Job Description – Educational Adviser

About the role

The role holder will work within the Student Recruitment and Support Centres (SRSCs) to help students and prospective students within the curriculum area of a Faculty, to make study choices leading to successful progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction.

The key duties are:

1. Provide educational support and guidance on complex issues, working within a Student Support Team (SST), to students and potential students, on a wide range of queries to maximise student success. Act as a point of contact for reactive queries and requests for guidance and complex educational support received via a variety of channels, individually and in groups (e.g. on forums).

2. Offer key aspects of educational support across all SSTs within their Faculty and where necessary to refer on to other staff with specialist expertise, as part of the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) model.

3. Offer IAG skills and knowledge leadership, training and development to SRSC staff with a focus on student success and satisfaction.

Key responsibilities

1. Deliver guidance and complex educational support to students and potential students through both reactive and proactive contact via a variety of channels including inbound and outbound phone calls, emails, letters, online webchat, online forums and social media. Accurately record and maintain relevant detail on University systems and databases.

2. Provide leadership of areas of special responsibility, relating to SST specialisms and student groups, acting as a local knowledge expert and relationship contact point for appropriate specialist/centralised areas e.g. for disabled students.

3. Contribute to the design and delivery of staff development and training of staff across the SRSC including ALs, other faculty staff and Academic Services staff in relation to IAG skills, students’ educational support, the specialist area(s) and improving information, advice and guidance within an SST.

4. Contribute to the development of the University’s Student Recruitment and Support Service with a focus on IAG to promote student success and satisfaction through responsibilities including, management of projects and representation on University groups.
5. Continually develop skills and knowledge to maintain and improve personal performance, good internal and inter team working and service provision in the spirit of continuous improvement.

The role holder will be part of a Student Recruitment and Support Team based in Student Support, Academic Services and will be required to work to an agreed pattern, between the hours of 8.00am - 8.00pm Monday to Friday and Saturdays 9.00am to 5.00pm, as directed by business demands. Please note that at certain times of the year leave booking will be restricted according to operational need.

The role holder may occasionally be required to attend meetings/events at other Open University locations for business, training and evaluation purposes.

Skills and experience

- A good standard of general education equivalent to GCSE level and experience of degree level study. A relevant professional qualification (minimum Level 3) and/or evidence of training and continuing professional development in Guidance.

- Experience of providing Information, Advice and Guidance to a range of diverse groups of customers, preferably students in adult, further or higher education.

- Knowledge of and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

- Awareness of the HE environment and government policies as they might impact on the University.

- Experience of working to personal, team and organisational targets.

- Advice and guidance skills that can support students’ autonomy and decision making, using techniques in negotiating, enabling, advocating and challenging.

- Good communication skills: both oral and written, effective telephone techniques and the ability to explain policies and processes in plain English as well as to write clearly, succinctly and correctly in plain English.

- Good interpersonal skills including liaison, networking, negotiation and team working across a range of teams (virtually and in person) and other University departments, including faculty.

- Ability to contribute to the identification, development and delivery of training and coaching to a wide range of staff.

- Excellent planning and organisational skills including the ability to work autonomously, manage fluctuating volumes of work and develop processes, roles and responsibilities to improve services and respond to change.