ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post: Student Support Administrator

Department: Registry

Grade: 5

Responsible to: Student Support Manager

Background:

The Royal College of Art is the only entirely postgraduate institution of university status devoted to research and knowledge exchange, teaching and practice in art, design, communication and humanities. Its international reputation for excellence in teaching, practice and research has been recognised for two successive years by the highly regarded QS World Ranking survey, with the College as the world's number one art and design university in both 2015 and 2016. In 2016 -- 2017 the College has some 1,780 students registered for MA, MRes, MPhil and PhD degrees and over 400 full and part-time academic, technical and administrative staff.

Student Support offers advice, guidance and learning support to help ensure the best possible experience for students. As well as providing broad welfare support for students on all matters impacting on their study, the service also delivers specialist support across a range of areas including; finance, immigration, disability, counselling, dyslexia tuition, and English for academic purposes (EAP).

Members of the support team have extensive, ongoing contact with academics and other staff to work collegiately to provide integrated and effective support for postgrad students and researchers at the College.

The service takes an innovative approach to delivery and support and is designed to promote independence and be accessible, flexible and enabling. The team take a leading role in supporting the progression and retention of students facing challenges throughout their time at the College.

Student Support is a busy team of diverse specialists currently. A strong emphasis is placed on the values and skills associated with effective teamwork. The team provides a knowledgeable, responsive and friendly service with good continuity of support.

The Student Support team is comprised of: a team administrator; three Student Advisors (including disability, finance and international support); a Lead Counsellor and Associate Counsellors; a Student Funding Co-ordinator; an EAP Co-ordinator and tutor; a Dyslexia Co-ordinator and tutor; and a Student Support
Manager. Members of the team also work closely with the Chaplain who is based at Imperial College.

**Purpose of the post:**
To provide central role as first point of contact for Student Support. Providing pro-active support for a small team of specialists delivering a wide range of services to students. To provide friendly and helpful responses to initial queries from students, applicants and staff at the College. Answering and advising on standard queries, guiding students to relevant information and initiating direct referrals to specialist staff. Taking a lead role in organising events including the summer Pre-Sessional course for students with English as a second language.

**Main duties and responsibilities:**
- Understanding and evaluating students’ queries, taking time and care to identify and clarify the issues.

- Providing initial responses to enquiries via email, phone or in person.

- Providing initial advice and key information on common queries.

- Liaising with colleagues to feedback on information needs to ensure all routine queries are identified and managed on an ongoing basis.

- Arranging appointments or referring students on to the appropriate team members for detailed advice.

- Overseeing colleagues’ calendars for appointment and room bookings.

- Organising the 8 week pre-sessional English for Academic Purposes course during the summer vacation period (would require availability for at least six of the 8 weeks between mid-July and September).

- Taking the organisational lead on various events and activities through the year including welcome events for new students, information events, exhibitions, supporting forum meetings (including taking minutes), dyslexia screenings events etc.

- Analysing current processes to identify potential improvements and, working jointly with members of the team, developing and implementing effective administration systems.

- Proactively identifying information needs of students, applicants and staff and working with relevant colleagues to develop new policies, guidance documents and other resources to publish on the student support web pages.

- Ensuring the provision of comprehensive information on the College website and printed resources.
• Ongoing administrative support for members of the team as agreed following clearly documented briefings and ongoing liaison to ensure efficient and appropriate support.

• Working with colleagues to collectively ensure effective continuity of services within a small team.

• Manage and monitor the main generic email account to ensure all emails receive a swift and appropriate response, working closely with colleagues where more complex queries arise.

• To assist with procurement for department activities, including raising purchase orders and managing department financial activities using the College’s finance system, Agresso.

• Keep up-to-date with developments and expertise in the area of student support and the specialisms of the student support team.

**Person Specification**

**Essential:**

• Educated to degree level or equivalent experience
• Experience of working with people in an advisory or customer service role providing confidential, responsive and friendly service
• Knowledge of issues relating to student welfare
• Excellent written communication skills demonstrating the ability to communicate complex issues sensitively in clear, simple and appropriate language, and taking into account the varying needs of students attending the College
• Excellent interpersonal and communication skills demonstrating the ability to communicate effectively and productively with a wide range of people, including in challenging situations
• Ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds and with a diverse range of support needs
• Excellent administration skills, including accuracy and attention to detail
• Strong IT skills, including the ability to adapt to new software packages when necessary, and experience of using spreadsheets and databases
• Experience of developing information materials and creating web pages
• Project management skills, including the ability to organise events and courses involving students, academics and professional specialists
• Ability to assess, develop and fine-tune systems to ensure efficient and reliable services
• Initiative and ability to prioritise and manage own workload
• Ability to quickly learn a wide range of technical information relating to student support services
• Ability to work effectively under pressure in a busy environment
• Ability to adapt speedily to changing demands, priorities and processes in a constantly developing service
Desirable:
- Experience of helping and supporting others
- Experience of working in any of the specialisms within the team
- Experience of working in Higher Education

Additional Information:
- Normal hours will total 35 hours per week, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 5.30pm with an hour each day for lunch
- 25 days annual leave plus extended breaks at Christmas and Easter
- Contributory defined benefit pension scheme and interest free season ticket loan

March 2017
PAY & BENEFITS

Pension
The Royal College of Art is a member of the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL) which is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme. The college will contribute a sum equal to 16% of your salary while you pay 6%.

Holiday
5 weeks’ (25 days) paid leave a year plus bank and public holidays normally observed in England and Wales. In addition, the college is normally closed for six days a year, one day either side of Easter and the remainder between Christmas and New Year. Part-time staff will be entitled to the pro rata equivalent.

Season ticket loans
Interest-free loans are available for staff to purchase annual season tickets.

Enhanced maternity and adoption pay
Qualifying employees are entitled to enhanced maternity/adoption pay: 26 weeks’ full pay, 13 weeks Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay. This compares to the statutory provision of 90% of average pay for 6 weeks followed by Statutory Maternity/Adoption Pay for 33 weeks.

Enhanced paternity pay
Qualifying employees are entitled to two weeks’ paternity leave entitlement at full pay. This compares to the statutory provision of two weeks’ pay at the statutory rate.

Enhanced sick pay
Occupational sick pay after six months’ service is three months’ full pay/three months’ half pay.

24/7 confidential support
Staff and family members in their household have access to a free, external confidential support service for work, financial, legal, family and personal problems 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Occupational health
Occupational Health support for the College is provided by Imperial College’s occupational health service at their South Kensington Campus.

Cycle to Work Scheme
The Royal College of Art has signed up to the Cycle to Work Scheme – part of the government’s Green Transport Initiative – which allows employees to make significant savings on purchasing new bikes and safety equipment.
**Childcare Vouchers**
The Royal College of Art enables staff to purchase childcare vouchers, through its partner Edenred, as a salary sacrifice scheme.

**Life Cover**
Active members of the SAUL pension scheme automatically receive life cover. A lump sum of four times your salary together with a refund of your contributions and a 2/3 pension for your dependent/spouse is payable should you die whilst in employment.

**Library**
All staff are welcome to join the college library.

**Events**
All staff are welcome to attend exhibitions, lectures and private views held by academic schools and programmes.