

1 Advertisement

Post Title: Academic School Casework Officer

School/department: Office for Student Complaints, Conduct & Funding
Student Experience Division

Hours: Full time hours considered up to a maximum of 36.5 hours

Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

Location: Brighton, Falmer Campus United Kingdom. Hybrid working with minimum 50% on campus working with up to 50% remote/home working permitted.

Contract: Permanent

Reference:20189

Salary: starting at £28,131, to £31,411 per annum, pro rata if part time

Placed on: 04 April 2023

Closing date: 25 April 2023. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

Expected Interview date: To be confirmed

Expected start date: As soon as possible

The Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding Team is excited to offer an opportunity for an additional caseworker to join our team. This role will be part of a team of four caseworkers providing dedicated support to assigned academic schools within the University. The University's four academic-clusters are: Business; Media Arts and Humanities; Sciences; and Social Sciences.

You will possess strong analytical and communication skills, with the capability to work with regulations and procedures. You will also have demonstrable experience at working proactively with a range of parties, applying your skills in an environment where resolutions are being sought, ideally within a Higher Education setting.

The post will be responsible for responding, monitoring and progressing cases in their assigned clusters in accordance with agreed guidelines, using a risk-based approach, and with sensitivity to the health, safety and wellbeing of those involved in all cases. The role-holders will be process-driven, with a compassionate mindset, and provide high-quality administrative support in relation to the following workstreams:

- Student Complaints
- Student Discipline
- Academic Appeals
- Exceptional Circumstances claims

The role-holders will provide efficient and effective support to the Head of Service and Student Casework Managers in the delivery of the Office's portfolios, and the development of student compliance functions / policy / procedures within Student Support Services. Further, to provide advice and guidance to Schools of Study and other Professional Services Divisions on the application of policies and procedures on such matters.

Please contact Joseph Mullin (j.mullin@sussex.ac.uk) for informal enquiries.

For full details and how to apply see our [vacancies page](#)

The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

Please note: The University requires that work undertaken for the University is performed from the UK.

2. The School / Division

The Directorate for the Student Experience provide support services focused on improving the student experience, both to students and colleagues in schools and departments.

Our services include:

- academic appeals and student complaints
- student registration exam timetabling and e-assessment
- management of University Education Committee
- business management of University quality assurance processes
- student progress and assessment
- central support and coordination for academic programme development
- external partnerships
- academic policy and procedures, including assessment regulations
- timetabling of teaching and managing room bookings
- maintaining student records (current and past) and management of registration
- production of student transcripts and degree certificates
- management information
- support for teaching and learning for staff and students
- technology-enhanced learning
- UKVI compliance.

The Office for Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding comprises of key student-facing functions which include process, procedural, regulatory and administrative activity. It also covers student complaints, student conduct and exceptional circumstances together with the administration of bursary and hardship disbursement.

Please see also: <https://staff.sussex.ac.uk/us/services/student-experience>

3. Job Description

Post:	Academic School Casework Officer
Department:	Office for Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding
Section/Unit/School:	Student Experience
Location:	Bramber House, Falmer Campus with remote working permitted up to 50%.
Grade:	5
Responsible to:	Head of Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding
Responsible for:	n/a

Job Purpose

The Academic Schools Casework Officer will be responsible for responding, monitoring and progressing cases in their assigned cluster accordance to agreed guidelines, using a risk-based approach and with sensitivity to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of those involved in all cases. Proactivity and a demonstrable ability to engage with a range of stakeholders both internally and externally is paramount in order to contribute to the division's objective of enhancing the student experience. The role-holder will be process driven, but yet compassionate, and will provide high-quality administrative support across the department's portfolios.

Consequently, the role-holder will provide efficient and effective support to the Student Casework Managers in the delivery of the Office's portfolios, and the development of student compliance functions / policy / procedures within Student Engagement and Achievement. Further, to provide advice and guidance to Schools of Study and other Professional Services Divisions on the application of policies and procedures on such matters.

Key working relationships include the Deputy Director (Student Experience), the Director for the Student Experience, Student Advice and Guidance, School Staff (particularly School Directors of Student Experience and Directors of Teaching and Learning).

Key Duties and Responsibilities

- Undertake day-to-day administration of Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline work, ensuring that cases are progressed sensitively, with a risk-based approach and with a key focus on ensuring student health, safety and wellbeing
- Progress and review cases in accordance with published procedures, processes and regulation (within agreed guidelines) and support those investigating in the handling of cases.
- To support the Student Casework Managers and the Head of Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding and wider team in the development of fair, transparent and effective Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline policies and procedures, and, to provide administrative support where necessary across these areas.
- Support colleagues carrying out investigations.

- To administer processes for Exceptional Circumstances claims in liaison with appropriate Academic and Professional Services staff, and students as required.
- To undertake other duties as required from time-to-time.

3.1. Undertake day-to-day administration of Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline work, ensuring that cases are progressed sensitively, with a risk-based approach and with a key focus on ensuring student health, safety and wellbeing

- 3.1.1. To provide high-quality administrative support in Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline casework, including drafting responses and making recommendations where required, to progress a given case as well as ensuring accurate record keeping.
- 3.1.2. Receive reports and complaints and where needed draft initial risk assessments using an agreed template so that Casework Managers can ascertain the level of risk / seriousness of a case, and consider if any initial action should be recommended.
- 3.1.3. Initiate support for senior staff in the consideration and implementation of any initial actions by flagging any high-risk cases, drafting letters and reports, undertaking correspondence with parties involved, keeping a log of all communications, and any other actions as required.
- 3.1.4. Proactively communicate with both parties sensitively, and in a timely way, keeping students informed of action and next steps where appropriate, and ensuring that health, safety and wellbeing is considered at all times.
- 3.1.5. Support Casework Managers and senior staff by proactively seeking updates on cases from internal and external sources and providing updates when appropriate throughout the duration of a case.

3.2. Progress and review cases in accordance with published procedures, processes and regulation (within agreed guidelines) and support those investigating in the handling of cases.

- 3.2.1. Create case files on the guidance of the Student Casework Manager when incident reports / complaints / appeals come in, and identify and collate relevant information and evidence. Progressing such cases within agreed guidelines. To support Casework Managers in the identification of appropriate Investigating Officers / complaint handlers (at level 2 /3) within appropriate areas in accordance with the nature /seriousness of the case and corresponding procedure / regulation.
- 3.2.2. Manage communications with Investigating Officers / complaint handlers (at level 2 / 3) throughout the process, ensuring they receive information on cases and briefings on procedural steps throughout the duration of cases.
- 3.2.3. Arrange disciplinary meetings with Investigating Officers, Student Disciplinary Panels, Student Disciplinary Appeal Committees and meetings with complaint handlers and parties involved where necessary, including the preparation of case files for decision makers, and act as Secretary to those meetings including drafting case outcomes.
- 3.2.4. Co-ordinate the disclosure of reports and outcomes under direction, and advise Casework Manager on cases which require disclosure to internal colleagues and external organisations, in accordance with relevant procedures.

- 3.2.5. Develop and maintain databases and filing systems to facilitate the efficient management of cases and to ensure an accurate log of all cases in compliance with University governance and records management. Ensure efficient adoption and effective use of IT systems as appropriate.
 - 3.2.6. Undertake all of the above in a timely manner, and with due consideration for privacy and confidentiality.
 - 3.2.7. Provide guidance and support to other Academic and Professional Services staff in relation to procedures and regulations in these areas.
- 3.3. To support the Student Casework Managers and the Head of Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding and wider team in the development of fair, transparent and effective Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline policies and procedures, and, to provide administrative support where necessary across these areas.
- 3.3.1. Disseminate information and guidance on developments within the Higher Education sector in relation to these areas of work. Continuously review procedures and systems and identify and recommend improvements as necessary to meet University requirements.
 - 3.3.2. Maintain and update a web presence that accurately reflects regulations and procedures in these areas of work to ensure accessibility and transparency. Review and maintain all information, procedures and documents contained in the web pages, to include improving the experience of those using these pages so far as is practicable.
 - 3.3.3. To support and contribute to updating policies and procedures by co-ordinating reviews, researching best practice, and providing assistance with consultations and drafting guidance.
 - 3.3.4. Assist in the preparation of papers for committees, to include drafting reports, collating information from a variety of sources and presenting in an accessible and logical manner.
 - 3.3.5. Act as Committee Secretary to meetings as required and to take responsibility for the progression of business, development work between meetings, and the drafting and circulation of minutes as required.
 - 3.3.6. Compile, redact and draft information required by external organisations such as the Office for the Independent Adjudicator.
- 3.4. Support colleagues carrying out investigations
- 3.4.1. Maintain the list of Investigating Officers and relevant information relating to training and case involvement.
 - 3.4.2. Act as a first point of contact for any queries from staff in relation to procedures or regulations. Provide guidance and support as required, and escalate more complex requests to the Casework Managers.
 - 3.4.3. Support Casework Managers in the organisation of all training and quarterly meetings for Investigating Officers and complaints / appeals related training to ensure all

required training is completed before engagement in the process. Assess such events and recommend improvements for future sessions.

3.5. To administer processes for Exceptional Circumstances claims in liaison with appropriate Academic and Professional Services staff, and students as required.

3.5.1. To administer Exceptional Circumstances claims notifying students of decisions and ensuring implementation of the Regulations, as required.

3.6. To undertake other duties as required from time-to-time

3.6.1. To take personal responsibility for continuing professional development and to ensure appropriate engagement in national networks as required.

3.6.2. Some occasional evening and weekend work will be required.

3.6.3. Additional duties appropriate to the grade and as required to support service delivery.

4. Person Specification

4.1. Essential (General)

- Education to A' Level or equivalent qualification
- Excellent interpersonal and customer service skills, diplomacy and persuasiveness.
- Good analytical skills
- Ability to take the initiative and be pro-active
- Demonstrable service orientation together with a "client/customer" focus.
- Commitment to learn new skills and to keep abreast developments in the sector relevant to the post

4.2. Essential (Role Specific)

- Knowledge of university (or equivalent) regulations / procedures such as complaints, appeals or discipline/investigatory procedures.
- Experience of dealing with student complaints, appeals or disciplinary claims in a higher education or equivalent environment.
- Ability to confidently express sensitive and complex points to peers and a range of staff across an organisation.
- A proven track record of working collaboratively and effectively with a range of staff (at all levels and with different functions/function areas)
- Ability to prioritise tasks and meet deadlines.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, the ability to write to a high standard of accuracy and detail.

4.3. Desirable

- A graduate/ equivalent qualification or experience
- Experience of working in a legal environment
- Experience of developing systems and business processes to improve service delivery.
- A good understanding of current policy and climate in Higher Education (both nationally and internationally); along with an understanding of the regulatory issues and current challenges relevant to Higher Education.