Student Services Officer (Special Cases)

Student and Academic Services

Closing date: 19 March 2018

Interview date: To Be Confirmed

Vacancy reference: 6485
INTRODUCTION

Student Services are responsible for ensuring an excellent student experience to students during their time at the University of York. We provide support and work with students from their enrolment through to graduation. We also provide a high level of advice and guidance to colleagues across the University who rely on us to update student records and deliver systems to support the student lifecycle.

As a team we are responsible for:
- front-of-house support, information, and guidance
- student advice
- student records management
- Tier 4 compliance
- student enrolment
- student financial support
- academic progress
- examinations and assessment
- academic appeals
- graduation
- research student administration
- compliance and statutory returns, and
- student systems development

As Student Services Officer, you will be based in the Special Cases team, gaining expertise in the team’s activities. You will work with students, departments and academics to investigate, and make recommendations to the Special Cases Committee about variations to standard enrolment, and appeals against academic decisions for all taught students. You will develop a detailed understanding of University policy and regulations, and apply those to a wide variety of unique and complex situations. Your analytical approach, tempered with compassion for students facing difficult circumstances, will allow the University to find just outcomes for students within a strict regulatory framework.

You will work with a dedicated team with links throughout central services and the wider University to investigate claims of exceptional circumstances and procedural irregularity and balance the rights and responsibilities of the student and the institution. You will have a keen attention to detail, and an ability to place unique circumstances in the wider regulatory context.
Main purpose of the role

To work with the Special Cases team to support the work of the University’s Special Cases Committee, undertaking the administration of the taught-student cases that fall within the Committee’s remit. Officers provide specialist advice and guidance to Committee members, students, faculty and departmental staff regarding the procedural and regulatory framework within which decisions regarding variations to standard procedures for students are made. Officers work with other members of Student Services to identify and implement improvements to processes, and present the work of the Team and the Committee to staff. The post holder also deputises for the Special Cases Manager as Secretary to the Committee when required.

Key responsibilities

- To investigate and process taught-student cases that fall within the Special Cases remit, including: leave of absence cases; programme transfers; repeat periods of study; programme extensions; academic appeals; cases that arise from the Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment procedures; cases that are referred to the Committee from a Board of Studies or Senate.

- To provide advice and guidance, including training, to staff and students on specialist processes and procedures, and the regulatory position regarding cases that fall within the Special Cases Committee’s remit for taught students, using judgement as necessary to suggest the most appropriate course of action, in particular in cases where progression is not as expected and/or a taught student wishes to submit an academic appeal.

- To provide information and recommendations to the Chair and other members of Special Cases Committee with regard to University (and other relevant) regulations in relation to individual taught student cases considered by Chair’s action or at a full meeting of the Committee.

- To liaise with colleagues in central support and academic departments with respect to the processing of SCC decisions relating to taught students, including liaising with colleagues in other areas of Student and Academic Services as appropriate, for example to understand the welfare or immigration implications of particular SCC decisions, and to notify appropriate staff of any changes in a student’s registration.

- To deputise as needed for the Special Cases Manager as Secretary to SCC, advising the Committee with regard to University (and other relevant) regulations during the course of hearings and Chair’s action meetings.

- To maintain detailed and accurate records of cases and work with the Special Cases Manager to keep Special Cases processes and procedures under review, ensuring that they are up-to-date, fit for purpose and improved wherever possible.

- To deputise for the Special Cases Manager in participating in relevant working parties and University groups as appropriate.

- Undertake any other task that may be assigned to support the activities of Student Services.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications

A general education to include three passes at A level, or an equivalent educational qualification, or relevant experience

First degree or an administrative qualification relevant to a complex administrative role.

Knowledge

Knowledge and understanding of degree structures

Understanding of the principles of natural justice, data protection and freedom of information

Knowledge of the Operation of the Independent Adjudicator

Knowledge of the University of York Regulatory Framework

Skills, abilities and competencies

A high degree of attention to detail and a systematic approach to complex student casework

The ability to work within tight timescales and meet deadlines

The ability to apply regulations and procedures consistently and fairly to individual student cases

Excellent oral and written communication skills, with the ability to provide detailed advice and guidance on specialist defined processes and procedures to students and staff in language appropriate to the individuals concerned.

The ability to write, with guidance, effective communication material for students and staff, and formal case outcome letters to students

The ability to develop and use spreadsheets and/or database systems to track and record student cases.

The ability to implement operational improvements

The ability to present the work of SCC to groups of staff

Strong IT skills, including word processing, email, use of spreadsheets, and webpage maintenance
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Experience

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<th>Essential/Desirable</th>
<th>Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>A relevant background in applying a regulatory framework to individual student cases with consistency and detailed attention to particular aspects of the case</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Experience of servicing and/or chairing committees and working groups</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Experience in working constructively with a wide range of colleagues</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Experience in working with students in an FE or HE setting</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Experience of using the SITS student record system</td>
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### Personal attributes

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<th>Essential</th>
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<tr>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Organised and flexible, and able to prioritise</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Ability to use initiative</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Ability to deal with confidential and sensitive matters and documentation and to act with discretion</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Highly motivated and able to work independently or as part of a team</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Ability to exercise diplomacy and tact in communications with staff and students</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>A flexible approach and openness to change as programme structures and committee and administrative procedures are varied</td>
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<td>Essential</td>
<td>Recognition that the peak appeals period is during the summer and the impact this has on the amount of annual leave that can be taken at this time of year.</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
<td>Willingness to vary hours to some extent in order to ensure cover during the most demanding periods of the academic year.</td>
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THE DEPARTMENT

Student and Academic Services provide administrative and advisory services and opportunities for development to support the student experience. Working collaboratively with students, colleagues and external partners we facilitate learning, development and success.

As one of the largest professional service directorates we make a significant impact on the University’s ability to achieve its ambition of offering and outstanding and valuable experience, and to support our colleagues in achieving excellence in research, teaching, and the student experience. We are in a strong position to shape and influence the way that the University delivers its objectives. We provide a collection of professional services which contribute to the quality of the student experience; these services are organised in five sections:

- Academic Support
- Careers and Placements
- Colleges
- Open Door
- Student Services

Student Services is engaged in a broad range of activities which underpin the student lifecycle from enrolment through to graduation. We are the first point of contact for students for everyday enquiries and specialist advice, and provide and support essential processes, systems, and events that underpin the student journey, the administration of teaching and learning, and the University’s relationship with key stakeholders and external agencies. We are responsible for matters relating to:

- front-of-house support, information, and guidance;
- student advice;
- student records management;
- student enrolment;
- student financial support;
- academic progress;
- examinations and assessment;
- academic appeals;
- graduation;
- research student administration;
- compliance and statutory returns; and
- student systems development.

We are comprised of a team of approximately 60 staff members organised in 11 teams. Our teams work in partnership with academic departments and professional services across a wide range of operational and development activities. We’re working together to identify opportunities to introduce greater harmonisation of the administrative processes and tasks that support the student journey, and to adapt and develop our services to meet new requirements.
Founded on principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University of York opened in 1963 with just 230 students. In 2018 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 are ranked 16th in the Times & Sunday Times league table (2017). 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 and Welcome Officers.

The University is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community - a place where we can all be ourselves and succeed on merit. We offer a range of family friendly, inclusive employment policies, flexible working arrangements, staff engagement forums, campus facilities and services to support staff from different backgrounds.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages.
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 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
- Find this job using reference 6485
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 19 March 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 Robert.simpson@york.ac.uk

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

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