Job Description - Research Administrative Assistant

About the Role
This role provides administrative support as part of the Research Support Team in the Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS). The post-holder will work as part of a team of Research Admin Assistants to support research activity in the Faculty. Team members may be required to provide admin support to Research Managers and Senior Managers, as well as the Associate Dean for Research Excellence, the Director of Postgraduate Studies, the professional doctorate leads, and academic colleagues.

Key Responsibilities
Duties are varied and may include the following at different times, according to demand:

1. Organising & servicing meetings – including making room bookings (internal & external) & booking hospitality, preparing meeting papers in an acceptable format and taking notes
2. Travel & accommodation – including booking travel and hotels (including international bookings) using Click Travel and processing TSE claims
3. Consultancies – requesting consultancies, in liaison with faculty academics – may include doing right to work checks in exceptional circumstances, arranging payments
4. Budgets – setting up a spreadsheet for a new project, recording expenditure, budget monitoring, provision of budget information to project leads, and alerting Research Managers to budget issues and preparation of figures for quarterly forecasting activity
5. Managing shared email mailboxes – proactively answering queries and coordinating responses as needed
6. Coordinating and supporting events – including liaising with the academics running the events, updating event web pages, preparing packs, liaising with Estates and AV to book rooms, catering, equipment, taking bookings, arranging hotel accommodation, monitoring online payments, registering delegates on the day, etc.
7. Creating and formatting reports or presentations
8. Web support: uploading and maintaining pages on the Faculty’s intranet and externally facing website using the relevant content management system
9. Management of postgraduate student matters
   - Providing first point of contact for requests and queries from PhD Students and prospective students, either in person or by phone, letter or email
   - Providing full support during recruitment rounds
   - Approving PGRS T&S claim and monitoring budgets
   - Coordinating the faculty/school PGR events
Maintaining a hardcopy file for each student, including material of a highly confidential nature

Providing support around annual probation, progress reports and vivas – ensuring procedures and deadline are adhered to

Admin support for the Director of Postgraduate Studies & professional doctorate leads

10. **Providing pre-award project support** – for externally funded projects this includes creation and updating of project records in the Awards Management System (AMS), liaison with other departments around the university to gain appropriate approvals, including academic workload approval, contributing to the preparation of project costings, uploading information into funders’ online application forms, maintaining accurate records of bids being submitted, proactively answering queries and other activities, as required.

11. **Providing post-award admin support to externally funded research projects** that are without bespoke posts – may include:

- Arranging meetings for the project team and/or steering group
- Chasing contract progress
- Scheduling fieldwork interviews
- Archiving data consistently and in accordance with relevant data protection requirements
- Maintaining project websites
- Setting up focus groups, workshops and seminars
- Monitoring budgets (see above) and processing paperwork associated with income and expenditure

12. **Providing back-up across the full range of support.**

**Skills and experience**

**Essential:**

- GCSE ‘O’ level or equivalent in English and Maths
- Excellent organisational skills, with experience of secretarial or admin support including diary management
- Excellent IT skills to include a high level of competency in word-processing, Excel, PowerPoint, electronic diaries, spreadsheets, databases, using the internet and Outlook
- Experience of taking notes and action points
- Experience of providing service to internal and external customers
- Ability to work well within a team
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Ability to work proactively
- Understanding of budget management
- Understanding of project management
- Methodical approach, with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail
- Ability to communicate well with people at all levels
- Ability to work calmly under pressure
- Ability to prioritise workload and deliver to delivery standards within agreed timescales
- Commitment to principles of improving diversity and equal opportunities within the work environment

Desirable:
- NVQ Level 2 Administration or equivalent
- Advanced Excel training
- Experience of organising more complex events
- Experience of managing complex budgets
- Proactive approach to improving practice

If you would like further details about the role before making an application then please email your query through to Resourcing-Hub@open.ac.uk quoting the reference number and job title or contact Paula Haycock. Paula.haycock@open.ac.uk