

JOB DESCRIPTION	
Job title:	Academic Adviser
Reports to:	Advice Place Manager
Department:	The Advice Place
Direct Reports:	N/A
Indirect Reports:	N/A
Revision Date:	July 2019
Job Purpose and General Dimensions	
<p>The postholder will work as part of a small team providing expert advice and representation to students with academic queries, on a wide range of academic-related issues and processes, including academic misconduct, appeals, harassment, complaints and disciplinary processes. They will also, as part of the Advice Place team, offer general advice (including welfare advice) as a duty adviser seeing drop in students, triaging and booking follow ups as necessary. They will also undertake specialist casework as required.</p> <p>The Advice Place is a free, professional, impartial and confidential advice service for students at the University of Edinburgh, operated by Edinburgh University Students Association. The service is very busy and operates drop-ins and appointments, with phone and email consultation available as well. The service deals with a wide variety of topics (finance, accommodation, academic and personal issues) and provides basic information as well as more complex casework advice, advocacy and support. Service usage data is used to inform campaigns and the constant development and assessment of University policy.</p>	
Main Duties and Responsibilities	
<p>Main Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide professional in depth advice, advocacy and representation to individual students on University processes such as academic appeals, complaints, academic misconduct and disciplinary processes. • To provide expert advice to students with academic queries through drop in and booked appointments, email, social networks and telephone contact. To analyse complex situations concisely and offer clear explanations and guidance. • To offer general academic and welfare advice as a duty adviser seeing drop-in service users, triaging, signposting and booking follow up appointments as required • To advise students presenting who are in significant distress, including responding appropriately to students disclosing suicidal ideation or intent or who have been the victim of sexual assault/ crime. Immediate liaison with third parties including the University/ police to safeguard students, Foodbanks, City of Edinburgh Council, Second Tier Advice services etc. • To efficiently create and maintain accurate case notes and ensure accurate monitoring and reporting of issues arising from the service and to liaise with the university in relation to individual cases and in relation to themes and trends arising from academic cases • To advise and support students who have been accused of breaching the code of student conduct (including accusations of harassment and gender-based violence) 	

- Advocating for students and representing their best interests in University meetings or proceedings (for example supporting a student who is the subject of a disciplinary investigation)
- To develop and deliver training, presentations, online content for students, prospective students and staff
- Support, Supervision and Debrief – Actively participate in regular one to one meetings with line manager, external supervision sessions with counsellor, debrief sessions with colleagues and case conferences and team meetings.

Departmental Support

- To support outreach activities across outlying campuses with a view to ensuring all students are aware of and have access to our service
- To contribute to support for student volunteering within the Advice Place including recruitment, the development and delivery of training, and arrangements for ongoing supervision and support under the direction of the Deputy Advice Place Manager
- To follow in house recording procedures as appropriate, and adhere to the service guidelines on confidentiality and impartiality at all times
- To participate in relevant adviser training and relay information to other members of the team
- To take part in Welcome Week and Open Day activities as a way of providing information about and promoting the Advice Place
- To undertake research and participate in relevant University groups as required to inform improving the student experience
- To work with relevant Sabbatical Office bearers and elected representatives on academic issues, as required.

General responsibilities

- Support delivery of key, organisation-wide projects including Welcome Week, University Open Days, and elections
- Develop and maintain positive working relationships with relevant University staff, community stakeholders, and colleagues in the Higher Education sector
- Commit to delivering the Students' Association's Strategic Plan
- Demonstrate a positive and respectful attitude to all Students' Association staff, the organisation as a whole, as well as our members, partners and clients
- Ensure that every student, staff member, or visitor who uses our services has the best possible experience
- Adhere to and support the Students' Association's Ethical, Environmental, and Health and Safety policies and procedures
- Commit to positively engaging with the training and development of yourself and others
- Any other appropriate duties, as reasonably required by your line manager or Senior Management

Key Relationships

- Advice Place Manager
- Beyond the immediate Advice Place team you will also work with: Wider Membership Support and Development team, including welfare and advisory staff, as well as staff with responsibility for student engagement, academic representation, and democracy.
- Service Users
- Student representatives, including sabbatical office bearers.
- External stakeholders, including University academic, administrative and student services staff.

- External partners/contacts, as appropriate.

Other shared responsibilities/expectations:

- The Students' Association's overall vision is that *'all students at Edinburgh should have the power to shape their own future and enjoy a vibrant and cohesive student community where everyone is valued and respected'*. Our staff have an essential part to play in achieving this vision. Every staff member at the Students' Association, wherever they work, has the same responsibility.
- A commitment to the delivery of the Students' Association's Strategic Plan through the implementation of departmental plan activities
- A positive and respectful attitude to all Students' Association staff, its management, the organisation as a whole, and its members, clients and partners
- To ensure that every student, staff member or visitor using any of our services has the best possible experience of that service and of the Students' Association as an organisation.
- Adhere to and support Students' Association's Ethical, Environmental and Health and Safety policies and procedures
- A commitment to training and development of self and others
- Any other appropriate duties as reasonably required by your line manager, Departmental manager or Senior Management

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Job title:	Academic Adviser	
Person Summary		
<p>The Academic Adviser will be an exceptional and enthusiastic individual, who aspires to provide a professional and high quality service to our service users. They will be a student focused individual with a consistently professional approach to their duties and keen attention to detail. A person with high expectations of themselves and others, who takes pride in their work.</p> <p>Confident and competent, with demonstrable experience (typically at least 2 years) gained within a customer facing role, delivering high standards of customer service. The postholder will have proven experience of dealing with sensitive information and prioritising in a busy client facing role. Ideally, they will have worked in situations where they have been required to deal effectively and compassionately with customers who are distressed.</p>		
Required Experience	Essential	Desirable
At least 2 years' experience gained within an information, advice or advocacy role, or within a university setting.	X	
Experience of using initiative and analysis for problem solving in a professional context	X	
Experience of forming strong relationships with service users and stakeholders across different levels of the organisation	X	
Experience of working within a Student Union		X
Experience of supporting volunteers.		X
Functional Skills and Proficiency	Essential	Desirable
A basic knowledge of the Higher Education system and current academic and welfare issues	X	
Strong organisation and analytical skills with the ability to work independently and to manage a busy caseload, prioritising appropriately	X	
Strong analytical skills, and the ability to process complex written materials or situations	X	
Demonstrable ability to deal with sensitive information in an impartial, non-judgmental, professional and confidential manner.	X	
Proven ability to successfully communicate across a variety of audiences including in presentations	X	
Excellent IT skills, including proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office, internet and social media channels	X	
Knowledge of the principles of advice, information or advocacy work	X	
Knowledge of university student policies and student services		X
Proven report-writing skills		X
Training and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Educated to degree level or equivalent	X	

Other Requirements Specific to the Role		Essential	Desirable
Flexibility in terms of hours worked		X	
Shared Competencies			
The Students' Association's competency framework describes the key behaviors you are expected to demonstrate in this role. The main facets for each of these competencies are described below. Within the competency structure, this is a <i>Level 3</i> position			
Customer Focus	Understands the needs of our customers, and actively seeks ways to improve service delivery Collects customer feedback and ensures it is acted upon		
Delivering Results	Understands what is expected of them and reviews and adapts personal objectives to deal with changing priorities Strives for continuous improvement in their own personal performance		
Initiative & Creativity	Actively embraces new ideas and ways of working, and seeks opportunities to develop both short and long term improvements Encourages others to think about fresh ideas /approaches		
Knowledge & Skills Development	Actively seeks opportunities for professional development, based on personal strengths and weaknesses Applies knowledge and skills to support the achievement of the Students' Association's long term goals		
Communicating Effectively	Communicates effectively, and in an appropriate way for the audience. Shares own expertise effectively, and actively seeks the views of others		
Teamworking	Involves others to ensure that diverse views, experiences and ways of working are encouraged. Takes time to support others, and to help them develop their skills		
Ambition, Purpose and Principles			
<p>Ambition: by 2025 we will be a high performing Students' Union, valued by our members, delivering outstanding support and services for a vibrant, well-rounded time at University.</p> <p>Purpose: to enhance student life at the University of Edinburgh by providing representation, services, activities and support.</p> <p>Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Led • Power to Change • Diverse Student Communities • Open and Helpful • Collaboration • Ethically and Environmentally Responsible • Social Enterprise 			