Widening Participation Employability Officer

Department: Student Careers and Systems, Student and Academic Services

Hours of work: Full time, 37 hours per week

Contract type: 1 x Open Contract, 1 x 2 year Fixed-Term

Salary: Grade 6, £34,308 - £42,155 per year
Introduction

Developing employability is an essential feature of the offer the University of York makes to its current and prospective students. The Student Careers and Systems department provides a range of opportunities to help students acquire work experiences, personal development and careers support.

Combining elements of information and guidance, access to opportunities and activities that build self-awareness and career direction, the offer made by the University to its students is both comprehensive and effective in supporting progress toward a graduate destination.

However, the employability development needs of students are not all the same. Students from backgrounds where they are the first of their family to attend University and/or come from areas of traditionally low participation in higher education may have differing needs related to career knowledge, expectations and possibilities. Other factors such as ethnicity and disability may also impact on the employability needs of a student. There is a need for us to understand the challenges and needs of students from all backgrounds to ensure we provide every opportunity for all students to develop their employability and access the networks and contacts provided by the University for this purpose.

The University of York is particularly effective at attracting talented students from state sector schools and offers employers access to a diverse and well prepared pool of potential candidates. This role will play an important role in ensuring that all York’s students can take their place in this pool with equal confidence and preparedness.

Main purpose of the role

The postholder will focus principally on widening participation employability programmes and offers, working in partnership with colleagues in Careers and Placements and colleagues in other areas of the University to join up support and provision. They will also organise and deliver interventions to address various aspects of social mobility, diversity and inclusion, monitor the progress of students taking part and evaluate the impact.

These interventions will include the management of the York Futures Scholarships programme to support students to build ambitious career plans, our graduation to employment programme, as well as supporting to design, deliver and evaluate new tailored packages of support.

Work in this role will be varied, ranging from researching needs and challenges of under represented groups specific to employability, reporting those findings back to the service and using them to propose developments to our offer, delivering one to one support to students, building relationships with stakeholders across the university to strengthen our approach to widening participation, advising and keeping the service up to date on related widening participation information and working with external stakeholders.

Data is a key part of this role and the post holder will be involved in new initiatives to develop mechanisms for better measuring student progression and learning related to employability, providing senior management with meaningful data on the impact of activities on eventual graduate outcomes.
Key responsibilities

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

1. Role Specific Responsibilities

- Managing all aspects of the York Futures Scholarship programme in collaboration with colleagues from the Office of Philanthropic Partnerships and Alumni (OPPA), including regularly reviewing the award criteria, managing the application and assessment period and the subsequent monitoring of impact (the permanent role will lead on this area of responsibility)
- Driving forward the Integrated Progression Project which aims to create a greater sense of direction and momentum for WP students from the very start of their time at York through to graduation, enabling them to access the right initiatives in the best order to suit their individual circumstances
- Managing the Careers Coaching contract with an external provider, to provide one-to-one coaching within budget
- Collaboration with OPPA to organise visits to key employment cities structured around meetings with alumni in a variety of roles in those cities
- Coordination of a suite of training activities (online and in person) to build careers related confidence and awareness. There is also the potential that elements of the training will be delivered by the post holder
- Identifying good practice in careers support in the field of widening participation which can be adopted from across the University and the wider UK context to provide support and guidance to colleagues
- Delivering information and activity to students from widening participation backgrounds
- Working with the Careers Information and Engagement Team, manage messaging to underrepresented groups through the website, social media and promotional materials
- Develop information and learning resources for use by colleagues
- Represent employability at the University of York at relevant meetings and forums, such as during school and college visits, relevant conferences and Open Days
- Contribute time and expertise to the range of projects that arise across the Careers and Placements team

2. University of York Responsibilities for Grade 6

Service and Operational Delivery

- Oversee a responsive and proactive support service to ensure service expectations are met.
- Collect and analyse stakeholder feedback to help define needs and requirements and the design and planning of services.
- Contribute to operational leadership teams and decision making to shape the nature and level of support services.
- Implement changes to the design and development of a service.
- Accountable for delivery of a service within a defined area or defined responsibilities.
- Make effective use of digital solutions to carry out operational activity and implement efficiency improvements.
- Depending on the role, may be required to act as operational line manager - setting, monitoring and overseeing the work of the team on a day to day basis

Continuous Improvement
- Analyse service and operational delivery data and provide reports, making recommendations for improvement as appropriate.
- Ensure the review and improvement of systems and procedures in line with University frameworks.
- Review internal and external practice to identify opportunities for future improvements or efficiencies.
- Apply expertise to identify, understand and propose resolutions for issues or problems.
- Proactively identify opportunities for building personal knowledge and skills, and ensure training and development needs of the team are met.
- Deliver knowledge sharing on specialist defined processes across the broader team.

Specialist Contribution
- Provide advice to stakeholders in relation to complex policy, procedures and regulations.
- Provide specific technical advice to ensure compliance with legislation, statutory duties, etc.
- Provide specialist expertise and support with complexity of data and information sources, providing interpretation and analysis.
- Carry out in-depth, complex investigations or searches; interrogate the information and data to identify trends and patterns.
- Deliver training, teaching and/or development delivery for stakeholders.

Collaboration and Communication
- Establish, maintain and develop productive and ongoing relationships with University stakeholders to create ideas for tactical service or operational delivery development.
- Build relationships and networks internally and externally to build and update knowledge and skills.
- Use a range of digital media and tools to communicate with a diverse range of key stakeholders.
- Act as a supportive and encouraging member of a team. For roles at this level with supervisory responsibilities, demonstrate compassion and give advice on commonly occurring wellbeing issues.

Governance and Oversight
- Oversee activity to ensure all processes and transactions are delivered in line with regulatory and professional service and policy standards.
- Provide advice and training to stakeholders regarding compliance and regulations relating to the area of responsibility.
- Contribute to the creation or development of policy and procedures to take account of internal and external changes.
● Ensure activities and documents comply with internal University and external regulation, policy and procedures.

Planning and Organisation

● Plan, organise and prioritise the work of self and team members on a regular basis, taking into account operational needs and changing circumstances over the short to mid term.
● Contribute to longer term strategic/planning of the team’s work.
● Lead the delivery of projects to facilitate service operational change or play a role in University-wide projects.

The above list of duties is not exhaustive and is subject to change. The post holder may be required to undertake others duties within the scope and grading of the post.
## Person specification

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<th>Role Specific</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of higher education and the issues impacting on student employability</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of labour market trends, employer expectations and the occupational, training and learning opportunities open to graduates</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of widening participation in relation to progression in UK higher education</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Coaching or careers guidance qualification (or working toward)</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Understanding the issues surrounding widening participation and social mobility</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of project management</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of working with students, and particularly those from underrepresented groups</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Proven ability to evaluate programmes of work and conduct research using both qualitative and quantitative methods</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Strong network development and management skills; able to form collaborative relationships with many different types of people both internally and externally; persuasive and influential</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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### University of York Person Specification for Grade 6

**Qualifications:**

- Level 3 qualification. (Qualifications at this level include A levels. Please [view the full list](#). We also welcome applicants with equivalent non-uk qualifications or equivalent professional experience. | Essential |

**Skills - demonstrates the ability to:**

- Lead projects | Essential |
- Gather, analyse, interpret and report complex data/information | Essential |
- Use digital technologies including Google applications and/or Microsoft Office | Essential |
- Communicate effectively in verbal and written formats, including the use of a variety of digital tools | Essential |

**Behaviours:**

- Works collaboratively with others | Essential |
- Delivers a quality service | Essential |
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<th>Develops self and others</th>
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<td>Actively champions respect, inclusivity, equality and diversity</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Identifies and implements continuous improvement</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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