Student Experience and Support Officer

History

Closing date: 7 March 2019
Interview date: TBC
Vacancy reference: 7371
INTRODUCTION

Working with the Chair of the Board of Studies and the University’s facilities for supporting students, the role will involve two main strands of work:

Student Progression

The first strand will require the role holder to manage the provision of student support across the Department. They will oversee the progression of all students through their programme of studies, ensuring they have the assistance they require to fully engage with the academic aspects of their degree. The role holder will develop links with academic and teaching staff to create a dual and interlinked system of student provision which will in turn promote the students’ success both within the degree programme and beyond, as they emerge with the skills and confidence they require to seek graduate-level employment.

The role will encompass the management and development of the student supervision system; leading on the provision of student pastoral support within the Department; contributing to departmental committees, both at a strategic and operational level, and providing the analysis of data for these crucial areas to guide and inform departmental planning. A key part of the role is to assist students who require additional support such as those with disabilities, e.g. students who require adjustments in relation to their academic work and those who suffer occasional or recurrent anxiety and other mental health conditions that make it harder for them to complete their studies. The role holder will liaise with these students to direct them to an appropriate source of professional assistance, whilst ensuring appropriate arrangements in relation to their academic work.

Student Outreach Work:

Working with relevant academic and administrative staff, the role holder will manage the Department’s widening participation work to provide opportunities to a diverse a range of applicants as possible, while still ensuring our reputation for academic achievement. The post holder will be expected to develop links with local schools and colleges within the Yorkshire region and potentially beyond, working with academic staff to promote the academic and pastoral work of the department and emphasising the skills and knowledge that a degree in history brings.

Building on this work, the role holder will participate in induction to provide the necessary guidance to students, from their first day at University and beyond, ensuring they remain committed to their programme of study.
INTRODUCTION

Skills, Knowledge and Experience

The role holder should have experience of a student-related role at a senior administrative level within the education sector. Excellent interpersonal skills are essential, as is the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. Proven problem-solving skills and the ability to prioritise are also key as the role holder will be required to triage a number of issues arriving on an unpredictable and ad hoc basis. The ability to deal with confidential and sensitive information is key, as is experience of leading and coordinating support for students. The role holder should be able to contribute at a strategic and operational level to inform Departmental planning. A relevant mental health-related qualification would be welcomed but is not essential; however, the role holder should be willing to undertake this once in post.

The post is available from May / June 2019. The post is full-time, with most of the work carried out during office hours. However, the role holder will occasionally need to vary working days from time to time to cover events and activities scheduled outside normal working days/office hours e.g. attendance at Open and Visit days.
**Condition of appointment**

This role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Consequently, all applicants will be asked to declare both unspent and spent convictions on their application form. Appointment of the successful candidate will be conditional on a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

**Main purpose of the role**

- To work with academic staff and the student colleges to ensure that all students have the support they require as they progress through their degree. This involves the management and delivery of supervisions via Departmental academic and teaching staff to ensure the provision of a network of support to the student, both academic and non-academic. This includes overseeing the supervision provided by academic staff, ensuring they are aware of current guidelines and practice in dealing with the issues raised by students.

- To determine the correct form of support to assist individual students and to ensure they can continue to engage with, and succeed in, their programme of study. This includes meeting students who are experiencing difficulties with their studies and explaining the options available to them.

- To play a key role in the Exceptional Cases Committee and the Student Support Committee, advising the Chair of the committee regarding individual cases, so that academic obligations are met while ensuring that individual students obtain the assistance they require.

**Key responsibilities**

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

**Managing Exceptional Circumstances, Special Cases and Student Absence**

- The role holder plays a significant role in the relevant departmental committees in reviewing the student’s application / situation and providing guidance to other members of the committee, taking into account the University’s regulations. Where relevant, the role holder will also contact the student to let them know the outcome of the committee.

- The role holder is expected to review the committee’s processes on an annual basis or more frequently if the University regulations are updated.

- Assist the Chair of the Board of Studies and personal supervisors regarding the authorisation of student leave of absence.

- Oversee the support arrangements for student absence. This involves collecting data on student absence to determine patterns of absence for individual students.
JOB DESCRIPTION

(and also for the cohort as a whole, where feasible). Work with the relevant tutor/supervisor to investigate the reasons for absence but also to ensure that the student is in a position to attend and engage with their studies as soon as possible.

Supporting students with disabilities

- Arrange a meeting with each student holding a Student Support Plan (SSP) to discuss expectations and assistance to be provided.
- Working with the Department’s Disability Administrators / Disability Contacts, ensure the relevant members of staff receive the information they require to meet the specifications of the SSP. The role holder ensures that those supervising and teaching the student are aware of the SSP and understand the implications.

Leading on the provision of pastoral / non-academic support to students

- Manage the supervisory systems across the department, allocating supervisees, and working with academic and teaching staff to ensure they have the guidance they require to deliver the expected level of pastoral assistance to students.
- Brief and update academic and administrative staff in the Department e.g. on changes to regulations and processes in relation to pastoral support and administrative support to the teaching programme.
- In cases where there is an overlap between the student's well-being and academic expectations, it is envisaged that the role holder will liaise with the relevant academic member of staff to reach a solution that aligns with the regulations and expectations in each area.
- To be available to students wishing to receive assistance. The role holder should ensure the appropriate quality of support and information provided.
- To determine the most appropriate form of action for each individual student issue, taking into account a number of possible routes. The role holder will then convey the potential options to the student. In some cases, this will involve accompanying the student to the relevant area of the University or staying with the student until they can receive the assistance they require. Although the role holder will not be expected to treat the student, they should be appropriately qualified to deal with the issues that might arise.
- Liaise with the University’s Open Door team, Student Support Services, College welfare officers and the Disability Office to ensure effective communication and appropriate arrangements for the student.

Communication with prospective students applying to study in the Department of History

- Working with the Admissions and Events Administrator, initiate an outreach programme specifically for History students, establishing strong links with schools in the Yorkshire region and beyond. The role holder is expected to work with academic staff to convey the dual system of support available to all students in the Department of History.
- Participate in University Visit and Open Days, and respond to queries received by applicants outside the standard Visit and Open Days that fall within the role-holder’s remit.
- Working with academic staff, play a key role in student induction to convey the non-academic support arrangements the Department provides.

Contribution to Departmental strategic planning and relevant communications

- Contribute to departmental committees, both at a strategic and operational level, particularly in the areas relating to student development and support.

Supervision of administrative activities

- Coordinate and provide guidance to administrative staff who are carrying out duties that relate to the role holder’s remit. The role holder will be responsible for ensuring they have been completed effectively.

Professional development

- The role holder will be expected to maintain her/his knowledge of University regulations as well as other external developments in the field of student pastoral support.
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educated to first degree level or with appropriate and relevant experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>A professional qualification relevant to the post</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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## Knowledge

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of mental health issues and the impact of these on student welfare and academic study. The role holder is expected to update this knowledge on a regular basis.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>An awareness of the ‘bigger-picture’ to be able to contribute to both strategic and operational planning, including an understanding of the HE environment and the challenges faced by universities</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Up-to-date knowledge of the University regulations relating to student welfare and well-being.</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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## Skills, abilities and competencies

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<tr>
<td>Excellent interpersonal skills to effectively support a wide range of individual students in a variety of situations.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent communication skills, both verbally and in writing to communicate with both staff and students at all levels. This includes the ability to interpret and summarise complex and detailed information and to present this clearly and concisely.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent problem-solving and analytical skills. The ability to resolve problems that arrive in an unplanned and ad hoc manner, liaising with others as relevant to obtain a suitable resolution of the issue</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to deal appropriately with confidential and sensitive data.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>The ability to develop and maintain excellent record-keeping systems, both electronically and in paper copy, so that information can be retrieved easily. The role holder should ensure that any data should be processed in with relevant legislation i.e. the General Data Protection Regulations.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Good IT skills in a range of MS packages: word processing, spreadsheets and databases.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>The ability to prioritise incoming work and to manage own workload, particularly when faced with a range of potentially conflicting demands.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>The ability to supervise and direct the work of other staff, who may often be at a higher level than that of the role holder</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Experience

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<tr>
<td>Experience of coordinating the provision of student pastoral matters</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of assessing situations against student-related or other similar regulations to determine the correct course of support required.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of working with students who have disabilities</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of developing links with, or experience of working within, schools and colleges</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of dealing with confidential and sensitive data.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisory experience, including directing the work of staff who may be senior to the role holder.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of a teaching role within the UK educational system. This can be at primary/second school level or beyond.</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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### Personal attributes

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<th>Essential/Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Able to work independently as well as within a wider team.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>A strong awareness of, and sensitivity to, equality and diversity.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>A positive, approachable and diplomatic manner</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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<tr>
<td>A pro-active attitude to the post, with the ability to initiate changes and bring new approaches to the work</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to occasionally vary working days from time to time to cover events and activities scheduled outside normal working days/office hours.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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The University of York is one of the finest institutions in Europe for the advanced study of History, combining groundbreaking research with teaching programmes of incredible chronological breadth and geographic and thematic scope. The Department of History is one of the largest in the UK, with a present complement of over 45 academic staff, over 900 single-subject or combined-honours undergraduate students, and a graduate school of more than 150 students on various postgraduate programmes.

The Times Higher Education's ranking of the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014) placed the Department second overall for research performance, as well as top 10 for both the quality of its outputs (papers) and the impact of its research outside academia. The Department was also ranked in the UK's top 15 in the 2017 Complete University Guide and Times Good University Guide. The current Head of Department is Professor Lawrence Black.

The Department has an international reputation for research and teaching over a chronological span from Late Antiquity to the Twentieth-First Century. Its strengths are organized into nine research clusters: Medieval, Early Modern, Eighteenth Century, Modern Europe, Asia & Middle East, Religion, Public History, Science, Technology, Environment & Medicine and the Americas. The Department’s PhD programme is one of the largest and best-funded in the UK with around 70 PhD students currently registered.

The Department has a strong commitment to interdisciplinarity. Members of the Department are leading participants in the University's interdisciplinary Centres: for Medieval Studies (CMS), for Renaissance and Early Modern Studies (CREMS), Eighteenth-Century Studies (CECS), Women's Studies (CWS), the Centre for Modern Studies (CMODS) and Historical Economics and Related Research (CHERRY). Most of these centres offer interdisciplinary MA and PhD programmes. The Department’s commitment to interdisciplinarity is further evidenced in the wide range of undergraduate combined programmes, the MA in Contemporary History and International Politics (CHIP) and the MA in Medical History and Humanities (run with the Department of English) as well as individual modules at the undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Within the Department of History itself there are various research centres, including the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture (which explores the ways religion has shaped and continues to shape society and culture and to address the need for historical understanding and perspective on contemporary issues); the Institute for the Public Understanding of the Past (IPUP) where the MA in Public
THE DEPARTMENT

History is based; and the Centre for Global Health Histories (CGHH), which is at the forefront of the Department’s research in medical humanities and collaborates with the WHO.

The professional support staff form a key part of the Department’s life and work and comprise a team of around 10 staff based in the Vanbrugh College and the Berrick Saul building. Together, the team support the Department’s core activities of teaching and research.

Further information about the department is available at: http://www.york.ac.uk/history/
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 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
- Find this job using reference 7371
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 7 March 2019

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 caroline.edwards@york.ac.uk

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:
- recruitment@york.ac.uk
- +44 (0) 1904 324835