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

Student Experience

The Student Experience Directorate provides a range of administrative, academic and support services focussed on improving the student experience, both directly to students and also to colleagues in Schools and Departments.

Key services

- Careers and Employability Centre
- Chaplaincy
- Counselling, Health and Wellbeing
- International Student Support
- Student Life Centre
- Student Support Unit
- Sussex Regional ACCESS Centre
- Student progress and administration
- Technology and enhanced learning
- Registration, assessment, compliance
- Academic quality
- Student experience

The Student Support Unit – STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Student Support Unit is a team of 10 highly skilled disability advisors who also have specialisms in a range of different areas. Together, sharing knowledge and skills they support students with SpLDs, disability and long term health conditions and mental health and autism spectrum conditions. Colleagues also work with professional services staff and academics across the university to provide training and information.

3. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: Disability Advisor (Mental Health and Autism Spectrum)

Department: Student Experience

Section/Unit/School: Student Support Unit

Location: Bramber House

Grade: 7

Responsible to: Associate Director Student Engagement and Achievement

Responsible for:

Job Purpose and Overview: To contribute to a professional and specialist advice and guidance service to students [with disabilities, specific learning differences, medium to long term health conditions and mental health and autism spectrum conditions] to enable students to access their studies successfully and encourage academic progress and student retention.
To contribute to the work of the Directorate in the formulation, promotion, delivery, monitoring and review of University policies and procedures regarding students [with disabilities, specific learning differences, medium to long term health conditions and mental health and autism spectrum conditions] to ensure legal and contractual obligations under equality legislation.

Main accountabilities and responsibility areas

- To provide a professional and specialist advice and information service to disabled students and those with mental health and autism spectrum conditions. This service is to be provided for students and also to potential students interested in applying to the University of Sussex.

- To accurately interpret, and keep up to date with, all relevant legislation relating to disabled students and those with specific learning differences to ensure that accurate and appropriate advice is offered at all times.

- To maintain a case work portfolio providing continuing support for individual applicants and students as appropriate. This may involve regular reviews and updates of provision, case conferences with academic staff and other professional services directorates to ensure that students are able to access their studies effectively throughout their time at University.

- To organise and prioritise a client caseload; to routinely monitor and review casework, taking into account any urgent action required and mandatory deadlines for submission of applications and to take responsibility for deciding when to invoke peer or management supervision.

- To liaise with the University’s academic and support services regarding the learning needs of students with including the provision of special examination arrangements and reasonable adjustments in respect of teaching, learning and assessment.

- To identify circumstances where it is necessary to breach the Services Code of Confidentiality and clients who are at risk of harming themselves or others and to invoke emergency procedures or referrals where necessary ensuring that duty of care responsibilities are discharged at all times.

- To offer advice on individual support plans students and referrals to an approved National Access Centre, to enable students to apply for Disabled Students Allowance or other relevant funding to cover their support needs.

- To keep thorough, accurate and up to date client case notes ensuring compliance with the Student Support Service’s Code of Confidentiality, professional standards and the Data Protection Act.

- To actively use systems to record statistical information on clients and casework and to keep thorough, accurate and up to date client case notes ensuring compliance with the Student Support Service Code of Confidentiality, professional standards and the Data Protection Act.

Major deliverables, projects, processes, responsibility areas etc.

- To ensure that all students who have declared a disability, long term health condition or SpLD receive the appropriate level of support in line with their needs under the

• To liaise with the Administration Team and/or external providers to arrange a diagnostic assessment (SpLD) or non-medical support personnel, e.g. note-takers, communication support workers, mentors for disabled students

• To liaise with community mental health teams, local authority social services and other relevant agencies in the support of students with diagnosed/suspected mental health / autism spectrum conditions.

• To liaise with the Administration Team and/or external providers to arrange a diagnostic assessment (SpLD) or non-medical support personnel, e.g. note-takers, communication support workers, mentors for disabled students

• To liaise with community mental health teams, local authority social services and other relevant agencies in the support of students with diagnosed/suspected mental health / autism spectrum conditions.

• To be a recognised advisory points of contact for university staff/stakeholders when dealing with critical incidents / student crises.

• To liaise with appropriate academic and any other relevant staff to ensure that any anticipatory and reasonable adjustments required by students are implemented, in accordance with equality legislation. [This could include liaison with other professional service directorates and faculty staff, offering advice and recommendations on physical accessibility, appropriate format of teaching materials and any other practical considerations in order to ensure that individual applicants and students can access their studies].

• To liaise with appropriate academic and any other relevant staff to ensure that any anticipatory and reasonable adjustments required by students are implemented, in accordance with equality legislation. [This could include liaison with other professional service directorates and faculty staff, offering advice and recommendations on physical accessibility, appropriate format of teaching materials and any other practical considerations in order to ensure that individual applicants and students can access their studies].

• To liaise with appropriate academic and any other relevant staff to support widening participation and access, academic progress and student retention.

• To support and contribute to training for colleagues in the Directorate and schools around reasonable adjustments and the adaptation of materials as appropriate to ensure access to up to date and detailed information about support and provision.

• To contribute to promoting good practice to ensure compliance and improvements in provision for students

• To represent the University of Sussex at regional and national events and professional interest groups in order to influence local and national policy and decision making regarding students in higher education.

• To undertake any other reasonable duties and responsibilities as may be reasonably expected as part of this role and in line with the grade.

4. Person Specification

Essential Criteria

Skills and Competencies

Degree or equivalent
Experience of providing advice to students on disability related matters
Able to maintain clear professional boundaries
Ability to manage a large caseload and prioritise work
Well-developed interview, case working and practitioner skills
Competence in accurate record keeping and report writing.

**Knowledge Areas**

Substantial knowledge of issues affecting disabled students and those with mental health conditions undertaking higher education

**Previous experience**

Extensive experience of supporting people with mental health conditions in a professional context

Proven ability to articulate complex legislative or regulatory issues to a range of audiences

Ability to apply knowledge of current approaches to supporting disabled students and students with mental health conditions

Ability to remain calm and professional within a busy environment when dealing with clients with various challenges and in difficult situations

**Professional qualities**

Organisational abilities, including an ability to manage priorities and workloads

Highly developed inter personal, communication and negotiation skills

Literate in IT and reporting tools

Understanding and commitment to the importance of equality of opportunity within a student support service environment.

An enthusiastic, can-do approach to supporting students and promoting the services and the Directorate.

**Desirable criteria**

Professional / vocational qualification in mental health related field

Ability to develop and deliver training to staff

A good knowledge of the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) scheme and the DSA Quality Assurance Framework