Undergraduate and Teaching Laboratories Administrator

Department of Chemistry

Closing date: 7 January 2018
Interview date: 2 February 2018
Vacancy reference: 6227
INTRODUCTION

The Department of Chemistry recruited over 200 highly qualified undergraduate students to start in September 2017 and additional administrative support is required to assist the students through their study at the University of York. This support will include working with academic and technical staff in the undergraduate teaching laboratories as well as with existing administrative staff in the undergraduate student experience team. In addition to providing administrative support, the role involves assessing existing systems and processes for tracking and monitoring students and their practical laboratory assessment marks and suggesting ways for improving the efficiency of these systems. The ideal candidate will therefore have an understanding of administrative and IT processes and experience of improving different systems and the ability to develop good working relationships with key academic, technical and administrative staff as well as building a rapport with the students.

The Department of Chemistry is one of the UK’s leading Chemistry departments and we are renowned internationally for our research. This is combined with a commitment to teaching and outstanding student satisfaction, and we have been recognised consistently for our family-friendly policies and are proud of our Athena SWAN Gold Award: https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/

As a Department we strive to provide a working environment which allows all staff and students to contribute fully, to flourish, and to excel. We aim to ensure that there is a supportive and egalitarian culture at all levels and across all staff groups. We promote good practice and a strong culture of equality in higher education. Further information can be found within this brief and on our website: www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/
The expectation is that the role holder will spend the first year supporting the various administrative processes, setting up workflows and understanding the underlying systems and from the second year onwards will work with existing staff to improve the efficiency of these processes.

The time and location of the role holder will be split between the Teaching Laboratories and the Undergraduate Office.

**Main purpose of the role**

To undertake a range of specialised, administrative activities that contribute to the effective and efficient operation of the undergraduate office and teaching laboratories within the overall Department of Chemistry. This will include:

- Carrying out a range of administrative processes in order to facilitate the smooth running of the undergraduate office and the undergraduate teaching laboratories
- Setting up workflows for the different processes to ensure accuracy of information
- Reviewing administrative and IT systems associated with student progress through the undergraduate teaching laboratories and practical assessments
- Providing additional support to the assessment and examination team during the key assessment periods.

**Key responsibilities**

(Role holders will be required to undertake some or all of the duties below)

- Assist in the management and delivery of the services provided by the undergraduate office and teaching laboratories providing effective and efficient administrative support to senior colleagues and students, including arranging and servicing laboratory staff team meetings
- Act as a point of reference and provide information, advice, guidance and support to students and staff, answering queries and resolving problems, applying a good working knowledge of departmental and University administrative systems
- Create, manage and maintain information systems pertaining to academic courses and undergraduate student data within the University’s central information and records systems
- Take the lead on the development and improved efficiency of administrative systems, ensuring controls are in place to ensure accuracy and timeliness, liaising with senior staff
- Liaise with relevant departments to develop reliable and informative data and statistics to provide to both internal and external organisations. This will include maintaining data on departmental and central University systems (SITS and e-Vision, attendance monitoring, Tier 4 compliance and Programme Module Catalogue input), providing reports and management information as required
- Produce departmental related documentation using different media, including support for demonstrating, assessments and examinations; ensuring the timely dissemination of information to the appropriate people
- Monitor expenditure against a service-related budget; managing and maintaining spreadsheets of vacation bursary payments and liaison with the departmental finance team and process orders, making effective use of departmental/university financial administrative processes as required
- Support the teaching laboratory and undergraduate student webpages, updating and originating content as required and supporting course organisers with the configuration of virtual learning resources
- Provide information and guidance on: internal standards and policies; relevant external procedures, regulations and legislation related to the undergraduate student experience (e.g. equal opportunities for students)

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**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**At a glance**

**Salary**  
Grade 5; £24,983—£30,688 a year

**Hours of work**  
Full time; 37 hours a week

**Contract type**  
Fixed term until 30 June 2020

**Based at**  
Heslington Campus West
JOB DESCRIPTION

- Assist in organising all aspects of key events related to the undergraduate students
- Supervise the work of temporary staff and casual workers, allocating and checking work as required
- Any other duties that fall within the scope of the job, as allocated by the line manager following consultation with the post holder including covering of staff holidays and sickness for other members of the Departmental Administration team

Specific Responsibilities

Lab Based

- Attendance monitoring including monitoring of pre-laboratory sessions
- Co-ordination of the handing in of all assessed undergraduate work including laboratory scripts
- Setting up mark books and marks processing for laboratory scripts
- Support for graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) including preparation of welcome packs, badges, statements of engagement and certificates, blank demonstrator timetable templates and Google groups for GTAs for each practical course

U/G office based

Providing support to the administration of Undergraduate Vacation Bursaries including liaison with students, academic prizes coordinator, departmental finance officer and University support departments, collating all details and ensuring (with support from the departmental finance officer) that bursary payments are timely and compliant with different funding organisations
# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>A general education to include 5 GCSE passes at Grade C or above (including Maths and English), or an equivalent educational qualification, or relevant experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Three passes at A level, or an equivalent educational qualification, or relevant experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Qualification in administration / common IT packages</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<td>A thorough understanding of the principles of service provision and office management within a large, complex organisation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Thorough knowledge of all Microsoft Office applications (particularly Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint) and ideally the Google suite of applications</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Knowledge of undergraduate student processes and other procedures in Higher Education</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Knowledge of office accounting processes</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<th>Skills, abilities and competencies</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<td>Good oral and written communication skills, with the ability to provide detailed advice and guidance on specialist defined processes and procedures to internal and external contacts</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Able to review procedures and processes, ensuring they are fit for purpose and maximise efficiency; make recommendations for improvements as identified and implement agreed changes</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Initiative and problem solving skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to write clearly and succinctly, for reports and publication, including web publication</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Strong IT skills: including word processing, email, web page maintenance, expertise in manipulating databases and spreadsheets and ideally the Google suite of applications</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>A high degree of attention to detail</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to effectively organise and prioritise own work and follow procedures in order to produce work to a high standard, under pressure and to required deadlines</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Demonstrable ability to work as part of a team</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to deal with confidential matters and act with discretion</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Experience

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<tr>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Experience of working in an administrative role in a busy office within a large complex organisation including working with databases</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Considerable experience in writing service-related reports for senior managers, which may include reports on service development</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Ability to assess processes and suggest improvements to systems to enhance effectiveness and efficiency</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Experience of organising events &amp; meetings</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Experience of providing an excellent standard of customer service</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Experience of dealing with confidential / sensitive issues</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Experience within a scientific environment</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Experience within the HE sector</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Experience of the University’s SITS system</td>
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### Personal attributes

| Essential             | Sensitivity and empathy with students, colleagues and staff with the ability to develop and maintain good interpersonal relationships with a wide range of people |
| Essential             | Organised and flexible, able to prioritise                                                      |
| Essential             | Demonstrable initiative and willingness to learn new skills                                    |
| Essential             | Keen to provide a high standard of customer service including providing cover for colleagues as required |
| Essential             | Highly motivated, able to work independently or as part of a team                               |
| Essential             | Conveys a positive attitude                                                                    |
| Essential             | Ability to work accurately                                                                     |
The Chemistry Administration Team

The new Undergraduate and Teaching Laboratories Administrator will work within a student-focused undergraduate team (‘The Undergraduate Student Experience Team’) which incorporates the activities of the admissions team, undergraduate office and the examinations office. All three groups work under the direction of the Undergraduate Student Experience Manager with the objective of sharing best practice, improving efficiency and communication and improving the flexibility of team members to support each other in periods of high activity or staff absence and to ensure that particular expertise does not lie solely with just one individual. In addition the new Administrator will also spend time working with and supervised by staff associated with the undergraduate teaching laboratories.

Chemistry Administrative team members (including part-time and job-share) work together to support undergraduate and postgraduate admissions, teaching and assessment, research, human resources, operations and strategy, health and safety, finance and outreach activities.

The Department of Chemistry

The Department of Chemistry: https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ is one of the largest and most successful academic departments at York. The Department was placed in the top ten UK universities for Research Power by the 2014 Research Excellence Framework exercise (REF). Amongst our academic staff we have five Fellows of the Royal Society and many national and international prize winners, contributing to a dynamic and thriving department. The excellence of Chemistry at York was recognised in the 2018 Guardian League Table Guide, Complete University Guide and Times University League Tables where it achieved an outstanding 2nd and two 4th places, respectively.

The Department has nearly 60 academic staff (including teaching-only staff), more than 600 undergraduate students, approximately 160 graduate students (mainly studying for PhDs) and over 80 research associates and fellows. The Department has a group of coherent laboratories, recently extended and modernised, which provide an excellent environment for both teaching and research; £35M has been spent on new buildings and equipment in the last seven years.

Staff in the Department of Chemistry undertake research in a wide range of fields and there are particular strengths in
analytical and archaeological science, atmospheric chemistry, chemical and structural biology, green chemistry, materials chemistry, metalloproteins, organometallic and catalytic chemistry, synthetic organic chemistry and time-resolved spectroscopy.

We have nearly 30 administrative staff (including those funded externally), as well as over 50 technical staff who provide assistance in the teaching and research laboratories and maintain the workshops (mechanical, glass and electronics) supporting these activities.

The undergraduate programmes, which typically attract over 1200 applications for the ca 180 places, have a flexible, modular structure with opportunities for specialisation in environmental, industrial and medicinal chemistry. There are three-year (BSc) and four-year (MChem) courses with opportunities for students to spend a year at one of a number of overseas universities or in industry. Students rated the Department with an overall satisfaction rating of 95% in the National Student Survey 2017. Central to York’s teaching is the college system. All Chemistry students belong to one of the eight teaching colleges which contain a number of tutors from different disciplines, one of whom is also the student’s pastoral supervisor. The college system provides the majority of the Department’s learning support through either tutorials (5 students per session) or workshops (whole college group, maximum 25 students). The Core undergraduate Chemistry programme is delivered through lecture courses comprising between 5 and 9 lectures. Although some core modules are themed, they are intended to be interdisciplinary and are not delivered under traditional I,O,P,A lines. Student laboratory teaching work is undertaken in the recently built chemistry F-block. In Years 1 and 2, students typically spend one whole day a week in the laboratory. MChem students in Year 3 undertake three experiments in the Autumn Term and an open-ended group mini-project in the Spring Term, designed to act as preparation for final year research projects. The Department offers a number of transferable skills course throughout the programme covering topics such as ethics, presentation skills, team working, quantitative skills and
THE DEPARTMENT

mathematics.

The Gold award from Athena SWAN: https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/ for promoting women in science was won by the Department of Chemistry in 2007 and renewed in 2010 and 2015. This was the first Gold award made in this scheme. The Athena SWAN Charter recognises and celebrates good employment practice for women working in science, engineering and technology (SET) in higher education and research.

The case studies on our Equality and Diversity website: https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/fam-friendly-work/ illustrate the variety of working arrangements of staff which are supported by the Department.

The Department of Chemistry operates a set of family-friendly practices. Staff working patterns are flexible and a formal Flexitime system is also in operation. The Department has developed a maternity and paternity leave procedure to help provide support for staff and the University has a nursery: http://www.york.ac.uk/univ/nrsry/ and a Child Care voucher scheme.

The Department provides support for all categories of staff in their applications for promotion, role reviews, awards, prizes and rewarding excellence nominations. Staff are encouraged to attend training events and take up opportunities for professional development including those offered by the award-winning University Learning and Development Team: http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/training/. The Department strives to address diversity inequalities to ensure that there is a culture that supports equality and encourages better representation throughout the Department. Support for all staff at all stages of their career is recognised as being extremely important; individuals will be allocated a specific mentor to help support them in future career development. Social events are also held regularly for members of staff.

Opportunities for employment for partners exist across the University, Science City York or within the City of York. The Department recognises that employment for partners can be an issue for new employees and will be understanding if you raise this and will do its best to help.

The Department is committed to establishing a culture of environmental good practice and all staff are asked to go about their duties in a resource efficient way and minimise impacts to the environment wherever possible.

The University has recently invested heavily in Chemistry. The Dorothy Hodgkin Building was completed in two phases. The first, housing Analytical Science and Synthetic Chemistry, opened in 2005, while the second phase housing catalytic, materials and synthetic chemistry was completed in 2012. The department is exceptionally well equipped for NMR spectroscopy and departmental instruments are housed in a purpose-built building opened in 2006, while the Wellcome-Wolfson-funded Centre for Hyperpolarisation in Magnetic Resonance (CHyM) was completed in October 2012. The Wolfson Atmospheric Chemistry Laboratories were opened in 2013 and are currently being extended (2017), while most recently, a two-storey building housing new teaching and research laboratories (to house Green Chemistry) and offices was completed in March 2014. The department has recently secured funding from the Wellcome Trust, the Wolfson Foundation, a generous alumnus and the university to acquire a 200 kV cryo-electron microscope and a building in which to house it. Construction and installation are anticipated in 2018.
Founded on principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University of York opened in 1963 with just 230 students. In 2017 it is the home of more than 17,000 students across more than 30 academic departments and research centres. Since opening over fifty years ago, we have become one of the world’s leading universities and a member of the prestigious Russell Group.

We are consistently recognised as one of the leading Higher Education Institutes and one of just six post-war universities which appear in the world top 100 (2013-14) and 15th in the Times & Sunday Times league table (2016). The University of York has won six Times Higher Education (THE) Awards and five Queen’s Anniversary Prizes.

The University is proud of its association with Athena SWAN, holding 12 awards in support of gender equality, representation and success for all, with gold awards for Chemistry and Biology and a University-wide bronze award.

Of 154 universities that took part in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, The University of York ranked 14th overall and 10th for the impact of our research. The University is consistently in the top ten UK research universities and attracts over £60m a year of funding from research alone.

Our vision is to make the University of York a world leader in the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research, the sharing of knowledge by teaching students from varied backgrounds and the application of knowledge for the health, prosperity and well-being of people and society.
Attractive workplace

Centred around the picturesque village of Heslington on the edge of the city of York, our colleges are set in an attractive landscaped campus. York enjoys a safe, friendly atmosphere with facilities including bars, shops, theatres and concert halls all within easy walking distance.

The University has undergone an unprecedented period of expansion and renewal since 2000. We have invested in twenty new buildings on the original campus and have completed the first and second phases of a £750m campus expansion. Our investment in new colleges, teaching and learning spaces, laboratories, research facilities and a new sports village mean there has never been a better time to join us.

During this period of change we've worked hard to retain our friendly, informal and collegiate atmosphere, which is important to our core values of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity.

We have a thriving international community and are committed to providing staff moving to York with as much support as possible through our Relocation Package: [https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/policies/new-starters/relocation/](https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/policies/new-starters/relocation/)

and Welcome Officers: [https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/new-starters/welcome-to-york/welcome-service/](https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/new-starters/welcome-to-york/welcome-service/)

The University aims to offer a nurturing and supportive environment as an employer. Flexible working hours, nursery facilities, childcare vouchers, cycle to work scheme, generous holidays and an attractive pension scheme all make the University of York one of the region’s leading employers.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages: [https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/browse/employee-benefits](https://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/browse/employee-benefits)
The City of York

Internationally acclaimed for its rich heritage and historic architecture, York's bustling streets are filled with visitors from all over the world. Within its medieval walls you will find the iconic gothic Minster, Clifford's Tower and the Shambles - just a few of the many attractions.

But York isn't just a great place to visit - it's also a great place to live and work. While nourishing a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, York still maintains the friendly sense of community unique to a small city.

Visit [www.visityork.org](http://www.visityork.org) for more information on the city of York.

Shopping, culture and entertainment

York boasts specialist and unique boutiques but also all the high street stores on its busy shopping streets. Alongside them you will find cinemas, theatres, an opera house, art galleries, a vast range of restaurants, live music venues and clubs. York is particularly renowned for its multitude of pubs and bars, from the modern to the medieval.

Housing and schools

Whether you choose to live close to the city, in one of the surrounding villages or further afield, you will find a wide range of housing within comfortable distance of York and the University. For families, the area has a range of excellent schools both in the state and independent sector.

Great location

York is one of Britain’s best-connected cities. Halfway between London and Edinburgh on the East Coast mainline, on intercity trains you can reach London King’s Cross in less than two hours and Edinburgh in two and a half hours. York is also well served by road links, and it is easily accessible from the A1, M1 and the M62.

For those travelling from overseas, Manchester Airport is two hours away and Heathrow Airport just three and a half. Flights from nearby Leeds Bradford Airport provide easy access to mainland Europe. By Eurostar from London St Pancras, Paris is just over six hours away.

Yorkshire

The Lonely Planet guide recently declared Yorkshire the third best region in the world to visit. There is something to cater to every taste, whether it be the rugged landscapes of the Moors or the Dales, the picturesque seaside towns of Scarborough and Robin Hoods Bay, the gothic architecture of Whitby or the vibrancy of cosmopolitan Leeds.
**Apply online**

- Go to [https://jobs.york.ac.uk](https://jobs.york.ac.uk)
- Find this job using reference 6227
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 7 January 2018.

**What will I need?**

We will ask you for details of:

- your employment history
- relevant qualifications
- two referees

You need to be ready to show us how you meet the requirements of the job, either in a written statement and / or by answering questions.

**Help and assistance**

Direct any informal queries to Katrina Sayer (katrina.sayer@york.ac.uk)

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:

recruitment@york.ac.uk  
+44 (0)1904 324835