

## 1 Advertisement

**Post Title:** Disability Advisor

**Department:** Division of Student Experience, Student Advice and Guidance

**Hours:** full-time hours considered up to 1 FTE

**Contract:** Permanent

**Reference:** 8895

**Salary:** Starting at £34,304 to £40,927 per annum

**Placed on:** 17 June 2022

**Closing date:** 06 July 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 Student Support Unit is looking to recruit a Disability Advisor to join a well-established and experienced team.

We seek to appoint an experienced professional to assess the needs of existing and prospective students with a range of disabilities, specific learning differences and mental health conditions, ensuring that support packages and reasonable adjustments are in place and implemented.

You will have sound knowledge and experience of working with people who have a range of disabilities but will also have a deep and thorough knowledge and experience working with people who have physical disabilities and with people who have visual and hearing impairments.

Equipped with this experience you have the ability to determine the suitability of reasonable adjustments and how to proactively support individuals within an education setting. You will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills, be able to develop professional relationships with colleagues across a large organisation, and contribute positively to the development of policies and procedures.

A strong team player, we are looking for a positive, proactive individual who can be flexible, responsive and willing to share their experience, knowledge and advice with immediate colleagues and more widely with the academic community to support all staff working with students with disabilities.

For full details please see the Person Specification and Job Description.

Please contact Mike Pudan by emailing [m.pudan@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:m.pudan@sussex.ac.uk) to arrange an informal conversation.

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.*

## **2. Division**

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

Please find further information regarding the division at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/schoolsandservices/professionalservices/student-experience>

## **3. Job Description**

**Job Description for the post of:** Disability Advisor

**Department:** Student Experience

**Section/Unit/School:** Student Advice and Guidance

**Location:** Bramber House/Student Centre

**Grade:** 7

**Responsible to:** Lead Disability Advisor, Head of Advice and Guidance

**Responsible for:** n/a

### **Job Purpose and Overview:**

- To contribute to a professional and specialist advice and guidance service for disabled students [with mental health conditions, physical disabilities, Specific Learning Differences, autism and long-term health conditions] that enables students to access their studies successfully and encourages academic progress and student retention.
- To maintain and support a caseload consisting primarily of students who have a physical disability, a long term health condition, and visual or hearing impairment.
- 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 and specific learning differences 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 students with specific learning differences. 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 casework 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 refer students who may have a specific learning difference for a diagnostic assessment to determine the cause of any difficulties they may be experiencing.
- To liaise with the University's academic and support services regarding the learning needs of students including the provision of examination arrangements and reasonable adjustments in respect of teaching, learning and assessment.
- To offer advice on individual support plans for 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 client's data 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 Equality Act 2010.
- To liaise with the Administration Team and /or external providers to arrange non-medical support personnel, e.g. note-takers, communication support workers, mentors for disabled students
- 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, the 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 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 be part of a collaborative response to a student in crisis
- 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.

#### **4. Person Specification**

##### **Essential Criteria**

##### ***Skills and Competencies***

First Degree or equivalent

Experience of advising users on disability-related matters

Able to maintain clear professional boundaries

Ability to manage a large caseload and prioritise work

Well-developed interview and case working skills

Competence in accurate record keeping and report writing.

##### ***Knowledge Areas***

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

Substantial knowledge of issues affecting disabled students undertaking higher education

##### ***Previous experience***

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 who have a physical disability and visual / hearing impairment

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

Experience of working with students in crisis

***Professional qualities***

Organisational abilities, including an ability to manage priorities and workloads

Highly developed interpersonal, 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**

Qualification related to supporting people with disabilities

Ability to develop and deliver training to staff

Experience working within a Higher Education setting