1 Advertisement

Post Title: Head of Student Engagement and Enhancement
School/department: Student Experience
Hours: Part time or Full time considered up to a maximum of 1 FTE. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).
Contract: Permanent
Reference: 6523
Salary: starting at £51,799 to £56,587 per annum, pro rata if part time
Placed on: 18 August 2021
Closing date: 10 September 2021. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.
Expected Interview date: TBC
Expected start date: As soon as possible

To help support the delivery of the University’s strategic framework, in particular with leading the implementation of the University’s strategy for the on-course success and progress strands (of our Access, Success and Progress programme as set out in our OfS approved Access and Participation Plan) and associated operational plans.

The post-holder will be responsible for the delivery of agreed objectives against the University’s OfS Access Agreement commitments overseeing the development of a number of major work strands including:

- The review of our existing on-course support and progress work, including benchmarking against key competitors; oversight of work in this area to support delivery of the University’s Access and Participation Plan objectives; lead work around key student transitions, support for major Student Experience projects such as the development of the Connector Programme (co-creation) development of a student award and working with colleagues to support retention, progression and attainment of underrepresented groups across the University.

An exciting and varied leadership role we are seeking an innovative, driven and passionate individual who can see, develop and deliver a vision through to completion. A multi-tasker who is able to work on multiple projects simultaneously whilst supporting a very talented team.

Key Working relationships: Students from across the University, Connectors in co-creation roles, Director for the Student Experience Development, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Education and Students, Head of UK Student Recruitment and Widening Participation, Heads of School, Directors for the Student Experience (school based) Professional Services staff and the Access, Success and Progress Group.

Please contact Wendy Tozer at w.j.tozer@sussex.ac.uk and she can arrange an informal conversation with the Associate Director of Student Engagement and
Achievement or the Director for the Student Experience.

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. The School / Division

Please find further information regarding the school/division at https://www.sussex.ac.uk/about/strategy-and-funding https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/terms-and-conditions/access-agreements

3. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: Student Engagement and Enhancement

Department: Student Experience

Section/Unit/School: Student Engagement and Enhancement

Location: Essex House

Grade: 9

Responsible to: Associate Director Student Engagement and Achievement

Responsible for: Student retention and progression manager, APP Manager, Spirit of Sussex Award Manager, Student Voice Manager, Co-creation Advisor as well as Connectors working within the area, numbers will fluctuate throughout the year.

Key Responsibilities:

Management and Leadership

1. The post-holder will line manage the Student retention and progression manager, APP Manager, Spirit of Sussex Award Manager, Student Voice Manager Co-creation Advisor as well as Connectors working within the area, numbers will fluctuate throughout the year. Identify and support individual’s training and development to ensure a positive performance culture within the team. They will work in a matrix management structure, working closely to support colleagues from across the Division for the Student Experience.

2. As a key member of the Directorate, the post holder will recognise the importance of excellence in customer services and as such is expected to positively engage with and seek opportunities to enhance the
applicant/student experience and in doing so contribute to underpinning academic endeavour.

Strategy

3. The post-holder will have responsibility for undertaking an annual audit of on-course activity and progression work, detailing the work undertaken, linking this back to OfS objectives and benchmarking against sector good practice.

4. Planning, monitor, evaluate and deliver University activity designed to meet agreed University objectives in relation to retention, on course success and progression, and the delivery of objectives outlined in the institutional OfS Access and Participation Plan (APP) as agreed by University Council.

5. Input directly to the on-course success and progress elements of the annual OfS annual Access Agreement and Access and Participation Plan returns, ensuring oversight from the Access, Success and Progress Group and reporting back to the Executive Group ahead of key OfS deadlines.

6. The post-holder will have responsibility for providing advice to the Access, Success and Progress Group and senior management on strategies for major thematic strands in relation to on course success and progress.

7. Formulating and agreeing an on-course success and progress strategy to the end of the Strategic plan period and delivery of University Access and Participation Plan objectives, re-visiting this on an annual basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose for the duration of the University Strategic Plan. As part of this process, setting clear KPIs, benchmarks and objectives.

8. The post-holder will have responsibility for maintaining oversight of important external relationships and partnerships that support students on-course such as the OfS, HEAT, NEON whilst consistently building new relationships with relevant partners.

Innovation and Delivery

9. Design, develop, deliver and evaluate new programmes to support the success and achievement to the changing needs to our students throughout the student lifecycle.

10. Support, promote and communicate the vision of co-creation and embed the Connector programme in every aspect of University life.

11. Operationalise change and vision that which will enhance student engagement eg. Student voice mechanisms, Connector Programme and its development.

12. Train and provide ongoing support for colleagues around student engagement, widening participation and attainment.

Data analysis, KPIs and targets
13. Analyse and interpret relevant student attainment, retention and progress data in particular focusing on data pertaining to groups of students defined in the institutional APP. Understand which data sets provide the most salient information; steer the process of what to gather to enable the tracking of student outcomes; interpret and/or manipulate data to provide information and advice to senior colleagues and inform the programmes as they develop through the 5 year life cycle.

14. In order to analyse data, the post-holder will be able to work with relevant Planning colleagues and OfS group colleagues, which may include analysis of HESA, UCAS or HEIDI databases and MOSAIC data to help identify relevant cohorts of students and guide decisions over future strategy and activity.

Other duties

15. Actively manage a significant budget and ensure robust and appropriate mechanisms to forecast and accurately report on spend

16. Develop and maintain contacts with relevant UK wide HE bodies (e.g. OfS, UUK, AUA, NEON, FACE, AMOSSHE the Sutton Trust and other funding bodies) with a view to raising the profile of Sussex student experience activity relevant to on course success, representing Sussex at national events, sharing good practice and maintaining good strategic relationships with outside organisations.

17. Representing the University at a number of fora and committees including the University Education Committee, Student Experience Committee, Student Experience Forum and Access, Success and Progress Group, as well as relevant external meetings in line with strategic and operational objectives.

18. Keep abreast of national developments and of the expectations and requirements of Government and other relevant organisations as they affect student success and progression and provision of management information related to the above.

19. Ensuring that the student retention and progression manager and other Divisional staff undertake e-learning and other internal training related to Finance, GDPR, CMA and other areas of compliance is undertaken and completed.

20. Represent the Division at key University events during the year as agreed with the Associate Director Student Engagement and Achievement

21. Further deputise for the Associate Director Student Engagement and Achievement

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.

4. Person Specification

Person Specification
Essential

- First Degree or equivalent
- Excellent people management skills and the ability to develop and motivate others
- Strong leadership skills
- High level of financial and budgetary management skills

Professional skills and experience

- Capacity for strategic thinking, planning and implementation
- Strong influencing skills with the ability to apply these at all levels
- Strong analytical skills to identify and to inform departmental planning and priorities
- Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to meet both individual and team deadlines
- Decision making and organisational abilities, including an ability to manage priorities and workloads
- Excellent interpersonal and presentational skills
- Ability to network with professional colleagues within the sector
- Literate in IT and reporting tools
- Pedagogical experience including the design and delivery of innovative teaching and training

Knowledge

- Demonstrable knowledge of student engagement theories and programme development to enhance student engagement and achievement
- Proven knowledge of Access and Participation framework and the Office for Students and how this sits and what it aims to achieve within the Higher Education context.
- Demonstrable understanding of attainment, retention and progression gaps within education settings and the ability to think creatively about addressing these
- Strong knowledge around the concerns and issues currently affecting students within Higher Education

Desirable

- Post-graduate qualification in a related field i.e. PGCE
- Experience of co-creation
- Experience of working with widening participation cohorts