

1 Advertisement

Post Title: Head of Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding

School/department: Division of Student Experience, Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding

Hours: Full time or part time hours considered up to 1.0 FTE . Requests for [flexible working](#) options will be considered (subject to business need).

Contract: permanent

Ref: 7761

Salary: Starting at £42,149 to £50,296 per annum, pro rata if part time

Placed on: 29 March 2022

Closing date: 06 May 2022. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

Expected interview date: to be confirmed

Expected start date: As soon as possible

The Directorate for the Student Experience is seeking to appoint an experienced professional to the role of the Head of Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding.

An interesting and varied role, you will lead and manage an effective and pro-active institutional service responsible for the provision of advice, information and investigatory casework relating to student conduct, and exceptional circumstances whilst ensuring the smooth and effective working of a busy student funding team responsible for the distribution of key funds such as SFE related funding and hardship funds, amongst others.

You will have experience of working within regulatory frameworks and be able to demonstrate a deep and broad understanding and operational knowledge of the application of regulations, as well as issues in relation to student cases and the intricacies of Student Funding in the Higher Education sector.

The role holder will be able to work collaboratively and proactively with a range with a range of colleagues and services on campus as well as with statutory and voluntary organisations.

An innovative, risk conscious approach to the management of the department's approach to compliance matters, sound judgement and diplomacy, as well as the ability to manage business processes in a complex organisational structure are essential attributes required of the post holder.

Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to build relationships, respect confidentiality, and be able to navigate complex situations in a sensitive and professional manner. Highly developed written and oral communication skills with meticulous attention to detail are key.

For full details please see the Person Specification and Job Description. For an informal conversation about the role please email w.j.tozer@sussex.ac.uk

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.

Job Description

Job Title:	Head of Student Complaints, Conduct and Funding
Grade:	Grade 8
School/Division:	Directorate for the Student Experience
Location:	Bramber House
Responsible to:	Director for Student Support Services
Direct reports:	Student Casework Manager, Student Funds Manager and x4 Academic School Casework Officers
Key contacts:	Colleagues across all schools and professional service areas. General Counsel, Student Experience, Alumni, Housing and Security. National organisations including Student Finance England, OFS and NASMA.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 1 To provide leadership and effective management of the University Student Complaints ensuring the timely production of reports, effective liaison with complainants, and advising Schools and Professional Service Departments**
- 2 To provide leadership and effective management of the Student Misconduct and exceptional circumstances process translating the impact of new statutory requirements and national developments in student casework in HE into appropriate action plans and operational approaches.**
- 3 To lead the Funding Team and compliant and effective delivery of all University means tested funding schemes, hardship funding and US Federal Loan administration. Ensure effective management and mechanisms of a range of Funding provisions including University schemes, Hardship funds and US Federal Loans, ensuring compliance with the US Government and other relevant financial regulations;**
- 5. To initiate, lead and structure the ongoing development and implementation of relevant policies and procedures and act as the University's expert in these areas. This includes reviewing processes, procedural documents, regulations and legislation, consulting widely on implications (including with staff within Legal Services) and ensuring effective implementation through presentations, publications, seminars and a detailed action plan**

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 To provide leadership and effective management of the University Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Service, ensuring the timely production of reports, effective liaison with complainants, and advising Schools and Professional Service Departments**

- 1.1 To lead the Student Complaints and Appeals Service, and to review and develop the University's Student Complaints Procedures in Accordance with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).
- 1.2 Identifying and managing statutory, institutional and reputational risks associated with student cases, and devising, implementing and revising mechanisms for their mitigation
- 1.3 To act as a primary point of contact for Schools and Professional Service Departments concerning the effective handling of complaints at preliminary stages and their escalation, and to work with Schools and Professional Services Departments to support and promote good practice in complaint handling.
- 1.4 To make a significant and sustained contribution to the development of a strong service- oriented culture in support of School and Professional Services student complaint handling promoting a reputation for effectiveness and fairness in this area.
- 1.5 To manage the teams casework load and act as a point of escalation for complex cases.

2 To provide leadership and effective management of the Student Misconduct and exceptional circumstances process translating the impact of new statutory requirements and national developments in student casework in HE into appropriate action plans and operational approaches.

- 2.1 Leading on the development and implementation of complex and sensitive processes and policies relating to student cases and to work with colleagues to ensure that cases are managed appropriately, reviewed and improvements to procedures implemented where appropriate.
- 2.2 Advising senior staff on cases and managing associated risk (s) gaining commitment and support for courses of action.
- 2.3 To work with colleagues in areas that focus on student wellbeing to ensure cases are managed, progressed and reviewed in a timely manner, sensitively and with due regard to relevant legislation and institutional risk.
- 2.4 To provide operational oversight on Exceptional Circumstances claims and to provide advice and guidance to staff on those matters and develop policies and procedures to support their effective delivery.
- 2.5 Liaising with external agencies including the police and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator where required on student cases.

3 To lead the Funding Team and compliant and effective delivery of all University means tested funding schemes, hardship funding and US Federal Loan administration. Ensure effective management and mechanisms of a range of Funding provisions including University schemes, Hardship funds and US Federal Loans, ensuring compliance with the US Government and other relevant financial regulations;

- 4.1 To maintain up to date knowledge of a wide range of relevant legislation, regulations, policies, and practices, relevant to the delivery of student information, advice and funding services;

Oversee and ensure effective running of all processes in relation to student funding so that all enquiries are answered to a high standard and all regular payments go out to students in a timely and effective manner

- 4.2 To develop and maintain links and work in cooperation with key internal stakeholders e.g. Alumni and the Development Office as well as local and regional agencies, and

other organisations involved in relevant areas of finance and student funding as appropriate

- 4.3 In conjunction with other members of the Student Services Division, to design protocols for information and advice giving and for setting standards of customer service;
- 4.4 To identify impact and evaluation measures as part of the Access and Participation Plan 20-25. Produce regular reports and monitoring of all student Funding provisions to provide guidance and management information related to effectiveness and impact of funding mechanisms.

4 To manage the development and implementation of relevant policies and procedures and act as the University's expert in this area. This includes reviewing processes, procedural documents, regulations and legislation, consulting widely on implications (including with staff within Legal Services) and ensuring effective implementation through presentations, publications, seminars and a detailed action plan.

- 4.1 Review, develop and improve upon efficient and effective quality assurance mechanisms for all student casework and funding processes.
- 4.2 Identify key areas for improvement and development in line with sector and government guidelines on all policies, processes, procedures and regulations within every aspect of the areas work
- 4.3 Develop and deliver training sessions and briefings for senior colleagues.
- 4.4 To have editorial responsibility for the standard, quality, relevance and accuracy of all information, advice and guidance (including online) for the team and lead any audits that fall within the remit of the team.

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 level of responsibility entailed.

Any other reasonable duty commensurate with the grade of the post.

Evening and weekend work will be required as part of a management team rota.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. A graduate or a substantial amount of relevant experience gained at an equivalent level
2. Excellent leadership skills with the ability to contribute positively as a team member, develop and foster teamwork in others, and ensure consistent, high achievement of goals.
3. Demonstrable ability to liaise effectively with a range of staff and to provide accurate advice with clarity and relevance to the circumstances under discussion.
4. Diplomacy and persuasiveness and the ability to influence staff at all levels.
5. Strong ability to prioritise and make decisions whilst working under pressure, at pace and working across organisational boundaries in a complex organisation.
6. Excellent ability in using IT systems

7. Demonstrable ability to use own initiative appropriately and using risk mitigation
8. Demonstrable ability of being self-motivated, with the ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines

ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA

Knowledge and Experience

1. Knowledge and understanding of current policy and the climate in HE both nationally and internationally; along with an understanding of the regulatory issues and current challenges relevant to HE
2. Knowledge of complaint handling and misconduct in higher education or gained in a similar role
3. **Strong and demonstrable knowledge of legislation and policy relating to relevant areas including student funding mechanisms**
4. Knowledge of external legislation that impacts on the areas of responsibility, including data protection and equalities legislation

Skills

5. Experience of assessing and managing risk.
6. Proven track record of managing complex processes and consistently deliver on time.
7. Highly developed written communication skills, including drafting of regulations, guidance and reports, correspondence to internal and external staff and agencies.
8. Excellent attention to detail
9. Ability to maintain strict confidentiality in all areas of work.
10. Sensitivity to the circumstances of students, including cultural awareness and an understanding of the lives of different groups of students.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. A postgraduate qualification or professional qualification
2. A legal qualification