academic staff relating to the role of guidance and generic support to students including on legislation, policies, and procedures.

4. Significantly contribute to the development of the service to students and prospective students in Scotland and across the wider University with a focus on student-centred IAG to promote student retention, progression and satisfaction through, for example:
   • Involvement in, or management of, projects e.g. online information and advice tools.
   • Communications to students and prospective students.
   • Representation on University and/or external groups.
   • Developing support within new and existing student support structures.

5. To continually develop skills and knowledge to maintain and improve personal performance, adopting evolving business practices and procedures:
   • Undertaking all duties in accordance with internal policy and external legislation.
   • Working with the Senior Manager, 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.

6. To assist proactively in the development and continuous improvement of good internal and inter team working and service provision:
   • Participating in team meetings and development activities.
   • Contributing to business improvement ideas and initiatives, making recommendations to Managers as appropriate.
   • Showing initiative in helping the team to run smoothly, working and supporting other teams as required.
   • Undertaking other activities as directed by Managers.

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.
3. Person specification

<table>
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<th>Requirements (E = Essential/ D = Desirable)</th>
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### Education, qualifications and training

**Essential:**
- A degree or equivalent qualification.
- A relevant professional qualification and/or evidence of training and continuing professional development in Guidance.

**Desirable:**
- NVQ 4 in Advice and Guidance
- Willingness to work towards a professional qualification in Guidance where none is held.

### Knowledge, work and other relevant experience

**Essential:**
- Considerable experience of providing IAG to a range of diverse groups of customers, preferably students in adult, further or higher education.
- Knowledge of, and commitment to, equal opportunities and diversity.
- Awareness of the HE environment and government policies as they might impact on the University.
- Experience of working to personal, team and organisational targets.

**Desirable:**
- Experience of inbound and outbound calling in a complex customer services environment.
- An understanding of the needs of HE students.
- An understanding of the issues affecting student retention and progression in HE.

### Personal abilities and qualities

**Essential:**
- Advice and guidance skills developed to support students’ autonomy and decision making, using techniques in negotiating, enabling, advocating and challenging.
- Highly developed oral and written communication skills to convey complex information to a range of audiences.
- High level interpersonal skills including liaison, networking, negotiation and team working.
- Ability to operate as part of a virtual team using complex workflow systems.
- Ability to work within and across a range of teams.
- Ability to develop and deliver training to a wide range of staff.
- Confident computer skills sufficient to use IT systems effectively and to deliver guidance in an electronic world.
- Good planning and organisational skills including the ability to work autonomously and manage high volumes of work.
- The ability to analyse and develop data, processes, roles and responsibilities to improve services and respond to change.
- Commitment to, and role model for, the University’s values.

**Desirable:**
- Motivation and commitment to the continuous improvement and development of the service, to deliver to high volumes of students and prospective students.
- High levels of initiative and a willingness to take ownership of issues and resolve them.
• Ability to think creatively to resolve complex problems.
• A flexible and positive attitude to change.
• Ability to keep calm and maintain a sense of perspective when dealing with challenging students and prospective students.
• Commitment to own personal development and a willingness to keep up to date with developments in IAG.

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

• Role holder may be required to attend meetings/events at various venues across the UK for business, training and evaluation purposes.
• Appropriate office equipment will be provided to facilitate effective working on the telephone and for Skype/Lync conferencing.

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

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

• Three Nation Offices in Scotland (Edinburgh), Wales (Cardiff) and Ireland (Belfast).
• Four Student Recruitment and Support Centres

Academic Services is led by the Director of Academic Services who reports to the University Secretary.

Access, Careers and Teaching Support (ACTS)

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

• Associate Lecturer Services
• Associate Lecturer Support and Professional Development
• Careers and Employability Services
• Widening Access and Success Services
THE OPEN UNIVERSITY IN SCOTLAND

With nearly 15,000 students, The Open University (OU) is Scotland’s leading provider of part-time higher education. Some 40% of Scotland’s students studying part-time at undergraduate level with a higher education institution study with the OU.

The cornerstone of the OU’s mission to be open to all and our open entry system allows us to offer the opportunity for study to people from all backgrounds and sections of the community. For example, more than one third of our undergraduate students had qualifications below standard university entrance level when they joined the OU. We are also Scotland’s main provider for students with disabilities, teaching 10% of all disabled students in higher education.

Our reach is nationwide, and Open University students can be found in virtually every postcode district and community in Scotland. Hundreds of Scotland’s blue chip employers such as Scottish Power, Standard Life and Royal Bank of Scotland sponsor their staff to study with us. Through our courses and qualifications in areas such as health and social care, education, and business and management, the OU is playing a major role in the training and professional development of Scotland’s workforce across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Today e-learning is an integral part of the OU’s course delivery and our student support services; from online discussion groups and conferencing, to electronic assignment handling and dedicated course websites. By being online, even those living in the most isolated areas of the country are able to participate in a truly interactive learning environment.

The OU is an integral part of the Scottish higher education community and actively involved in the development of HE policy alongside all other higher education institutions in Scotland. Since 1 April 2000, the teaching of OU students living in Scotland has been funded by the Scottish Funding Council for Further and Higher Education.

The 130 academic, administrative and secretarial and clerical staff at the OU’s office in Edinburgh offer an extensive range of support and specialist advice services to students in Scotland. The core function of the office is to manage the University’s business in Scotland. This includes managing relationships with government and other external bodies, the research and development of learning and the recruitment and retention of students in Scotland, as well as the employment, support and staff development of the 500 Associate Lecturers who deliver the University’s teaching programmes. The office also provides advice, guidance and learning support to prospective and existing students including a programme of outreach events; administers examinations; organises an annual graduation ceremonies and promotes the University and its courses within Scotland. We have been voted as the top university in Scotland for student satisfaction for nine years.

More information can be obtained from the OU web site at 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 Maria McCrea on 0131 549 7116 or email: Maria.McCrea@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 Friday 2nd March 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: | Maria McCrea, Senior Manager, Student Support (IAG & Operations) |
| The other members of the interview panel will be: | Shona Littlejohn - Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access) |
| | Carla Anderson – Manager, Student Support (Operations) |
| The interviews will take place on: | 22nd March 2018 |
| The selection process for this post will include | In-tray or desk exercise followed by formal interview. |

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.