

Operations Manager, Student Recruitment & Fees (Ref 1936) – The Open University in Ireland

Main Responsibilities

1. Leadership and performance management of student facing staff including the Student Recruitment and Fees Supervisor and a team of Advisers, including:

- Recruit, train, performance manage and develop staff in line with guidelines and ensure individuals are supported and developed to help them fulfil their potential.
- Communicate with individuals and the team, to share information and direction, and to maximise productivity levels and quality standards.
- Manage resource challenges, minimising attrition, and absences wherever reasonable.

2. To oversee the Student Recruitment and Fees Supervisor and team of Advisers as part of a flexible management team with a focus on providing study and fees information to students and potential students within agreed timescales, ensuring that all activity is dealt with promptly and effectively and within agreed service levels.

- Oversee complex workflows, allocation, and capacity to ensure that student and prospective student interactions are responded to efficiently and effectively and in as seamless a way as possible.
- Actively monitor performance and quality to ensure that agreed service standards, performance targets and operating procedures are met and exceeded.
- Contribute to the regular evaluation and development of these standards.
- Exercise judgement in dealing with complex issues, complaint handling and escalations and interpreting and applying procedures and guidelines with judgement and initiative.

3. Develop SRSI, team and personal expertise and knowledge across all areas of the curriculum to provide an expert point of referral. Contribute to relevant practitioner and working groups, both within The Open University in Ireland and the wider service, established to promote informed, efficient, effective and consistent support services to students and prospective students to enable them to make successful study choices, leading to study progression, qualification completion and customer satisfaction.

4. Liaise closely and collaboratively with relevant staff and managers/senior managers within The Open University in Ireland and within the Information, Advice and Guidance Service in other locations, and with staff and managers/senior managers in central teams to provide excellent service to students and prospective students to enable them to make good study choices and to adopt successful behaviours.

5. To proactively support the Senior Manager (Operations) in the development and continuous improvement of good internal and inter team working and service provision:

- Attending and actively participating in team meetings and developmental activities.
- Exploring service improvements and enhancements.
- Contributing to business improvement ideas and initiatives, making recommendations to Senior Leaders as appropriate.
- Showing initiative and judgement in helping the team to run smoothly and working with and supporting other teams as required.
- Engage actively in the support and development of new team members.
- Working collaboratively with operations managers/senior managers within SRSI to share best practice and work consistently across the services.
- Provide holiday and absence cover for operations managers within SRSI.
- Undertaking other activities as directed by senior management.

6. To continually develop skills and knowledge to maintain and improve personal performance, in the spirit of continuous improvement and to adopt correct and evolving business practices and procedures:

- Undertaking all duties in accordance with internal policy and external legislation.
- Working with the Senior Manager (Operations) to understand personal performance and areas for development.
- Providing feedback to contribute to colleagues' performance development.
- Accepting feedback from colleagues to improve personal skills and knowledge.

7. Leadership and management of a specific area of work/areas of work, such as work with Student Finance Northern Ireland, students in secure environments, proactive funding campaigns, complaints etc. (the list is not exhaustive):

- Ensuring procedures and guidelines are followed.
- Monitoring workflows and quality.
- Facilitating briefings and training.
- Ensuring any issues are reported appropriately.

- Liaising with central colleagues/staff in other areas of the University.

The role holder may be required to undertake any other duties reasonably required within the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the role, subject to the proviso that normally any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the Job Description in specific terms.

All staff are expected:

- To comply with the University's Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities policies in the performance of your duties.
- To take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of yourself and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work.
- To co-operate with The Open University in ensuring as far as is necessary, that Statutory Requirements, Codes of Practice, University Policies and Departmental Health and Safety arrangements are complied with.
- To demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.

Essential Criteria

- Relevant qualification in management and/or advice and guidance, or equivalent professional management experience
- Proven experience managing multi-channel customer-focused services, including workload planning, workforce management, and operational performance delivery.
- Strong leadership experience including recruitment, staff development, performance management, operational performance planning, and maintaining quality standards.
- Skilled in managing the provision of information with a commitment to excellent customer service and continuous improvement.

- Highly developed interpersonal, communication, and presentation skills, with the ability to influence, build credibility, and adapt approach to different audiences and situations.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and teams to achieve organisational objectives and service targets.
- Strong problem-solving and decision-making abilities, resolving issues quickly, effectively, and with sensitivity.
- Excellent organisational, time-management, and self-motivation skills, with the ability to work independently within established systems and procedures.
- Numerically competent with the ability to interpret complex management information.
- Highly proficient in IT systems, including Microsoft Office applications and databases, with the ability to pick up new systems quickly and a commitment to continuous professional development.
- Ability to carry out the role in a way that is consistent with equality legislation and the University's values and relevant policies.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of working in an educational environment.
- Understanding of business continuity planning and management.
- Understanding of the higher education sector and the place of part-time, distance learning within it.