Job Description - Manager (OpenSTEM Labs)

Full Time
Permanent
Grade 7
Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

The role

The OpenSTEM Labs (OSL) team is responsible for the production and delivery of innovative Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) practical work activities that support student learning and success and are delivered to our students over the internet. The OSL is a key strategic STEM Faculty capability which also increasingly contributes to enterprise and research activity. A new University-backed project to enhance the OSL offering and an increase in the volume and diversity of activity has led to these new opportunities.

The Manager, OSL will provide administrative and project management skills to ensure that our STEM students continue to receive an excellent practical learning experience. You will support the Senior Management team and Director of The OpenSTEM Labs in the development and day-to-day running of this award-winning educational technology initiative.

Key responsibilities
The persons appointed to this post will undertake duties to include:

Project Management
Development and production activity
• Provide overall project management oversight of individual OpenSTEM Lab asset development and production, liaising with other teams and units within the Faculty, wider University and external consultants/providers
• Create and maintain project documentation such as plans, requirements, work breakdown structures, schedules, reports and risk registers
• Monitor projects to ensure that the activity is proceeding to schedule, specification, scope and within the allocated resources, escalating issues to OSL Senior Management where appropriate
• Ensure individual projects engage with and are cognizant of wider University and Faculty policy and approval processes
• Liaise with other teams to ensure appropriate testing and compliance of assets against wider policies are met where appropriate

Business-as-usual activity
• Provide project management support for the ongoing maintenance and renewal of OpenSTEM Lab assets, liaising with academics, curriculum support, laboratory management and other areas as appropriate
• Ensure appropriate asset readiness levels are achieved for user facing activities by liaising with curriculum and technical colleagues to produce, maintain and monitor calendars of activity
• Monitor the availability and operability of assets within the OSL by performing scheduled checks on the function and readiness of user interfaces
• Manage business-as-usual commitments of individual OpenSTEM Lab assets as directed by the OSL Senior Management
• Manage the delivery of assets via the OpenSTEM Labs delivery platforms (VLE and others), creating and maintaining experiment pages, booking systems, access permissions and other system administration tasks

Budget/Resource Management
• Prepare resource and budgetary requirements for OpenSTEM Lab projects, activities and assets, monitoring allocations both in development and business-as-usual activities
• Advise Senior OSL management of expenditure and exercise authority to sign off expenditure against agreed budget heads
• Initiate consultancy contracts, monitor progress, completion of work, and payment of fees
• Initiate purchasing requests ensuring that appropriate approval processes are met, monitoring progress to completion/delivery

Information Management and Communications
• Respond to user enquiries on a wide variety of OSL related issues from within and outside the University via a variety of means, including email and social media
• Provide support to and respond to requests for information from other University units and initiatives
• Preparation of OpenSTEM Lab analytics and management information reports for OSL Senior management and other University teams
• Prepare and maintain inventories of OSL assets and related materials
• Communication and tracking of maintenance and emergent issues
• Represent OSL at meetings inside and outside the University, often dealing with people at a more senior level, and ensuring that OSL requirements are understood
• Develop and maintain communications with lab and technical staff to surface emerging asset issues

Other Duties
• Other appropriate activities as specified by the OSL senior management
• Maintain awareness of new developments in the online delivery of practical STEM activities
• To take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of themselves and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
• To demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity
Person Specification

Essential

- A degree or relevant work experience in a STEM environment
- Plan and successfully deliver projects to agreed targets
- Work within a multi-disciplinary, complex matrix environment
- Communicate and engage with a range of stakeholders throughout the University
- Make independent decisions consistent with key responsibilities, escalating where appropriate
- Respond flexibly to the needs of the business, adapting and prioritising tasks as necessary
- Collate and present information in a format suitable for diverse stakeholder audience
- Work effectively within and contribute to a team environment
- Use own initiative to creatively solve problems
- Use common software tools (e.g. MS Office 365 suite)

Desirable

- Experience of working in a STEM environment
- A professional project management qualification, such as APM
- Experience of working on innovations projects
- Knowledge of Moodle based Virtual Learning Environments or equivalents

Whilst a record of working with these is advantageous, a willingness and ability to learn new concepts and systems is more important.