

Job Description

Job title	Mental Health Adviser (Wellbeing Advisor)
School / department	Student Services
Grade	5
Line manager	Senior Wellbeing Coordinator

Main purpose of the job

To provide specialist advice and guidance to support students, enabling them to participate in their studies as fully as possible and to achieve their academic potential. The caseload will primarily contain students with mental health difficulties including complex and long term mental health conditions, but also students with other disabilities and specific learning difficulties, as well as some students who are not yet diagnosed with any condition.

This will be achieved by assisting students to access the specialist internal and external support that they may need to succeed in their studies, including NHS services and funding such as Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) where applicable. The post holder will also liaise with students who are reporting issues or displaying behaviour which could be indicators of underlying mental health conditions, with a view to ensuring that they have accurate and helpful information and are able to access support if they wish to. Advice will be given to colleagues within the university if they raise concerns that a student's learning (or other students' learning) is being affected by a possible wellbeing issue. Where possible, the post holder will raise awareness of mental health issues amongst the student population as a whole, to reduce stigma and to increase the likelihood that students will seek support at an early stage if it is needed.

Key areas of responsibility

- To provide one-to-one advice and information to students and applicants with mental health difficulties and assist students and applicants with other types of disability or specific learning difficulties when necessary. Where appropriate, to refer students to other teams within Student Services, to other University services, or to external agencies.
- To conduct initial Mental Health Assessments (risk assessments) and implement a written Individual Support Plan (ISP) based on the assessment and the student's identified needs.
- To facilitate students' applications for funding support, e.g. Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and the University's Disability Contingency Fund, where applicable, and to liaise with the relevant funding bodies in the case of any difficulties.
- To liaise with colleagues across the University to ensure that any reasonable adjustments agreed for the student are implemented, in accordance with the Equality Act, and to offer advice if there are difficulties in implementing them.
- To develop good working relationships and frameworks with colleagues across the University and in the Students' Union, and also with relevant external providers including local NHS services.

- Where appropriate, to act as link between the student and services such as Community Mental Health Teams, Local borough Crisis Teams, CAMHS, Early Interventions, Social Services and other relevant agencies, in a manner that is in accordance with the Data Protection Act and Student Services' Code of Confidentiality.
- To take an active role in the University's response to any incidences of mental health crisis on the premises.
- To keep accurate written records of all casework and to collate anonymised data on the work that has been completed, to assist the management teams in assessing the effectiveness of the service in supporting students.
- To routinely self-monitor, reviewing recent and ongoing casework to ensure that it is appropriately prioritised. To take responsibility for making appropriate decisions to seek peer or managerial guidance where necessary, particularly in situations where there are risks which need to be reported, where the post holder finds themselves acting outside of their areas of expertise, or where they identify a need for self-care.
- To work, at all times, in line with relevant legislation, professional competency frameworks/ethical guidelines, and UWL policy and procedure. To take responsibility for maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of the relevant legislation and good practice, and to commit to the principles of continual personal development.
- To take part in occasional weekend or evening work, for example to offer advice to applicants attending University Open Days (time off in lieu is provided).
- In addition to the above areas of responsibility the position maybe required to undertake any other reasonable duties relating to the broad scope of the position.

Dimensions / back ground information

Student Services comprises Wellbeing, Student Engagement and Retention, Immigration and Funding Advice, Scholarships and Hardship Funding, Accommodation, and Careers.

This role is part of the Wellbeing Team which contains three Wellbeing Advisers, the Counselling Service, and the University's interfaith provision. Two of the Wellbeing Advisers focus on implementing reasonable adjustments for disabled students within the university, for example by advising on eligibility for DSA and supporting students with funding applications. This specific post has been newly refocused to ensure that the post holder can specialise in providing a holistic service to students with mental health conditions, including via liaison with external services such as the NHS. This is in response to the growing numbers of students across the country who experience mental health difficulties, and in particular the growth in complex cases where liaison with external services such as the NHS is essential.

The University is a provider of both Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) and we have an extremely diverse profile of students: <http://www.uwl.ac.uk/about-us/how-university-works/student-profile>

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
<p>Qualifications and/or membership of professional bodies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate level qualification plus significant experience working in the field of mental health, or professional/vocational qualification in a mental health related field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant professional qualification such as Registered Nurse Mental Health/Social Worker/Occupational Therapist would be an advantage
<p>Knowledge and experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working knowledge of current disability and mental health legislation and practice and the implications of this in an educational setting. An understanding of the effect of a range of mental health difficulties on the daily lives of individuals. Evidence of continuous professional development in a range of mental health and disability matters. Experience of delivering training / raising awareness in relation to mental health. An understanding of common factors which can positively or negatively affect students' mental health conditions Knowledge of the interaction between mental health, emotional state, and the ability to function in a demanding academic environment Evidence of commitment to the principles of equality and diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of how mental health conditions and other disabilities can impact on the student experience Awareness of statutory support and government benefits available to disabled students Working knowledge of the range of study skills and reasonable adjustments that are useful to disabled students in further and higher education. Working knowledge of further and higher education funding streams, such as Disabled Students Allowance, for students with mental health difficulties. Working knowledge of local mental health service provision, or NHS structures and ways of working Experience of working in a HE institution Knowledge of the interaction between mental health, emotional state, and the ability to function in a demanding academic environment Experience of developing policies, protocols or training materials

<p>Specific skills to the job</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience in the assessment of mental health needs and the assessment of risk, and good knowledge of the range of external services available to support students where external referral is required • Advice and guidance skills • Good crisis management and risk assessment skills, and the resilience to deal with challenging situations and seek personal support where necessary. • Significant experience of working in a team of staff in a changing environment and under pressure. • Ability to manage own caseload and to use time and resources effectively by prioritising. • The ability to set clear boundaries with students and to manage those boundaries throughout any ongoing work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of analysing data.
<p>General skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to use initiative and sound judgment in the appropriate management of rapidly changing student casework • Ability to work independently whilst seeking peer or management guidance where appropriate • Ability to work in an objective, non-judgmental way, respecting the rights of students to make their own decisions about support options. • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with a wide range of people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful team supervision within the HE environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to respect a high level of confidentiality at all times, together with the ability to make decisions about when it is appropriate to break confidentiality. • Self-motivated, with a flexible approach to work. • Excellent problem solving ability, ability to use initiative and analytical skills. • Commitment to providing an excellent and proactive student focused service. • Confident computer user, particularly in the use of Word, Excel, Outlook. 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This post is based at our St Marys Road campus in Ealing but it will be expected that the post holder will travel to our other campuses from time to time. There is a free shuttle bus for university staff which links our Brentford and Ealing campuses. 	
Disclosure and Barring Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This post requires an enhanced DBS check 	

Essential Criteria are those, without which, a candidate would not be able to do the job. Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.

Desirable Criteria are those that would be useful for the post holder to possess and will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.