Student Advice Assistant - Access and Participation

Student and Academic Services

Closing date: 13 September 2018
Interview date: to be confirmed
Vacancy reference: 6986
INTRODUCTION

Student Services are responsible for ensuring an excellent student experience to students during their time at the University of York. We provide information, advice, guidance and support to students and work with them from before their enrolment through to their Graduation. We also provide a high level of advice and guidance to colleagues across the University who rely on us to support the student lifecycle. The work of the Service is important in ensuring that the University meets a number of statutory compliance responsibilities. We are a dynamic service which operates in a collaborative and fast moving environment. We expect staff to work flexibility and to move within teams and specialisms as they develop a rewarding career in Higher Education.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and have created a number of new posts which will focus on improving access to, success in and progression from higher education for under-represented groups. This post will join a team working to develop initiatives to ensure effective support for students across the wider University. The team will work collaboratively to support the delivery of our Access and Participation plan, agreed with the Office for Students. Working with target groups the role is critical to delivering and enabling widening access to a range of advice and support. It will address specific needs by developing and delivering interventions that support retention and academic success.
Main purpose of the role

You will play a key role in enabling the delivery of our Access and Participation plan and improving our performance against agreed outcome measures by providing services that integrate target groups, developing interventions that support retention and academic success through a mix of bespoke provision as well as activities that connect students with a range of mainstream support. Working collaboratively with colleagues in Student Support and more widely from across the service, directorate and wider University you will ensure that effective support is in place for students from under-represented groups.

You will work with others to assist with the development and implementation of a programme of interventions in order to ensure students from these groups have a sense of belonging with the University. You will be committed to tackling inequalities and to undertaking innovative and effective interventions that contribute to increased retention and attainment of students in these under-represented groups.

Close collaboration with colleagues will be essential in this role in order to ensure that a holistic, student centred approach is adopted. You will contribute to the design, review, monitoring and evaluation of interventions to ensure that our activity is targeted appropriately and delivering measurable improvements in outcomes.

Key responsibilities

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

Customer service/support

- Act as a primary contact for queries and, working collaboratively with colleagues, providing detailed information and a range of solutions, interpreting user needs in order to solve problems, undertaking initial triage and first line support, signposting or referring students on to other services within and outside Student and Academic Services where appropriate. Where issues cannot be resolved, escalate them as appropriate.

- Apply a good working knowledge of established University systems, methods, processes or procedures to process casework, answer related questions and queries and resolve problems.

- Use initiative to provide an appropriate level of customer service whilst ensuring that work conforms with agreed quality standards, guidelines and procedures.

- Take a customer-oriented view of own work

- Contribute to the setting of standards for service delivery that are meaningful to customers and the team.

- Monitor service standards within own area of work and identify areas of improvement as part of planning activities within the team.

- Analyse, manipulate and interpret information in order to compile detailed summary reports and communications

- Maintain departmental/service website/webpages/social media and update content as required

- Assist in the preparation of relevant department/service documentation and processes to ensure the timely dissemination of information to the appropriate people

Generating improvement

- Where appropriate, work with others to introduce new processes or improvements including taking the lead in some instances, and use discretion and initiative to ensure the service can continue to meet agreed quality standards, guidelines and procedures.

Planning and organisation

- Contribute to short-term projects within own area/section or contribute as part of larger Directorate-wide project teams to support the achievements of project objectives.
• Organise or support events, meetings, etc and co-ordinate the associated arrangements to ensure activities are administered efficiently.

• Communication and collaboration
• Liaise with key contacts in the wider University body to support your own work activities/specific tasks as required.

• Attend relevant meetings as requested by a manager, to support standard work activities.

• Personal and professional development
• Maintain a personal and professional development plan.

• Maintain awareness of HE agendas and developments nationally especially with regard to impact on own area of responsibility.

• Attend appropriate external events such as conferences, where appropriate

• Undertake any other duties that fall within the scope of the job, as allocated by the line manager following consultation with the post holder
## 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 2 GCE A Level passes at Grade C or above, or an equivalent educational qualification, or relevant experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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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 equivalent experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
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<td>Knowledge of information advice and guidance procedures and processes used in a higher or further education setting</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Knowledge of administrative procedures and processes used in a busy office in a large complex organisation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Knowledge of a full range of MS office applications particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and on-line media</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Knowledge of relevant legislation including the Freedom of Information Act and GDPR</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Knowledge of the SITS student record system</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Skills, abilities and competencies</td>
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<td>Ability to provide information advice and guidance appropriately to a range of service users</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people, verbally and in writing</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Excellent IT skills</td>
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<td>Competent in the design and production of a range of information and promotional documentation and literature</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Ability to effectively organise and prioritise your own work and follow procedures in order to produce work to a high standard, to required deadlines</td>
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<td>Competent in diary management, with the ability to plan and organise meetings, small scale events, workshops and conferences</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of providing an excellent standard of customer service</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of working in a student facing role in a busy environment within a large complex organisation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of using the University’s student record systems</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Experience of analysing and evaluating data and presenting summary information in a clear and concise format</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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### Personal attributes

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<td>Highly motivated, able to work independently or as part of a team</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Able to work flexibly, under pressure and to tight deadlines</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Conveys a positive attitude</td>
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<td>Motivation towards customer service excellence and quality</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Understanding of the needs of those working and studying in higher education</td>
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<td>Demonstrable initiative</td>
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<td>Ability to solve problems</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Sensitivity and empathy with service users, colleagues and staff</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Commitment to organisational values</td>
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<td>Able to deal with issues of confidentiality and to demonstrate tact and diplomacy in sensitive situations.</td>
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Student and Academic Services provides information, advice, administrative 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 significant impact on the University’s ability to achieve its ambition of offering an outstanding and valuable experience and to support our colleagues in achieving excellence in research, teaching and the student experience. We provide a collection of professional services which contribute to the quality of the student experience:

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

In support of our ambitions our existing reception services have been brought together in a Student Information team, based in the Student Hub, providing information, support and guidance to service users across a range of our services. In May 2017 the Directorate achieved Customer Service Excellence with this team at the forefront of our endeavour and was successfully re-accredited with the award in May 2018.

Student and Academic Services is responsible for providing and improving the principal professional services that support student life at York. Collectively and in collaboration with other parts of the University we contribute to improving the experience and success of University of York students by:

- Developing aspects of student life that can enhance students’ learning and capability
- Providing the support students need to deal with aspects of student life that can inhibit learning and the assurance of academic standards, including targeted support where appropriate
- Building College communities in which students can feel cared for and able to thrive
- Promoting and facilitating students’ personal development, empowerment, self-reliance, career planning and employability
- Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, and students’ academic skills
- Providing the administrative underpinning for the student life-cycle.

The Student Hub is the central contact point for access to the main professional and specialist services for students experiencing challenges and works collaboratively with colleagues across the directorate and beyond. The team aims to work with students to develop strategies to overcome challenges so that they are successful academically and in their wider lives.
THE UNIVERSITY

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 AND THE REGION

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 6986
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 13 September 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 jill.ellis@york.ac.uk

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

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