

## Job Description – Staff Tutor in Psychology and Counselling

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### The Role

As an academic member of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the School of Psychology & Counselling, you will have a key role in keeping the OU in the forefront of supported distance higher education, particularly in designing and facilitating effective teaching of the School's modules, qualifications and programmes. You will also be responsible for the selection, monitoring and staff development of part-time Associate Lecturers (ALs), who teach modules across 4 British Psychological Society (BPS) accredited undergraduate psychology qualifications, a counselling qualification, joint honours qualifications and 2 postgraduate qualifications.

### Key responsibilities

The person appointed will be expected to contribute in the following ways:

- act on behalf of the School of Psychology & Counselling in the recruitment and appointment of ALs. ALs are responsible for grading and commenting on students' written assignments and offering support and guidance for students through blended learning provision including face-to-face day schools, synchronous online tutorials, asynchronous online forums and individual correspondence, telephone and e-mail;
- provide line-management of ALs including career development and performance management, maintaining their currency of knowledge on curriculum development, student progression pathways and teaching methods, and facilitating two-way communications with the School and academics working centrally on module teams;
- organise and implement an appropriate staff development programme, i.e. to train, supervise and support the work of ALs, encompassing face-to-face, online and correspondence tuition, telephone and other electronic support methods and to monitor their feedback on students' assignments;
- provide a link between ALS (Associate Lecturer Services), the SST (Student Support Team) and the School. This includes liaising with ALS about its work with ALs when necessary, e.g. recruitment, timetabling, as well as with other academic services staff in the SST on the progress of individual students as appropriate;
- organise timetables for blended tuition, including face-to-face day schools, online tutorials, forums, and aspects of collaborative and team working required of ALs;
- contribute as an academic to the development and presentation of Psychology & Counselling curriculum in formal and informal learning opportunities and by contributing to module team work;
- contribute to scholarship or research in the School of Psychology & Counselling in areas of strength existing in the School or to developments of theory and practice in learning and teaching Psychology;
- contribute to the development and maintenance of student learning communities;
- contribute to the work of the School's Student Support Team; be actively involved in developing and implementing policy and practice designed to support student success;
- be actively involved in developing and implementing diversity and widening participation initiatives, both for students and ALs.

## Person Specification

### *Essential*

- a postgraduate degree (or equivalent) in Psychology, or a cognate area which is clearly and specifically related to Psychology, and knowledge of BPS core curriculum;
- ability to contribute effectively to the academic and teaching activities of the School;
- scholarship/research interests which fit with the School's curriculum, and/or scholarship of teaching relevant to the School;
- substantial relevant recent experience of the management of teaching, and of teaching and student support;
- line management experience and ability to select, manage, motivate and provide staff development for Associate Lecturers;
- an understanding of the needs of adult, distance and independent learners, and an imaginative approach to tutoring modules for a wide range of adult students of different backgrounds;
- an understanding of issues of student access, retention, diversity and success;
- knowledge and experience of online learning environments; a keen interest in innovative forms of teaching and learning, including the development of teaching skills and providing student support in an online environment;
- excellent IT skills and willingness to use more advanced software after appropriate training;
- excellent written and oral communication skills, with a strength in academic communication;
- excellent interpersonal skills, including ability to work flexibly, independently and as part of a team;
- high degree of organizational and administrative skills;
- ability to travel to undertake School work as required in Milton Keynes and other locations in the UK;
- ability to balance a portfolio of diverse work commitments, setting priorities appropriately.

### *Desirable*

- evidence of scholarship/research publication or involvement, and/or a Ph.D. qualification;
- an FE/HE teaching qualification or Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (Advance HE);
- eligible for Graduate Basis for Chartered membership of the BPS;
- involvement and interest in use of social media.

### *Role specific requirements*

Since face-to-face and online tutorials and staff development events are held in the evenings and on Saturdays, Staff Tutors need to be prepared to regularly undertake evening and weekend commitments to visit or deliver these events. Staff Tutors may need to travel periodically to locations where face-to-face day schools or staff development sessions are taking place. The University's travel and subsistence scheme will apply.

## The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

The Faculty is the largest and most diverse at The Open University, with some 50,000 students studying our modules with excellent completion rates and consistently outstanding student satisfaction ratings. Noted for the strength of our interdisciplinary approaches, our scholars of international standing teach and research a very wide range of topics and themes in specific subject areas, recognized as world class or internationally excellent in the latest Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, and having a direct and profound influence on our undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

The Faculty is currently organised into three Schools:

- School of Psychology & Counselling
- School of Social Sciences & Global Studies
- School of Arts & Humanities

Students are supported by Student Support Teams. These teams offer specialist study support to students undertaking our qualifications across the University. Members of academic staff, including academics based in all four nations of the UK, form part of these teams in sustaining and improving student progression and retention.

The Faculty works closely with important organisations and institutions in the UK and other parts of the world in a range of validated partnerships and collaborations. Engaged in world-class, agenda setting research tackling the most difficult challenges facing us in the 21st Century, with work in numerous subject-based and interdisciplinary research groups and projects.

With c.1800 members of staff comprising academics, associate lecturers, support staff and full-time research students working across the locations of the University, combining originality and innovation in research and curriculum, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is a vibrant and exciting place to study and work.

To find out more about the Faculty's teaching, learning and research, please visit: <http://fass.open.ac.uk/>

### The School of Psychology & Counselling

The School of Psychology & Counselling is Europe's largest provider of university-level education in Psychology & Counselling, offering undergraduate, postgraduate and research qualifications, and with further taught postgraduate qualifications currently in development. The School has a vigorous research culture with strengths in psycho-social perspectives, counselling, social and forensic psychology. Our general orientation is specifically multi-perspectival and interdisciplinary, and this is reflected in both our teaching and research. Our students are not only versed in methodological skills, but also understand fundamental conceptual and philosophical issues in psychology, and the different ways in which psychological knowledge can be constructed and applied.

Members of the School work in close collaboration with psychologists in other Faculties including the Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS), the Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) and the Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in research, teaching and curriculum provision.

Psychology & Counselling staff and their research interests

For individual staff profiles please visit: <http://fass.open.ac.uk/psychology/people>