A. Advertisement

Post Title: Casework Officer
Division/Department: Student Experience / OSCAR (Office for Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations)
Hours: Full Time. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).
Contract: Permanent
Reference: 6360
Salary: Starting at £25,941 to £30,046 per annum
Placed on: 4 August 2021
Closing date: 25 August 2021. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.
Expected Interview date: 6 September 2021
Expected start date: Immediate

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

The OSCAR Team is excited to offer an opportunity for a professional to join our team of caseworkers. You will possess strong analytical skills and be proficient at working with regulations/procedures. You will also have demonstrable experience at working proactively with students and engaging in environments where resolutions are being sought, ideally within a Higher Education setting.

This role offers you the opportunity to make a real impact and to contribute to a high-performing team. Your proactivity and experience of engaging with a range of stakeholders will play a key role in contributing to the division’s objective of enhancing the student experience.

The Casework Officer will be responsible for responding to, monitoring and progressing assigned cases (in accordance with agreed guidelines). The role-holder will be process driven, with a compassionate mindset, and provide high-quality administrative support across OSCAR's portfolios. In the first instance, this will be focused on complaints and Exceptional Circumstances casework.

Due to the remit of OSCAR's work, the successful applicant will have a unique opportunity to develop professionally by deepening their knowledge across a range of diverse portfolios. OSCAR's key portfolios include:

- Student Complaints
- Liaison with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)
- Academic Appeals
- Student Discipline
- Student Immigration Compliance (UKVI)
- Exceptional Circumstances claims

The Casework Officer will report to the Casework Manager. They will be part of a wider team supporting the Head of OSCAR with additional guidance provided by a further Casework Manager and UKVI Compliance Officer.
Key working relationships include the Associate Director for Student Engagement (Student Experience), the Director for the Student Experience, Student Life Centre, Student Support Unit and School Staff (particularly School Directors of Student Experience and Directors of Teaching and Learning).

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.*

### B. 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 Teaching and Learning 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.
C. Job Description

Post: Casework Officer

Department: OSCAR (Office for Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations)

Division: Student Experience

Location: Bramber House, Falmer Campus

Grade: 5

Responsible to: Casework Manager

Responsible for: n/a

1. Job Purpose:

The Casework Officer’s purpose is to:

- be responsible for responding to, monitoring and progressing cases in accordance to agreed guidelines.
- be process driven with a compassionate mindset
- provide effective administrative support to the Casework Manager, as part of a wider contribution to assist the Head of OSCAR in the delivery of the office’s portfolios.
- provide high-quality administrative support across OSCAR’s portfolios, when required and as appropriate.
- Provide advice and guidance to Academic Schools, Professional Services and students on the application of policies and procedures, escalating and seeking guidance from senior staff where appropriate.

The role holder must apply proactivity to their work methodology, confidently engage with a range of stakeholders, apply strong analytical skills and communicate effectively in writing. In doing so, the role holder will contribute to the division's objective of enhancing the student experience.

2. Key Duties and Responsibilities

2.1. To support OSCAR senior staff in the progression of fair, transparent and effective casework in Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/ Student Discipline/ OIA. This includes providing support in the continuous development of the associated policies and procedures.

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

2.3. To support OSCAR senior staff in the development of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with student immigration requirements, including the Office of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
2.4. To work collaboratively and provide administrative support as part of the wider team, as required. To develop and maintain office systems and business processes to support the work of the Office.

2.5. To undertake research and analysis and draft reports as required, under the direction of senior staff within the OSCAR Team.

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

3.3. Key Duties and Responsibilities (in detail)

1. To support OSCAR senior staff in the progression of fair, transparent and effective casework in Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Student Discipline/OIA. This includes providing support in the continuous development of the associated policies and procedures.

   1.1. To provide high-quality administrative support in Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline/OIA casework, including drafting responses and making recommendations where required, to progress a given case as well as ensuring accurate record keeping.

   1.2. To support OSCAR senior staff in updating policies and procedures by coordinating reviews, researching best practice, and providing assistance with consultations and drafting guidance. To support implementation of new policies and procedures by updating web pages and documents and providing other assistance where required.

   1.3. To provide advice and support to staff and students on Student Complaints/Academic Appeals/Discipline procedures, escalating or seeking advice from senior staff where appropriate.

   1.4. To assist with the management of meetings and panels relating to Student Discipline, Complaints and Academic Appeals, and to act as clerk to meetings and panels where necessary, taking minutes and writing reports.

   1.5. To ensure that actions arising from panels and meetings are managed effectively, including accurate record keeping and effective dissemination to appropriate staff.

   1.6. To ensure students receive timely communication on the progress of cases and to respond to queries.

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

   2.1. To administer Exceptional Circumstances claims in liaison with OSCAR senior staff, and, the Associate Director for Student Engagement and Achievement (Student Experience). To notify students of decisions and ensuring implementation of the Regulations as required.

   2.2. To support OSCAR senior staff in in updating policies and procedures by coordinating reviews, researching best practice, and providing assistance with consultations and drafting guidance. To support implementation of new policies and procedures by updating web pages and documents and providing other assistance where required.

   2.3. To provide advice and support to staff and students in this area, escalating or seeking advice from senior staff where appropriate.
3. To support OSCAR senior staff in the development of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with student immigration requirements, including the Office of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

3.1. To support OSCAR senior staff in the development of policies and procedures to meet internal and external stakeholder requirements relating to UKVI compliance.

3.2. To support the staff in the Professional Services and Schools of Study in their preparations for UKVI reviews and audits, and to support course coordinators and other School staff in developing and implementing procedures (such as attendance monitoring), particularly in relation to the student visa route.

3.3. To support the delivery of the University’s UKVI compliance objectives, as directed by OSCAR senior personnel, and work collaboratively with staff responsible for student visa related matters.

3.4. To project manage specific initiatives as required, under senior staff direction.

3.5. To work in partnership with School colleagues, members of the wider Student Experience and Professional Services teams as required.

4. To work collaboratively and provide administrative support as part of the wider team, as required. To develop and maintain office systems and business processes to support the work of the Office.

4.1. To work as directed to establish and maintain information on the internal and external University’s website to meet stakeholder requirements; ensuring information is accurate, concise and provided in a timely manner to comply with institutional standards of publication and to meet UKVI, OIAHE and QAA requirements.

4.2. To provide administrative support to the wider team relating to UKVI compliance, Student Complaints, Academic Appeals, Student Discipline and Exceptional Circumstance claims. To advise and liaise with Schools and other Professional Services Divisions on these matters.

4.3. To manage information and business systems in support of the work of the Office; to improve service delivery to colleagues in Schools and other Professional Services and to lead developments and improvements in these areas as required, under senior staff direction.

4.4. To engage proactively in the Office’s systems and business continuous improvement drive, as appropriate for the post position and grade.

5. To undertake research and analysis and draft reports as required, under the director of senior staff within the OSCAR Team.

5.1. To undertake research and analysis as directed to support the work of the Office.

5.2. To support senior OSCAR staff and wider senior personnel by making early drafts for case responses/ research findings/ revision or establishing policies and procedures.

5.3. To take personal responsibility for continuing professional development and to ensure appropriate engagement in national networks as required.
6. To undertake other duties as required from time-to-time.

D. Person Specification

1. Skills and Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of developing/maintaining systems and business processes to improve service delivery.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent interpersonal and customer service skills, diplomacy and persuasiveness.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent oral and written communication skills, the ability to write to a high standard of accuracy and detail.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to confidently express points to peers and members of senior management.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong analytical skills.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education to 'A Level' or equivalent qualification</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A graduate; equivalent qualification or experience</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of university regulations/procedures such as complaints, appeals or discipline.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good understanding of current policy and climate in HE both nationally and internationally; along with an understanding of the regulatory issues and current challenges relevant to HE.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A proven track record of working collaboratively and effectively with colleagues at all levels and from different functional areas</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of dealing with student complaint or academic appeal claims, in a higher education or further education environment</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of dealing with student immigration compliance or student disciplinary regulation compliance, in a higher education or further education environment</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of working in a legal and/or regulatory environment</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Personal Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to take the initiative and be pro-active</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to prioritise tasks and meet deadlines.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrable service orientation together with a “client/customer” focus.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to learn new skills and to keep abreast developments in the sector relevant to the post.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>