Curriculum Manager

Full Time
Fixed Term
Grade 7
Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

The role

Curriculum Managers provide project management and administrative support in module production and presentation across the STEM curriculum and to curriculum related projects. They are the primary interface between module teams/curriculum related project teams and the production and administrative areas of the University and help to ensure that modules and projects meet agreed quality standards. They are responsible for:

(i) Ensuring that modules are presented on time and to budget and that necessary Faculty and University policy and procedures are followed in relation to module presentation and production activities.
(ii) Ensuring that module teams operate within the framework of objectives, policies and procedures agreed by the academic unit and as defined institutionally;
(iii) Through the Senior Manager, providing a link between the module teams and the academic unit’s senior management team;
(iv) Liaising between academic colleagues and the production and administrative areas of the University, and between the Faculty, Associate Lecturers and students;

Key responsibilities

The person appointed to this post will undertake duties to include:

Project Management

- Provide overall project management of module/curriculum materials development within the Faculty up to handover to the OU materials production unit, Learning and Teaching Innovation (LTI), or to a production unit within the Faculty, with the responsibility to ensure that the project is proceeding to schedule, specification and within the allocated resources;
- In partnership with the Module Team/Project Chair, arrange and support module/project team meetings (both face to face and on-line), writing agendas, notes, reports and papers for such meetings, and following up on module team decisions;
- Ensure that module/project teams have available to them appropriate and accurate management information, such as in relation to student feedback, recruitment and retention levels, throughput to other modules, etc.;
- Manage the processes for monitoring whether the module team is operating within the student workload assumptions set out in the module specification, and that other issues bearing on student retention are taken into account at the module level;
- Ensure that the module/project team has in place appropriate mechanisms for reviewing quality, standards and diversity issues;
• Manage the presentation and production of new or annually updated teaching/learning materials/activities and ICT components;
• Make an effective contribution to the creation of module/project materials by proof reading/discussion/drafting of various items (depending on the background of the post holder);
• Monitor and progress the production of examination papers and other confidential module materials; service Award meetings for module Examination and Assessment Boards;
• Monitor and review the use of module websites and module forums where appropriate, and update as required.

Budget Management
• Prepare resource bids on behalf of module/project teams and monitor module/project budgets, both in production and presentation;
• Monitor and manage the module/project budget, advise module/project teams of expenditure and exercise authority to sign off expenditure against agreed budget heads.

Policy and Procedures
• Advise module/project teams of University and Faculty policies and curriculum models during the development of the module proposals and specification period and, in partnership with the Module Team Chair, ensure that action is taken at module team level to ensure adherence to these policies;
• Ensure that module/project teams operate within wider University and Faculty policy and approval processes;
• Be responsible for module/project teams acting in the light of wider university and unit policies and procedures, for example, in relation to retention issues, the implementation of e-learning and such other developments bearing on module teams.

Be responsible for ensuring
• That major university databases and systems, such as PLANET, are kept up to date in respect of module-related data;
• That all information required at the module specification approval stage is provided using the costing and modelling tools;
• That the module materials inventory is complete and correct.

Information Management and Communications
• Negotiate production and presentation schedules and monitor these schedules on the various electronic systems operating within the University, with the appropriate staff in the Faculty and LTI;
• Act as the main administrative link between module/project teams and other areas of the University and outside organisations;
• Maintain awareness of new developments in ICT and pedagogy issues in order to play a key role in ensuring the module team has a full understanding of appropriate options for learning design and delivery models, bringing in knowledge and experience from across modules and qualifications and specialist input from other units;
• Represent module/project teams at meetings inside and outside the Faculty, often dealing with people at a more senior level, and ensuring that Faculty and University requirements are followed in relation to module presentation and production activities;
• Initiate external consultancy contracts, monitor progress and ensure completion of work and payment of fees;
• Prepare module information, submitting timely advice to students, tutors and University staff by supplying content for module-related publications;
• Respond to student and tutor enquiries and other queries for information on a wide variety of module related issues from within and outside the University via a variety of means, including VOICE, the University’s database of customer interactions;
• Keep the unit’s senior management informed of project progress and carry out such action at the module level as may be requested by the unit’s management.

Other Duties
• Other appropriate activities as specified by the either the Senior Manager (Qualifications) or Head of Curriculum Delivery.
• to undertake any other duties which may reasonably be required;
• 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 first degree or equivalent qualification or work experience at a comparable level
- Experience of managing or having the ability to manage a project to completion, including: specification, planning and scheduling, control of workflow, quality management, resource management, administration, and prioritising conflicting demands;
- Good information and communication technology (ICT) skills, a commitment to developing existing ICT skills, and a willingness to learn about ICT systems specific to module management;
- Appreciation and experience of working to agreed quality standards and a commitment to developing and monitoring the effectiveness of performance indicators and standards;
- Experience of working in a changing environment, and a keenness to work with new policies and procedures;
- Knowledge of and commitment to Equal Opportunity policies and practice and Diversity principles
- Ability to anticipate risks, analyse problems, propose timely and workable solutions and manage and resolve conflict;
- Effective team working and interpersonal skills, including ability to work pro-actively and independently, experience of building good relationships, and managing, organising and coordinating others to work flexibly and responsively across boundaries;
- Proven ability to organise own workload to ensure objectives are met within resource constraints, whilst remaining effective under pressure;
- Good communication skills, including the ability to interpret and convey information effectively in written and oral form, and the ability to persuade and influence others in a constructive way without having the authority to compel;
- Excellent attention to detail in both language and data;

Desirable

- A first degree in a STEM subject;
- Experience of working across a range of science subject areas;
- Experience of budgeting and budgetary management;
- Appreciation of the role of different media to support learning and teaching;
- Awareness of important issues in the higher education sector and a familiarity with the role and scope of the Open University in the UK’s HE system;
- Ability to be self-critical and reflective in relation to own role and work, and to learn from experience; the ability to operate with integrity, accountability and commitment.
About the Unit

**STEM**

**Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics**
The Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is comprised of:

- School of Computing & Communications
- School of Environment, Earth & Ecosystem Sciences
- School of Engineering & Innovation
- School of Life, Health & Chemical Sciences
- School of Mathematics & Statistics
- School of Physical Sciences
- Knowledge Media Institute
- Deanery including teams supporting Curriculum; Research, Enterprise and Scholarship; Laboratory Infrastructure; and Faculty Administration

“We aspire to be world leaders in inclusive, innovative and high impact STEM teaching and research, equipping learners, employers and society with the capabilities to meet tomorrow’s challenges”

The Faculty of STEM consists of 2500 staff including 1,800 Associate Lecturers. The Faculty delivers over 185 modules across undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum, supporting nearly 19,000 students (full time equivalents) which is 29% of the OU total.

The Faculty generates more research income (circa £17M) than any other Faculty in the University, supported by a comprehensive laboratory infrastructure.

We are proud of our distinctive values and capabilities underpinning our aspiration:

**We are inclusive:**
- We transform people’s lives, ensuring STEM education is openly accessible to many thousands of students from diverse backgrounds – our students express high satisfaction with their study experience.
- We engage the public in exciting citizen science and engineering, including through free open educational resources, multi-platform broadcasting, outreach to inspire the next generation and with programmes to encourage more women into STEM.

**We are highly innovative:**
- We are at the forefront of innovative developments in teaching practical science and engineering at a distance, through simulated and remote access laboratories and practical experimentation.
- Our high quality teaching and curriculum are informed by world-leading research, strong links with professional bodies and communities of practitioners, as well as by scholarship focused on continuously improving our STEM pedagogy.

**We deliver significant social and economic impact:**
- We provide STEM higher education at a scale and reach unsurpassed in the UK, with a sizeable international reach and further growth potential.
• We inject transferable STEM skills and knowledge direct into the workplace for immediate employee and employer benefit, as students combine study while working.
• The employability value of our courses is underpinned by accreditation from leading STEM Professional Bodies and Learned Societies, as well as partnerships and sponsorship with leading employers.
• Our high quality, applied and academically relevant teaching and research addresses real-world issues, delivering impact for industry and society, including addressing pressing STEM skill-shortages across the UK.

STEM Deanery

The Deanery is the administrative hub of the Faculty and comprises of four teams:
• Curriculum Support
• Faculty Administration
• Laboratory Support
• Research, Enterprise and Scholarship

Comprising the Executive Dean, Associate Deans, administrative and support staff, the Deanery manages the Faculty’s curriculum planning, module production and presentation activities; finances; human resources; laboratory infrastructure; specialist IT support; and research, enterprise and scholarship activities.