

## Job Description

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| <b>Job title</b>           | Student Welfare Advisor |
| <b>School / department</b> | Student Services        |
| <b>Grade</b>               | 5                       |
| <b>Line manager</b>        | Senior Welfare Advisor  |

### Main purpose of the job

To support the Senior Welfare Advisor to deliver an efficient, effective and informed pastoral support service to students. This is a key role in contributing to a professional advice and guidance service to support students who may be in crisis/distress. The post holder will also provide advice and guidance to staff on a range of student related issues within the Student Services Department.

The post holder is expected to improve communication and proactively work with the Student Community, Schools and Professional Service departments to foster engagement with, and an understanding of, services provided within the Student Welfare Team.

They will gain and maintain an understanding of the support needs of students across the University and Student Community and support the Senior Student Welfare Adviser, in any change management and development requirements to meet identified support needs.

The post holder will also contribute to the work of the Student Welfare team in the formulation, promotion, delivery, monitoring and review of University policies and procedures regarding students in distress/crisis, to ensure legal and contractual obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

To deputise for the Senior Student Welfare Officer when required in matters relating to students in crisis/distress.

The Student Welfare Advisor will:

- Act as a central dissemination point for all Schools/Colleges in relation to student welfare issues. The post holder will work closely and extensively with professional/specialists support services, escalating specific issues and referring students to such services internal and external as required.
- Undertake casework providing support and guidance to students and staff in respect of a range of practical advice issues pertaining to the student's particular problem/issue.
- Liaise with the UWL Accommodation Team to support students who are residing in any University nominated accommodation and mediate as and when necessary.
- Contribute to the provision of a professional and specialist advice and guidance service to all students, to encourage their academic progress and student retention.

This appointment requires a flexible approach to working hours including some rota based out of hours cover when required. The post holder will also be required to work across all UWL sites.

## Key areas of responsibility

### **Pastoral Student Support**

- Provide pastoral support for students needing guidance in order to provide an ongoing, accessible and visible welfare focal point and to identify students who may need help before they reach crisis point, liaising closely with personal tutors (and other internal/external partners as appropriate).
- Ensure that students in need or crisis are dealt with tactfully, sensitively and confidentially, providing a professional, specialist advice service in line with University policies and procedures.
- Identify the most complex support needs, applying good judgement and initiative, utilising expertise in order to signpost to other appropriate services within UWL, SU or external agencies where applicable.
- Maintain a case work portfolio providing continuing support for individual students as appropriate and responding to serious concerns about students who are having difficulties functioning or continuing their studies for non-academic reasons. Assess student support needs and participate in case conferences in collaboration with colleagues in Student Services, Student Advice, SU and any other University staff (when required).
- Organise and prioritise your own client caseload; to routinely monitor and review your own casework, and to take responsibility for deciding when to invoke peer or management supervision.
- Deal with all new and continuous student welfare cases in a timely manner and resolve queries appropriately within 24 hours (if possible and excluding weekends).
- Refer to student record data held on the student records system (Target Connect) as required and ensure full and accurate casework data is recorded in compliance with the Service's Code of Confidentiality, professional standards and Audit requirements.
- Provide bespoke support for targeted groups of students; working in collaboration with the Senior Welfare Advisor/Head of Welfare, students, staff and external partners where required.

### **Internal Liaison and Communications**

- Provide statistical information on clients and casework, ensuring data records are accurately maintained within the desired timescales.
- Act as a central 'triage' point for all Schools/Colleges relation to a student's welfare, liaising with appropriate academic and other relevant staff to support widening participation and access, academic progress and student retention.
- Advise students and colleagues on the validity of extenuating circumstances claims, including providing evidence to support mitigation addressing welfare issues.
- Provide a conflict resolution service between students to students and help resolve issues and support a positive outcome including working with UWL accommodation providers.
- Use effective communication skills, both oral and written; to deal efficiently, effectively and tactfully with people at all levels.
- Participate in recruitment and enrolment related events and assist with other activities which underpin the student lifecycle as required.

- Help maintain an effective information service by developing and producing guidance notes, written reports, training and other materials for use by students and colleagues available in multi-media format.
- Assist the Senior Welfare Advisor to provide staff development training on support for students; raising awareness and ensure compliance with pastoral care requirements.
- To identify circumstances where it is necessary to breach the Service's Code of Confidentiality, ensuring that duty of care responsibilities are met at all time; to inform senior staff of any such circumstances.
- At all times to carry out responsibilities with due regard to the university's Equal Opportunities Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Be aware of, and comply with, the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act at all times.
- Adhere to all of the university's procedures and policies.

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. In particular, those assigned by the Senior Welfare Advisor and/or Head of Student Welfare to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Student Services Department.

## Person Specification

| Criteria                                                       | Essential                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Desirable                                                                                                                                               |
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| <b>Qualifications and/or membership of professional bodies</b> | Graduate level qualifications in a relevant area (for example: social work, psychology, counselling) or equivalent.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Post Graduate qualification                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Knowledge and experience</b>                                | <p>A thorough working knowledge of providing 1-1 pastoral support to students who are in distress, in crises, affected by mental health difficulties or with other complex issues.</p> <p>Experience of working within a higher or further education environment.</p> <p>Working knowledge of Safeguarding.</p> <p>Experience of dealing with and managing highly sensitive and confidential information.</p> <p>Experience of working independently and dealing with unforeseen problems and circumstances, using initiative to analyse complex information to problem solve.</p> <p>Experience of working with students from a diverse range of backgrounds.</p> <p>Experience of working in a changing environment and frequently under pressure and ability to work to meet tight deadlines.</p> <p>Proven ability to build relationships with people at all</p> | <p>Awareness of key issues, trends and opportunities and challenges in higher education sector.</p> <p>Knowledge of conflict resolution techniques.</p> |

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|                                   | levels within and external to the University.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                   |
| <b>Specific skills to the job</b> | <p>Well-developed client interview and case working skills and the ability to maintain boundaries and professional ethics within a confidential setting.</p> <p>Ability to keep thorough, accurate and up to date client case notes and data in compliance with confidentiality policies, professional standards, and Data Protection Act and GDPR protocols.</p> <p>Ability to manage confidential issues and to remain discreet, calm, diplomatic and professional.</p> <p>A good understanding of the legislative framework relating to Equality Act 2010.</p> | Understanding of the Mental Health Act, Prevent Duty and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018. |
| <b>General skills</b>             | <p>Excellent written and verbal communication.</p> <p>Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to relate to people at all levels &amp; backgrounds.</p> <p>Ability to maintain clear boundaries when working 1:1 with vulnerable people.</p> <p>Computer literate with windows based products as communication and management tools, e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.</p> <p>Ability to show attention to detail and produce work and documentation of high quality.</p>                                                                              | The ability to devise and deliver high quality presentations and workshops.                       |
| <b>Other</b>                      | Ability to work in a team with a high level of personal responsibility.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                   |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>Proven ability to use initiative and work independently.</p> <p>Ability to work collaboratively.</p> <p>Ability to work outside normal working hours as required in order to maintain essential and professional services in responding to critical students' events.</p> |  |
| <b>Disclosure and Barring Scheme</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | This post requires an enhanced DBS check                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| <p><b>Essential Criteria</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Desirable Criteria</b> 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.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |