1 Advertisement

Post Title: Accommodation Services Manager  
School/department: Estates, Facilites and Commercial services  
Hours: full time - Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).  
Contract: permanent  
Reference: 5078  
Salary: starting at £33,797 to £40,322 per annum, pro rata if part time  
Placed on: 09 December 2020  
Closing date: 13 January 2021 Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.  
Expected Interview date: 25 January 2021  
Expected start date: tbc  

This vacancy is only open to those currently employed by the University.  

The University of Sussex is seeking an accomplished and experienced professional to join the Housing Services Management Team to lead, support and develop our housing team managers and to take ownership of the day to day running of the friendly Accommodation Office within Housing Services, whilst shaping our customer service excellence approach. This is an opportunity to make your mark in the University sector in a caring, and well supported department.  

Taking the team with you, caring for and seeing the potential in everyone is essential.  

Our ideal candidate will have outstanding interpersonal skills, extensive team management experience, proven business administration skills and a strong resonance with the vision and values of the University.  

Ideally, you will also have experience of working in a Housing Environment and have specialist knowledge of areas of the Landlord and Tenant Act. What is more essential however, is your ability to champion our service, care about our customers (students, residents, landlords, parents, partners, community groups and internal colleagues), maintain high levels of accuracy and attention to detail, be customer focused and personable.  

The role-holder will work collaboratively with partners, internally and externally to oversee and coordinate the day-to-day work of the Housing Services teams.  

You will join the service at an exciting time for student accommodation at Sussex, as we continue to refresh and expand our housing portfolio of over 5000 on and off campus bed spaces whilst safeguarding a quality student housing experience.  

Excellent leadership skills, initiative and the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, are essential, as is the ability to solve problems and make recommendations.  

A relevant degree or equivalent work experience in a Housing environment is essential, and a recognised qualification / background in either Housing, or people management/customer service is desirable.  

Please contact Mrs. Shelley Attfield S.l.attfield@sussex.ac.uk for informal enquiries.
The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

2. The School / Division

The University Housing Services team is responsible for managing the application and allocation process for approximately 5,000 bed-spaces (and rising), all of which is let on a self-catering basis. The majority of the housing is located on the Falmer campus, but there are also a number of properties in Brighton & Hove.

The Housing Services Team also provides an excellent and comprehensive package of support to assist students who will be living in the Private Sector with advice and guidance in navigating their way through the private rental market, providing support and assistance in a friendly and student focused way.

The University has signed up to the UUK Code of Practice for the Management of Student Housing. Emphasis is placed on assisting students in a professional and caring manner.

3. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: Accommodation Services Manager

Department: Estates, Facilities and Commercial Services

Section/Unit/School: Housing Services

Location: Housing Office, Level 2 Bramber House

Grade: 7

Responsible to: Assistant Head of Housing & Commercial Services

Responsible for: 4 FTE staff, 3 managers and 1 Housing Officer

The role-holder will work collaboratively with partners, internally and externally to lead, develop, support and coordinate the day-to-day work of the three teams within Housing Services.

To manage the team Managers, supporting and developing them to reach their full potential and to ensure the smooth running of the Housing Office to ensure that processes operate effectively and that information and advice regarding housing both on and off campus is accurate, timely and appropriate. The role-holder will lead on the service customer service approach, and ensure compliance to statutory requirements, including the UUK Code inspection and other health and safety requirements.
Specific Duties:

Management of resources

- Be the institutional first point of contact for all housing customer service enquiries, related advice and systems.
- Direct Line-manage 3 FTE Housing Managers and 1 Housing Officer designated to deal with tenancy management and breaches of the Licence to Occupy. The number of direct and indirect reports may increase as work levels fluctuate.
- Manage the daily operation of the University’s on and off-campus housing operational processes, driving forward customer service excellence in all aspects.
- Support senior managers with service forecasting.
- Develop and maintain credible statistics relating to the Housing service.
- Be responsible for ensuring that technical housing advice, particularly about housing tenancy agreements, is accurate and up-to-date.
- Provide advice and support to the Tenancy Management Housing Officer and ensure that breaches of the Licence to Occupy are dealt with in a swift and appropriate manner, taking into account current legislation and Housing Act law.
- Work closely with colleagues from Student Services, Sussex Students’ Union and Sussex Estates and Facilities (SEF) to coordinate and enhance the housing student experience.
- Lead the recruitment process for new staff to the team.
- Contribute to all aspects of service areas, which can be under pressure at certain times of the year.
- Attend occasional evening meetings with community groups, and represent Sussex at other private sector forums.
- Develop a credible rapport with partners, including the City Council, Landlords, Letting Agents and regulators.

Planning and development of information

- Develop and keep updated an annual housing operational plan to ensure that all key tasks and objectives are completed on time and delivered to a highly professional standard
- Forward plan team attendance at evening community meetings, making sure resources are provided well in advance
- Proactively develop processes for information sharing in line with GDPR regulations
- Oversee the development of and provision of regularly updated management statistics
• Work with the Systems and Administration Manager to schedule in system upgrade and business process improvements to maximise effectiveness

Customer experience

• Map the Accommodation customer experience, from enquirer through to applicant, identifying the communications that are received at each point in the journey and interaction with each system, to make recommendations for development
• Build relationships with stakeholders, champion our service, and welcome feedback and challenge others constructively to get things done effectively
• Develop buy in from internal and external contacts to re-shape activity to ensure our customer service approach enhance their experiences

Be an expert in the field and maintain up to date sector knowledge

• Drive forward excellence in our Housing service and contribute to an expanding, successful and student focused Housing service
• Keep abreast of relevant changes in the Higher Education and Housing sector which may impact on student accommodation
• Attend appropriate events and training in order to keep abreast of sector developments and expand networks
• Lead on the continual development and improvement of the Housing team social media presence
• Maintain good relationships with external organisations and collaborate on projects that will benefit our students

Work effectively in the team

• Understand how Housing Services activity contributes to the University’s strategy for growth and operational activity
• Lead Managers and Officers to support and inform service delivery
• Encourage and support best practice via support to staff, training, presentations, workshops and personal advice
• Work closely with relevant colleagues to provide specialist advice regarding student accommodation
• Ensure that the university databases are used in compliance with data protection legislation and good practice.

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.
Further Information

This job description sets out the current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.

Because of pressure of work, it will not be possible for the post holder to take more than 2 days annual leave from the middle of August until the middle of October each year.

There are a small number of weekend days that the post holder will be required to work throughout each year.

### 4. Person Specification

**Person Specification:**

**SKILLS / ABILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience of leadership of multiple teams with differing objectives and priorities</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of understanding HR policies and procedures and executing them consistently to continually improve team performance.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate a proven ability in developing effective office processes to improve standards and procedures</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to work methodically and maintain the highest standards of accuracy and consistency, both in your work and in that of your teams.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate well-developed administrative and organisational skills to manage several concurrent projects and meet tight deadlines.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate a proven ability to solve operational challenges as they arise</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An ability to present with confidence to a range of audiences.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High standards of written and oral communication including presentation and written skills.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A thorough working knowledge of MS Office (MS Word, Excel in particular). General IT literacy and familiarity with the internet is also essential.</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of working in a housing environment, with a sound working knowledge of Landlord and Tenant legislation</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of managing cases of ASB and breaches of tenancies and have a good working knowledge of legislation that covers ASB in relation to Housing</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Higher Education trends and demands including private sector housing issues and their impact on students and landlords</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### QUALIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant degree or equivalent qualification or sector experience</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of a relevant professional institute</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND CIRCUMSTANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An excellent team leader who is also able to work independently and display initiative and creativity.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An approachable person, who customers and team members can turn to for advice and support.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to establish good working relationships with colleagues, and communicate with specialists and non-specialists.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to prioritise workload appropriately for both yourself and your teams</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated November 2020