

# Disability Support Assistant (Register)

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## 1. Role Description

### Line management

The Disability Support Assistant (Register) is responsible on a day-to-day basis to the Disability Support Co-ordinator; the School Administrator has management authority for the School Office.

Authority at each residential school rests with the School Director.

### Staff for whom the jobholder carries supervisory responsibility

The Disability Support Assistant (Register) has no supervisory responsibility; s/he works as a member of a team of disability support assistants and team leaders comprised of:

- Contracted related **specialists** e.g., a professional communication support worker such as a British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreter or a nurse hired to provide personal care for a student with disabilities or additional requirements
- **Disability Support Assistants (Personal)**; these are generally friends, family, or regular assistants of students requiring one-to-one support; their attendance at the Residential School in order to provide this support has been agreed and arranged by the Disabled Student Services Team
- Those employed by The Open University as **Disability Support Assistants (School)** to provide general and temporary one-to-one support as required for students with disabilities and additional requirements, assistants providing one-to-one support, and related specialist staff; this is generally arranged for the whole residential school period but can be for a few days only
- The **Disability Co-ordinator** employed by The Open University to co-ordinate the on-site provision of equipment, assistance and other facilities as required for students with disabilities and additional requirements; this is generally arranged for the whole residential school period

### Main purpose of the job

To provide specified, one-to-one support to a student with disabilities or additional requirements; this can include guiding, accompanying to provide moral support and encouragement, mobility assistance, and note taking, and is generally organised on a week-by-week basis as part of the advance arrangements made by the Disabled Student Services Team, faculties and regions to provide a comprehensive package of on-site equipment, assistance and other facilities to enable DAR students to take part in their residential school module to the best of their ability.

### Duties and responsibilities

The Disability Support Assistant (Register) works with sensitive personal and confidential information. The work is largely active and may include manual handling. Any note taking work has a requirement for accuracy and legibility appropriate to the requirements of the student supported.

Duties of the Disability Support Assistant (Register) vary according to the requirements of the student being supported, the needs of the school and the level of other assistance available; they are likely to include:

### **Student support**

In relation to the student for whom support will be provided:

- As early as possible before the residential school start date, discussing and confirming details of her / his support requirements and anticipated working pattern, rest breaks and any other absences required by the Disability Support Assistant (Register); advising the Disabled Student Services Team promptly of any concerns. The most frequently requested areas of support are:
  - Assistance with luggage at registration and on the last morning
  - Guidance and assistance around the site and on field trips and in laboratories etc., which may involve for example, using a wheelchair to aid the mobility of a student, learning the specific guidance requirements of a student with sight loss or the support requirements of a student susceptible to epileptic seizures
  - Note taking
  - Assistance at mealtimes, which typically involves carrying a food tray and / or books and bags
  - Attendance to provide moral support and encouragement
  - Assistance with the return of borrowed items of equipment on the last morning
- Making direct contact with her / him at registration, or at another mutually agreed early opportunity
- Providing the support agreed and establishing throughout the week if s/he is content with the arrangements made and planned and help rectify as necessary
- Discussing sensitively with her / him any additional requirements that appear not to have been disclosed or for which they have not requested support; informing and seeking advice from the Disability Support Co-ordinator
- Making reasonable ad-hoc arrangements to meet her /his individual needs

### **Disability Support Assistants and Related Specialists**

Working with the Disability Support Assistant (School) and Disability Support Co-ordinator to:

- Help the Disability Support Co-ordinator to liaise as necessary with host institution staff to make arrangements for her / him e.g., security staff to arrange access keys and catering staff about special diets
- Upon request from the School Director, School Administrator, or Disability Support Co-ordinator, contribute to any report and other paperwork associated with her / him

### **General duties**

- Attending pre-school induction and training, accessing the assistant training and reference site and familiarizing self with the Manual of Office Procedures (MOP), Disability Resource Pack, manual handling guidance, and disability-specific and other resource material provided;
- Arriving promptly at the school, allowing time to familiarize self with the site and local guidelines and procedures
- As appropriate, becoming familiar with wheelchair accessible routes, parking spaces, lifts, accessible toilets, fire exits for people using wheelchairs, and specialist facilities e.g., dog spending areas for people with working or guide dogs
- Attending briefing sessions as required during the residential school, including the Disability Support Co-ordinator's meeting for incoming assistants and related specialists arranged early in each week (these provide a network structure, information, support, and advice by e.g.,

providing maps showing access routes and answers to queries about equipment, and explaining relevant staffing structures and reporting lines and how to claim travel expenses)

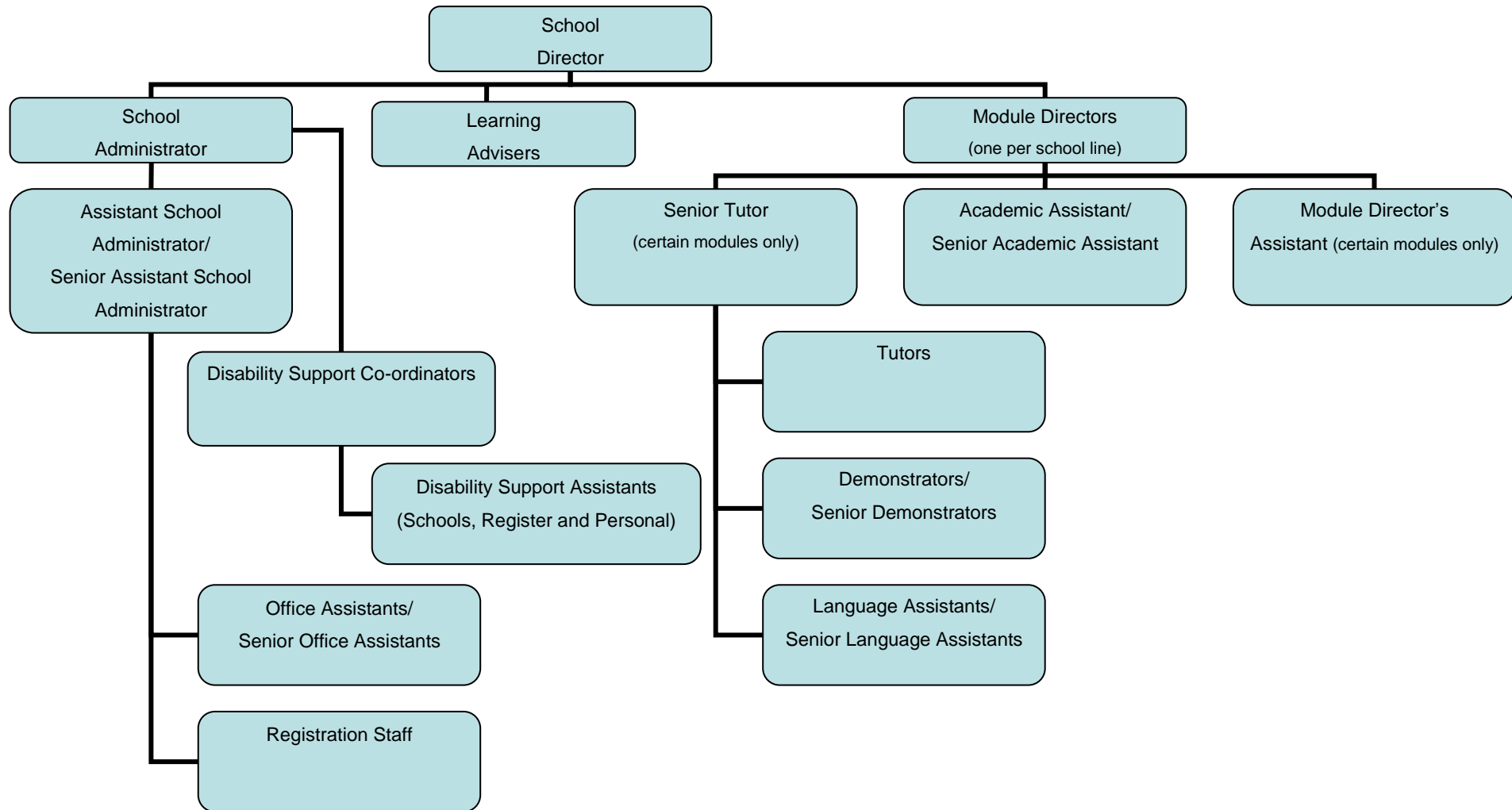
- Helping deal with any emergencies that arise, under the instruction of the School Director, School Administrator, other school staff, host institution staff, and others as necessary

## 2. Person specification

Criterion	Requirement	Essential / Desirable
<b>Education and qualifications</b>	GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English language and mathematics) or equivalent qualifications or experience.	E
	Full, clean driving licence (University of Nottingham only)	E
	First Aid Certificate	D
<b>Knowledge, work and other relevant experience</b>	Experience of working with or providing services for people with disabilities	E
	Experience of working in a service delivery / client-focussed environment	E
	Effective interpersonal and written communication skills, for application within own area of activity (via e.g., face-to-face, telephone, networking, report writing, signage)	E
	Basic knowledge of the residential school site and locality	D
	Basic understanding of The Open University, open distance learning, and the nature and purpose of OU residential schools	D
<b>Skills and competencies</b>	Ability to apply knowledge and skills in a significant range of varied activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Some of the activities are complex or non-routine.	E
	Ability to work with some autonomy and exercise some personal responsibility.	E
	Commitment to equality and diversity	E
	Experience of working in a similar operational environment that includes one or more of the following: handling sensitive or confidential information, manually handling equipment/goods of a light to medium weight; a requirement for higher education academic note taking, written accuracy, or numeracy,	E
	Good level of self-motivation	E
	Ability to use initiative and exercise sound judgement	E
	Proven ability to work effectively in a multi-disciplinary team	E
	Proven ability to work effectively under pressure, prioritising workload and managing time efficiently	E

Criterion	Requirement	Essential / Desirable
	A flexible approach to your work load	E
	Proven ability to plan and co-ordinate a range of operations	D
	Good general IT skills.	D

## Staffing Structure at a typical large summer residential school:



### 3. Role specific requirements e.g. Shift working

**Hours of Work** The jobholder works 40 hours over a 7-day period in a flexible pattern, which includes weekend and some evening working; it may also include shift patterns. S/he may be required occasionally to work extra hours and no overtime is payable for this.

The jobholder has a minimum of 1 day free (between Monday and Thursday) in each 7-day period, which is agreed in advance with the School Administrator.

#### **Accommodation and meals**

The jobholder is expected to be resident on campus for the duration of the residential school period. Accommodation and all meals are provided on campus, free of charge, during the term of employment.

#### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

The work of the Disability Support Assistant (School) brings the jobholder into contact with children and vulnerable adults at residential schools. Accordingly, successful applicants will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check.

The DBS provides access to criminal record and other relevant information to organisations in England and Wales. The results of the checks carried out by DBS help us make more informed decisions when recruiting people to work with children and vulnerable adults, ensuring greater protection for the vulnerable and affording greater protection to our students, staff, and volunteers.

**Appointment to this role is subject to a satisfactory disclosure being received from the Disclosure and Barring Service.**