Job Description – Lead Analyst/Developer

About the role

The Lead Analyst / Developer will work with colleagues in the Data and Student Analytics Returns team to lead on the development and support of the systems used to create and manage the University’s statutory returns to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and student Funding Bodies.

The team works closely with other teams in Data and Student Analytics to ensure that existing systems are in step with the latest technological developments and strategic initiatives. For example the development of a Cloud-based Enterprise Data Hub, integrating operational data from the new SAP solution with legacy system data to ensure continuity and consistency of returns data quality. The team also works closely with the University Secretary’s Office Returns team to ensure that data for the statutory returns enables them to meet the immovable deadlines and to the high data quality demanded by the external agencies.

The post holder will be able to provide rapid solutions delivered to a deadline, built and maintained in line with audit requirements. The Lead Analyst / Developer will understand the complexity of the data requirements, be involved in the design, build, test and implementation phases in accordance with technical and quality standards. Initially using SAS to support the existing returns solution and then technologies required for the Enterprise Data Hub, such as C#, U-SQL, SQL Server and .NET.

It is an exciting time to join Data and Student Analytics. Our vision is to support, align to, and proactively drive the recruitment and student success strategy through continuous innovation in analytics. Statutory returns form a significant and essential part of this strategy.

Key responsibilities

Systems maintenance

- Ensure that the required data from source operational systems is available for returns and to a high data quality
- Systems are continually updated to take account of changes to operational data, systems and external requirements
- Liaise with other teams in Data & Student Analytics, the IT unit and USO Returns teams
- Maintain documentation to agreed standards and conform to audit requirements

Systems analysis and development

- In consultation with other stakeholders, develop and promulgate agreed data definitions.
- Provide programming support to the team, contributing to the development of technical skills and the dissemination of good practice in the analysis of information needs and the design and implementation of efficient and maintainable programs.
- Champion common approaches such as re-usable code, standardised definitions, etc.
- Apply appropriate project management and systems development methodologies.
- Investigate new techniques to improve the processing and quality of returns data.
Future developments and Projects
• In collaboration with D&SA, IT and other units, and using your expertise in end-to-end processes, identify opportunities and make plans to transition from the existing platform to the future technical platform and approach to system development
• Contribute analytical, programming and systems expertise to D&SA and collaborative projects.

Line management
• Manage workload and priorities
• Set objectives and identify development needs.

Skills and experience
Education, qualifications and training
Essential: Undergraduate degree (or equivalent) with strong engineering, mathematics or computing elements.
Desirable: Programming training or certificate in high level language

Knowledge, work and other relevant experience
Essential:
1. Experience of developing and maintaining systems ideally to support decision making and management information needs.
2. Substantial experience coding in SQL, SAS or other high level languages.
3. Familiarity with prototyping techniques and structured systems development techniques.
4. Experience in managing projects.
5. Proficient with Microsoft Office tools.

Desirable:
1. Knowledge of Open University operational systems and data.
2. Unix/Linux.
3. Knowledge of Higher Education sector and data
4. Knowledge of statutory returns required in the Higher Education sector

Personal abilities and qualities
Essential:
1. A self-starter, proactive in reviewing processes and in identifying opportunities for improvement.
2. Effective skills in implementing change.
3. Able to work under pressure to manage competing demands for time and to meet demanding deadlines.
4. Aptitude for careful analysis and systems development, striving for highest level of product quality.
5. Able to provide leadership in developing new approaches to the use of systems to meet information needs.
6. Able to offer help and guidance to others on a range of system issues.
7. Strong communication and presentation skills, both oral and written
8. Committed to ongoing learning and personal development