

JOB DESCRIPTION

NOTE: This job description does not form part of the employee's contract of employment but is provided for guidance. The precise duties and responsibilities of any job may be expected to change over time. Job holders should be consulted over any proposed changes to this job description before implementation.

Job Title:	Student Adviser
Reports to:	Senior Student Adviser
Grade:	NG6
Purpose:	Together with the other student advisers, to provide a professional and specialist information and advice service to current and prospective students on a wide range of practical, financial and legal issues which may impede enrolment, participation on or successful completion of their course.

Principal Accountabilities

1. Together with the other advisers, to provide a professional, specialist advice and information service by responding to individual requests from students and prospective students, to be conversant with current relevant regulations and deliver advice with casework in the following areas:

Casework one-to-one advice sessions maintaining professional standards and competencies at all times and covering the following areas:

Funding & Finance: for UK and EU national students including statutory student finance, fee status, state welfare benefit entitlements, and alternative sources of funding.

General areas: including EU students' rights, income tax, national insurance and council tax

International Students: including advice casework on Immigration regulations and visa requirements for students and their dependants in line with the competency framework of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and the UKCISA Code of Ethics and ensuring compliance with the University's Tier 4 Sponsor Licence requirements.

2. To keep thorough, accurate and up to date case records ensuring compliance with the Service's code of confidentiality, professional

standards and Data Protection and to manage and prioritise the caseload effectively.

3. To undertake regular training and continuing professional development in order to keep abreast of changes in regulations and practice in the legislative areas covered by Student Advice and to ensure compliance with relevant professional competency frameworks and eligibility for accreditation.
4. To support students through advocacy to Student Finance England, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Home Office and other external organisations in cases of difficulty or dispute; to make oral and written representations on behalf of students and, where appropriate, to submit appeals on behalf of students.
5. To work collaboratively with the other members of the Student Advice team to ensure parity of workload and to enhance service development; to attend weekly team meetings; to actively participate in case discussions and supervision meetings to ensure high and consistent professional standards for service delivery and compliance with competency frameworks
6. To take responsibility for managing and co-ordinating the development of a specific specialism as designated by the Student Advice Manager. At the time of writing these include:
 - Acting as specialist adviser for Care Leavers and estranged students, offering specialist support and actively contributing to the maintenance of Stand Alone Pledge
 - Taking a lead on writing content on Student Advice issues for the University web pages, co-ordinating the writing of information sheets for students and process systems for the advice team and developing new ways of disseminating information to prospective and current students and to staff

These additional responsibilities can involve liaison at a Senior Level within the university as well as with external stakeholders.

7. Together with the other team members to deliver workshops and information sessions for prospective and current students and staff on current student advice issues and to deliver staff training on Home/Overseas fee status. To deliver on-site advice to the University Colleges during enrolment

8. Together with the other Student Advisers, to liaise with relevant University Staff, including Registry, Finance and Admissions staff, the Tier 4 Visa office, other Student Support and academic staff on issues of mutual concern and to initiate new ways of working together in the interest of students.
9. Together with the other advisers to support the work of the International Student Advisers on issues affecting international students
10. To attend relevant committee meetings and participate in joint projects and initiatives involving the wider Student Academic Services team; to attend meetings of relevant external professional groups (e.g. National Association of Student Money Advisers) and to contribute to national policy consultations when appropriate
11. Other duties appropriate to the grade as required by the Senior Student Adviser and/or Student Advice and Funding Manager.

Context

The current team of Student advisers also provide advice casework on Immigration regulations and visa requirements for students and their dependants in line with the competency framework of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and the UKCISA Code of Ethics and ensuring compliance with the University's Tier 4 Sponsor Licence requirements. The post holder will be trained in these areas as required.

The Student Advice service provides specialist advice and support on a range of issues, including: student finance for UK and EU students, fee status queries, Social Security benefits, money management, Council Tax liability, advice and support for care leavers and estranged students, advice on student visas and immigration issues, and information about the work that international students are permitted to do during their course. The Advice Service staff are the only staff within the University who are permitted to give immigration and visa advice to students. The Service also provides a Meet and Greet service and a Welcome Programme for new international students, together with advice for international students about adjusting to life in the UK and how to get the most from their student experience.

The Advice Service works with both current and prospective students. It plays an important role in ensuring the conversion of applicants to students, for example through enabling international students to obtain their visas or student funding. It also plays a valuable role in improving the student experience and in relation to student retention, for example by supporting students who are at risk of withdrawing because of financial crisis.

The wider Student Advice and Funding team includes Scholarships, discretionary and hardship funds and US Federal Loans and is managed by the Student Advice and Funding Manager. It is part of Student and Academic Services (SAS). SAS provides professional, efficient, effective and consistent researcher and student-focused support and services across the University's main sites in the West End and at Harrow. It will lead on professional support

for a wide range of governance, research, learning and wellbeing interventions that enhance the experience of students, staff and alumni throughout their relationship with the University.

The service components of SAS are:

- Advice and Funding
- Careers and Employability Service
- Disability Learning Support
- Interfaith Advice
- Learning Innovation and Digital Engagement
- Library Services
- Research and Scholarly Communications
- Research Office
- Student Residences
- Student Counselling
- University Records and Archives

The post is based in the West End but the postholder may be expected to work at any of the University sites as required, including Harrow

Dimensions

The post holder will be part of a team of 4.8 advisers which is led by the Senior Student Adviser. Together with the other advisers they will be expected to provide a comprehensive advice and information service to students both in central London and at the Harrow campus. Occasional weekend and evening work may be required for which time off in lieu will be given.

Person Specification:

Qualifications

Essential

Degree or equivalent relevant experience

Record of regular and recent training/CPD from recognised Advice sector providers including, JCWI, NASMA, CPAG, LASA and AdviceUK

Desirable

Certificate or Diploma in advice work

Current registration at OISC Level1 or Level 2

Accredited membership of the National Association of Money Advisers (NASMA)

Record of regular and recent training/CPD from UKCISA

Experience

Essential

- Minimum two years' experience delivering professional one-to-one advice with casework in a comparable advice service
- Substantial experience of undertaking specialist advocacy and representation on behalf of clients in a similar context with external agencies such as Student Finance England, the Department for Work and Pensions
- Evidence of the ability to work independently and to manage a large caseload to a high professional standard
- Evidence of the ability to work collaboratively in a small team
- Evidence of delivering new and innovative projects or working methods
- Ability to produce clear and engaging written information for students on a range of relevant topics, for web pages, other online media and hand-outs/booklets

Desirable

- Experience of providing one-to-one professional advice with casework in a UK Higher Education institution, including student finance and/or visa advice.
- Experience of creating and delivering engaging training and information sessions to a variety of audiences
- Experience of providing immigration advice with casework in line with the competencies required by the OISC

Aptitudes and Abilities

- Well-organised, flexible, resilient, self-motivated and able to work well under pressure, able to manage workloads which are variable throughout the year
- Committed to excellent customer service standards
- Ability to work co-operatively and constructively in a small team
- Willingness to volunteer to take on additional tasks when necessary
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Excellent IT and casework skills
- Ability to contribute to new ideas for providing an effective service which meets the changing needs of prospective students and students

- Ability to be approachable and sympathetic to students and potential students, without becoming over-involved in their situation
- Ability to identify compliance risks relating to legal or regulatory requirements, and the aptitude to recognise when to refer such issues to the Advice Manager
- Ability to work flexibly by taking account of new regulations or changed circumstances and modifying working methods accordingly
- Ability to effectively manage a complex workload by maintaining focus on agreed objectives and deliverables and monitoring progress against targets

Personal Attributes

- Willing to meet the challenges of increasing demand within limited resources
- Must share and exemplify the University's values
- Professional, positive and flexible approach to the work
- Commitment to personal and professional development, identifying development needs for discussion with the Senior Adviser

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