

Disability Support Assistant (School)

1. Role Description

Line management

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

Authority at each residential school rests with the School Director.

Staff for whom the jobholder carries supervisory responsibility

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

- **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 (Register)** 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; it is generally arranged on a week-by-week basis
- 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 build on the advance arrangements made by the Disabled Student Services Team, faculties and regions by helping the Disability Support Co-ordinator to co-ordinate the on-site provision of equipment, assistance and other facilities in order to enable each Disability and Additional Requirement (DAR) student to take part in their residential school module to the best of their ability.

This involves building and maintaining effective relationships, support networks, and communications, keeping accurate records, maintaining confidentiality, acting as an appropriate point of contact and providing general and temporary one-to-one support as required for DAR students (primarily those without designated one-to-one support), assistants (primarily those providing one-to-one support), and any related specialist staff throughout the residential school period.

Duties and responsibilities

Duties of the Disability Support Assistant (School) require flexibility and are likely to include:

Student support

Working with the Disability Support Co-ordinator to:

- Welcome each incoming DAR student at registration
- Identify students who may not have disclosed additional requirements and arrange support as required
- Establish that DAR students are content with the arrangements made for them and rectify as necessary
- Provide assistance with luggage as required
- Show students with restricted mobility appropriate access routes around the site and guide and assist DAR students as necessary, e.g., by assisting at mealtimes and on field trips etc.
- Liaise with the incoming School Director, Learning Advisers, Module Team members and tutors as necessary in order to enable each DAR student's participation in their residential school module to the best of their ability e.g., by checking with tutors and Module Team staff that faculty- and tutor-produced teaching materials will be provided in an alternative format where requested by DAR students
- If site transport is provided, identify the students who need it and make the appropriate arrangements. This may involve driving DAR students through the day and evening, to and from their academic sessions and on field trips
- Check the well-being of DAR students throughout the week; deal with any problems or emergencies that arise, liaise with the School Director, School Administrator, other school staff, host institution staff, and others as necessary
- Make reasonable ad-hoc arrangements to meet individual needs as required in consultation with the Disability Coordinator
- On the last morning, help check that all DAR students have moved out of their accommodation and returned all borrowed items of equipment

Disability Support Assistants and Related Specialists

Working with the Disability Support Co-ordinator to:

- Welcome incoming Disability Support Assistants and related specialist staff at registration
- Arrange a briefing meeting for incoming assistants and related specialists early in each week, to provide a network structure, offer information, support, and advice by e.g., providing maps showing access routes, dealing with queries about equipment, explaining relevant staffing structures and reporting lines and how to claim travel expenses
- Run campus tours for incoming assistants and related specialists as required
- Provide cover for assistants to take regular rest breaks and for other absences where required
- Make additional arrangements to facilitate assistants providing one-to-one support to fulfil their responsibilities by e.g., obtaining priority for assistants to queue for a student's meal
- Check the well-being of assistants providing one-to-one support and related specialists throughout each week; deal with any problems or emergencies that arise, liaise with the School Director, School Administrator, other school staff, host institution staff, and others as necessary.

NB All contractual and payment matters e.g., specialists concerned about what is being asked of them or unsure when or how much they will be paid, and any assistants appointed at short notice, whose contract has been sent to the School Office, are referred immediately to the School Administrator via the Disability Support Co-ordinator.

Disability support equipment

Working with the Disability Support Co-ordinator to:

- Distribute 'pre-ordered' items to DAR students by Sunday lunchtime
- Monitor demand and take-up of 'pool' equipment throughout the residential school period
- Help install items where necessary and check that students are able to operate correctly any equipment provided to them, and help to rectify as required; collecting completed and signed disclaimer forms for electric scooters and log sheets for other items
- Collect and check items back-in after use on the last day of each week
- Check the suitability of used items for re-issue and help to rectify as required
- Re-pack items securely at the end of the residential school period ready for collection, helping to check items against packing sheets and notifying the Disabled Student Services Team of missing items

General duties

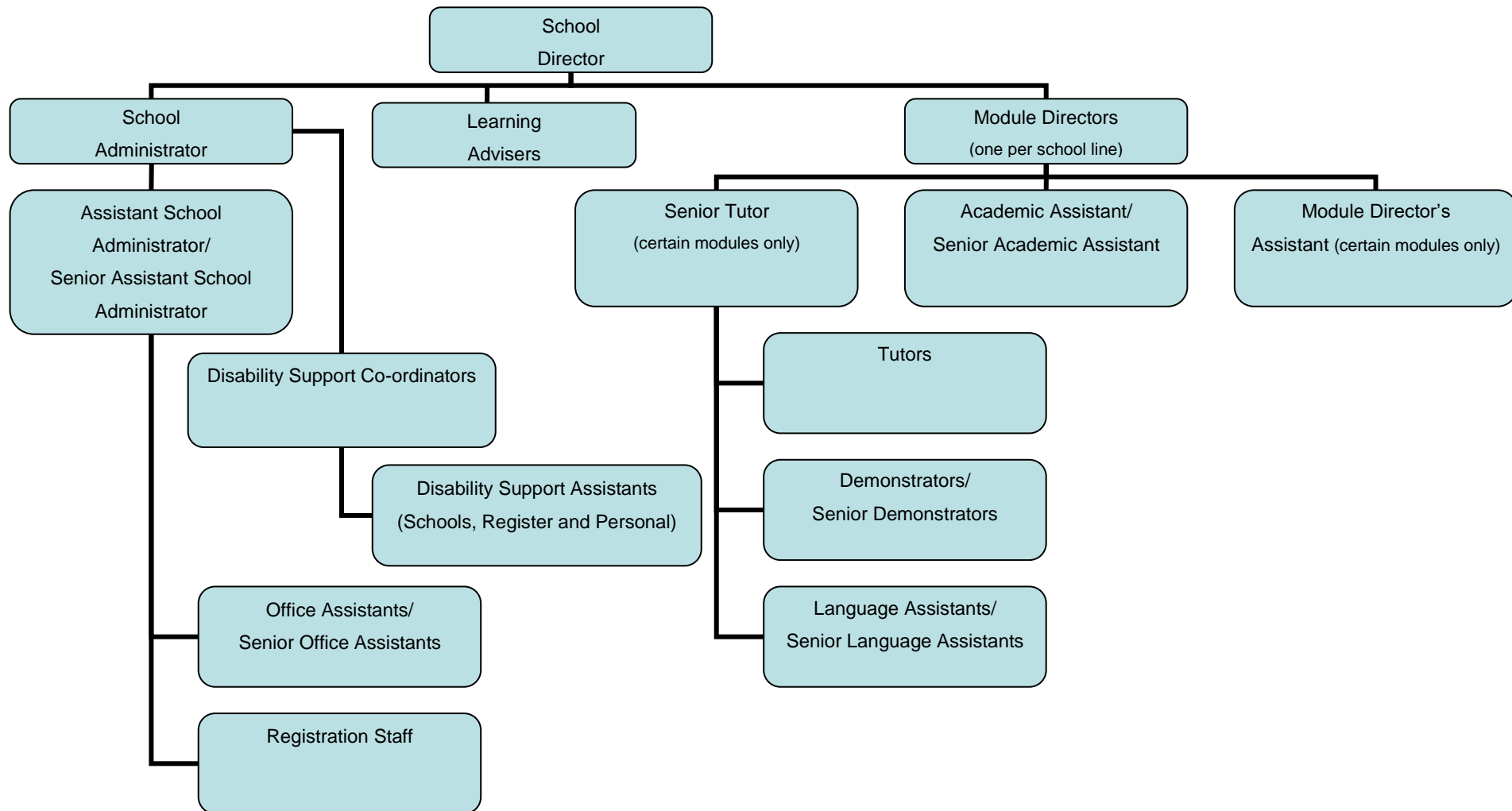
- Attending pre-school induction and training, accessing the assistant training and reference site and familiarizing self with the Manual of Office Procedures (MOP), Disability Resource Pack, manual handling guidance, and disability-specific and other resource material provided;
- Arriving promptly at the school, allowing time to familiarize self with the site and local guidelines and procedures
- Attending briefing sessions as required during the residential school period, including weekly Saturday briefings (following the School Director's morning briefing) with the Disability Support Co-ordinator
- Working with the Disability Support Co-ordinator to:
 - Maintain communication with the Disabled Student Services Team to clarify pre-school arrangements and obtain disability-specific guidance as necessary
 - Check and signpost 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
 - Liaise as necessary with host institution staff to make arrangements for DAR students and assistants e.g., security staff to arrange access keys and catering staff about special diets
 - Prepare documents and handouts as appropriate to help answer student and staff queries and provide general information about the support of DAR students
 - Complete as appropriate all paperwork associated with DAR students, assistants designated to provide one-to-one support, and equipment
- Providing general, administrative, clerical and technical support to the School Administrator and School Office as the need arises and time permits
- Carry out other tasks as reasonably may be requested by the School Administrator and School Director.

2. Person specification

Criterion	Requirement	Essential / Desirable
Education and qualifications	GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English language and mathematics) or equivalent qualifications or experience.	E
	First Aid Certificate	D
Knowledge, work and other relevant experience	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
	Experience of handling sensitive or confidential information	E
	A basic working knowledge of the diverse range of assistive technology and other specialist disability support equipment	E
	Basic knowledge of the residential school site and locality	D
	Administrative experience	D
	Basic understanding of The Open University, open distance learning, and the nature and purpose of OU residential schools	D
Skills and competencies	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
	Ability to collaborate with others.	E
	Good level of self-motivation	E
	Ability to use initiative and exercise sound judgement	E

Criterion	Requirement	Essential / Desirable
	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
	The ability to manually handle equipment/goods of a light to medium weight	E
	An eye for detail and good administrative accuracy including high levels of literacy and numeracy skills	E
	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.