Academic Skills Adviser  
Student and Academic Services

Closing date: 28 July 2019
Interview date: 12 August 2019
Vacancy reference: 7833
INTRODUCTION

The University of York Management School (TYMS) and the Academic Support Office’s Learning Enhancement team (in particular the Writing and Language Skills Centre - WLSC) are collaborating on a 12 month project to enhance academic skills, transition and success within postgraduate programmes. TYMS is a growing department with a large PGT cohort of over 500 largely international students. This role will provide a WLSC point of contact within TYMS and will take the lead in working with TYMS programme and module leaders to embed academic skills support within their programmes; in developing and delivering academic skills workshops aimed at improving student performance in lecture/seminar interactions and developing reading and writing skills; establishing and maintaining supportive student learning communities; and managing Grade 5 teaching staff in the delivery and evaluation of the provision.
Main purpose of the role

The Learning Enhancement Team supports undergraduate, taught Masters and research students in their development as successful students and as confident, highly skilled members of the academic community and society. It complements skills teaching that is embedded in programmes across the University. Services include support for Widening Participation and Access initiatives; skills centres offering ‘drop-in’ and appointment-based services; support for peer-assisted learning communities; online learning resources and information; tailored, department-based teaching support, and exemplar-based, interactive workshops.

Learning Enhancement services are open to students all year round. Some activities run primarily during term times, whilst others, such as drop-in and appointment based support, are available throughout the year to ensure timely access for all students, including postgraduates.

The advertised role will contribute to the delivery of these strategically important University services. It arises from a collaboration between the University of York Management School (TYMS) and the Academic Support Office’s Learning Enhancement team (in particular the Writing and Language Skills Centre -WLSC). This is a 12 month pilot project to enhance academic skills, transition and success within postgraduate programmes. TYMS is a growing department with a large PGT cohort of over 500 largely international students. The role will provide a WLSC point of contact within TYMS and will take the lead in:

• working with TYMS programme and module leaders to embed academic skills support within their programmes;
• developing and delivering academic skills workshops aimed at improving student performance in lecture / seminar interactions and developing reading and writing skills;
• establishing and maintaining supportive student learning communities; and
• managing Grade 5 teaching staff in the delivery and evaluation of the provision.

Key responsibilities

The key responsibilities of all Academic Skills Advisers in the Learning Enhancement Team include:

• leading on an identified learning and teaching enhancement service area;
• supporting student learning directly through contributing to and/or delivering classes; workshop provision, 1-to-1 tutoring and online provision;
• supporting the development of successful degree programmes by working with department groups, programme leaders and individual academic staff to embed aligned skills development into programmes;
• developing high quality and intellectually challenging teaching and learning resources, including digital and online resources to support independent skills development;
• monitoring and evaluating progress, outcomes and impact in defined service areas and reporting to relevant University officers and committees as necessary;
• contributing to the wider development of the Learning Enhancement Team by proposing and considering possible improvements or extensions to the portfolio of activities and services, informed by the Learning and Teaching Strategy and other University priorities;
• working collaboratively with colleagues in other parts of the ASO, including the Faculty Learning Enhancement Project Managers, colleagues in other professional services teams and in academic departments, to explore relevant aspects of student learning needs and the opportunities for support;
• maintaining up-to-date knowledge of HE pedagogy and innovation. This includes ensuring that work is informed by existing and emerging educational research, keeping up-to-date with advances in
JOB DESCRIPTION

technology relevant to teaching and learning in higher education, undertaking professional networking with the wider HE community, and using these insights to inform the development of the role holder's own teaching and the work of the Learning Enhancement team more broadly;

• representing the Learning Enhancement team or ASO at relevant meetings;

• undertaking other duties as required by the line manager, the Head of Team or the Head of the Academic Support Office, that may not be included above, but which are nevertheless consistent with the role and grade.

Specific responsibilities for the Academic Skills Adviser for The York Management School (TYMS) pilot project will include:

• working in close partnership with TYMS department staff to specify service goals based on the structure of TYMS degree programmes and the identified skills needs of the TYMS postgraduate taught student cohort;

• designing appropriate supplemental provision to meet specific programme and cohort needs in consultation with department staff and LE team colleagues;

• working with department administrators to co-ordinate timetables, class lists, room allocation, and staff allocation;

• delivering teaching sessions to TYMS student groups of various sizes;

• designing and deploying diagnostic testing and evaluation tools to assess the impact of the pilot provision and communicating the results of the evaluation to appropriate groups;

• managing and monitoring two Grade 5 tutors (1.2 fte) in their day-to-day working and teaching.

The role holder will report to the Writing and Language Skills Centre Manager. The role holder will need to work effectively with a range of colleagues across the University for whom teaching, learning and assessment matters are a key concern. These may include the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching, Learning and Students, Faculty Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning, academic and professional services staff, student representatives and the student body more widely. The post-holder is supported by the ASO's administrative team.
# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>A good honours degree or equivalent.</td>
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<td>A higher education teaching qualification (e.g. PGCE, Diploma in ELT, PGCAP) or equivalent recognition.</td>
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<td>A postgraduate degree.</td>
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<th>Knowledge</th>
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<td>Knowledge of the national learning and teaching agenda and of learning enhancement issues in HE.</td>
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<td>Knowledge of a wide range of current research and practice related to teaching and learning in HE, especially concerning academic skills e.g. academic writing; mathematics and statistics; English language, to enable effective teaching and learning support to students across different subjects and levels of proficiency.</td>
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<td>An understanding of academic culture relevant to a UK research-intensive university and its implications for</td>
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<td>Knowledge of the opportunities offered by the application of technology in supporting learning, including e-</td>
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<th>Skills, abilities and competencies</th>
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<td>Ability to manage and teach groups of students of various sizes from large lectures to 1-to-1s.</td>
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<td>Ability to design and deliver effective teaching, presentations, workshops and 1:1 support that engages</td>
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<td>Ability to lead or contribute to team-taught activities and courses.</td>
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<td>Excellent interpersonal, communication and customer service skills that enable effective engagement with colleagues and students, one-to-one and in larger groups, across a range of disciplines and at all levels of seniority within the University.</td>
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<td>Ability to design challenging materials to support student learning.</td>
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<td>Ability to supervise the work of students and assist with learning problems.</td>
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<td>Ability to reflect on the effectiveness of own teaching and to plan ongoing enhancement.</td>
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<td>Ability to investigate innovative teaching, learning and assessment methods and techniques in the sector, to engage with pedagogic research, and to evaluate the value of this information to inform the work of the Learning Enhancement Team and the wider ASO.</td>
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<td>Ability to design and implement appropriate approaches to evaluate the impact of learning enhancement</td>
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<td>Ability to prioritise, plan own work and responsibilities over the short and medium term, work well under</td>
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<td>Good IT skills relating to using VLE sites and standard IT software</td>
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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<th>Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of teaching or supporting students from a range of subject backgrounds in the HE sector, ideally at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.</td>
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<td>Experience of working with large international student cohorts.</td>
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<td>Experience of designing and developing effective learning resources, in the context of educational and staff development or tertiary-level teaching.</td>
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<td>Experience of planning and running projects designed to address HE transition</td>
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<td>Experience of using different delivery techniques to enthuse and engage students.</td>
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<td>Experience of overseeing teaching and learning service areas and managing teams.</td>
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<td>Experience of leading tertiary level curriculum design (module or support service).</td>
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<td>Experience of working with a range of academic and support staff on learning enhancement initiatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of evaluating learning and teaching initiatives or services.</td>
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### Personal attributes

| A commitment to addressing teaching and learning needs and effecting change. | E                     |
| An engaging and effective communicator, conveying a positive attitude with personal credibility and integrity. | E                     |
| Sensitivity and empathy with users, colleagues and staff, understanding the needs of those working and studying in an HE environment. | E                     |
| A self-starter, well organised and willing to take the initiative          | E                     |
| A proactive and positive approach, able to exercise creativity, initiative and judgement to identify appropriate approaches to teaching and learning support, solve problems and develop service improvements with an appreciation of possible longer-term implications. | E                     |
| Motivated to maintain awareness of HE agendas and developments nationally, especially with regard to their impact on the role holder's area of responsibility. | E                     |
| A commitment to continuing professional development.                      | E                     |
| A commitment to service excellence, equality and diversity.                | E                     |
The Academic Support Office (ASO) is part of the Student & Academic Services Directorate, which also includes Careers and Placements, Student Services, and Student Life and Wellbeing.

Collectively the Directorate contributes to the experience and success of students and staff by:

- providing the support that students and staff need to deal with aspects of student life that can enhance learning and capability;
- promoting and facilitating students' personal development and career planning;
- contributing to the assurance of academic standards and the quality of teaching and learning, and
- providing the administrative underpinning for the student life cycle.

The ASO plays an important role in helping to ensure that the University maintains its reputation for high quality teaching and learning. The Office is responsible for co-ordinating processes for assuring the quality of educational provision and for supporting a wide portfolio of activities aimed at enhancing teaching and learning practices. The work includes:

- supporting departments and individual staff in programme design, improving assessment and feedback, using technology to enhance teaching and learning, and embedding academic skills development in programmes and modules;
- providing, and advising staff on the pedagogic opportunities arising from, technology-related services and online learning tools including lecture recording, in-class polling and software to support student interaction online;
- supporting quality review processes in departments, including Periodic Review and Annual Programme Review, and engagements with professional accreditation bodies;
- supporting the development of academic policy and the University's engagement with national initiatives such as the TEF;
- providing professional development for staff across the University through programmes such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, workshops, online resources, and networking and practice-sharing opportunities including the annual Learning and Teaching Conference;
THE DEPARTMENT

- providing direct support to students across the University through workshops, ‘drop-ins’, appointments and online resources on topics such as English language, mathematics and statistics, intercultural communication, higher-order study skills and academic integrity. This support is designed to enhance learning and also facilitate the transition to University-level education;

- contributing to the University’s widening participation agenda including the delivery of workshop events for school children which help them to understand and aspire to HE-level study;

- evaluating the impact of learning enhancement initiatives, to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and to inform future development and innovation;

- contributing to University thinking and strategic planning, through proactive proposals and interaction with senior staff;

- maintaining current knowledge of relevant national and international developments, and active engagement with professional networks in the sector.

- promoting examples of excellent practice at the University to the wider sector, both nationally and internationally, through attendance and presentations at conferences and other events.

In delivering these responsibilities, ASO staff work closely with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching, Learning and Students, the Faculty Associate Deans for Learning, Teaching and Students, the University Teaching Committee, the Standing Committee on Assessment, the Learning and Teaching Forum, the Distance Learning Forum, staff in academic and central departments, and student representatives.

Further information on the work of the ASO can be found at www.york.ac.uk/admin/aso
THE UNIVERSITY

Founded on principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University of York opened in 1963 with just 230 students. In 2019 it is the home of more than 18,000 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 to have appeared in the world top 100. We were rated 22nd in the 2019 Times & Sunday Times league table. 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 multiple 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 7833
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 28 July 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 victoria.jack@york.ac.uk

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

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