**Adviser (Academic)**

**Job Description**

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| Organisation | University of Strathclyde Students’ Association |
| Reports To | Advice Manager | Grade | 6.1 |
| Starting Salary  | £28,756  | Contract Type | Permanent subject to successful 6 month probationary period |
| FTE and Hours of Work | 1.0 FTE, 35 hours/week, normally 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.  |  |  |

*To provide a professional, confidential, and accurate advice and support service to University of Strathclyde students. This role will deliver specialist advice and representation on academic policy and procedure and student funding in particular but will also support advice delivery on housing matters, wellbeing, and relevant welfare benefits advice. The post-holder will be committed to developing the quality & impact of advocacy and advice for our members.*

**Job Scope**

**Main duties**

1. Provide accurate and impartial advice, representation, and referral services to students, offering the highest professional standards and considering the impact that advice provided may have on those students. In particular, advisers must consider the advice process through an intersectional lens that reflects the diversity of the student population at Strathclyde.
2. Act as a lead adviser on issues relating to academic policy and procedure in place at the University of Strathclyde, including appeals, complaints, discipline, and other relevant procedures.
3. Act as lead adviser on issues related to student funding, including University-delivered funding support and bodies such as Student Awards Agency Scotland and Student Loans Company.
4. To participate in relevant boards and working groups as determined by needs of the organisation.
5. Advise as appropriate on University of Strathclyde student wellbeing procedures and policies including Safe 360 matters, Dignity & Respect, and Report & Support.
6. Support with the delivery of other areas of advice as required due to high demand or staff absence and leave, including housing, welfare benefits, and general wellbeing advice.
7. Monitor developments in national and local educational policy and legislation in order to equip Strath Union in responding to and shaping such policies and to enhance casework delivery.
8. Record and maintain up to date information on student enquiries and casework, ensuring accurate case notes at all times.
9. Ensuring strict levels of client confidentiality and compliance with data protection legislation.
10. Assist in the development, organisation, and delivery of relevant student support and wellbeing campaigns and activities for students, designed to raise awareness of student welfare issues. These may involve working with relevant student groups and internal & external organisations.
11. Provide appropriate professional advice to elected student Executive Officers to ensure that direct representation of students at all levels of the University is of a high standard.
12. Liaise with governmental and charitable agencies (including Child Poverty Action Group, National Association of Student Money Advisers, and National Union of Students) on a range of student support issues in order to provide professional input and influence policy and decision-making for the benefit and advancement of Strathclyde students.
13. Ensure that the service is consistently promoted to the membership and that all materials, including online materials, are kept up to date, accurate and accessible to students.
14. Encourage wider participation in all student activities and promote the benefits of involvement to the student membership.
15. Support with the administration of the Participation Fund and Advice Hub Emergency Funding.
16. Support with the provision of the free sexual health and free menstrual product supplies available within the Union.
17. The post holder will be expected to work collaboratively with colleagues across the Union, University, and external organisations in supporting non-standard activity commensurate with the role grade.

**Planning**

1. Casework is generated through students’ needs and is complex in nature, often requiring liaising with University academic departments and Professional Services, and external agencies. Individual cases can often remain active for a number of months from initial enquiry until resolution. Individual cases can also require immediate response and intervention.
2. Liaising with Advice Manager, Advisers, and other Strath Union departmental staff in the planning and organisation of campaigns and events.
3. Liaising with relevant fora in the planning and organisation of various campaigns and events throughout the year.
4. Workload is prioritised independently based on the criticality of client needs.
5. Constraints include regulations set out in University policy and procedure, legislation laid down by the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations, Equality Act 2010, duty of care, conflict of interest guidelines, Advice Hub Terms and Conditions, and policies set out by Strath Union Parliament.
6. Non-regular workload is at times generated through activities of student representatives, under direction from Executive Officers.

**Decision Making**

1. Autonomous decision making is expected in relation to advice work, with complex and safeguarding matters discussed with the Advice Manager.
2. The post-holder will act with a degree of autonomy, however, proposals and actions may require the authority of line manager or Leadership Team to receive funding and/or enactment.

**Person Specification**

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| **Educational** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Educated to degree level or equivalent relevant experience | x |  |
| **Knowledge & Experience** |
| Experience of delivering advice and managing casework in a professional capacity | x |  |
| Experience of representing others in a support or advocacy capacity | x |  |
| Experience of dealing with distressed clients and assessing clients at risk | x |  |
| Knowledge of the Higher Education environment, academic policy and procedure, and issues affecting students | x |  |
| Knowledge of student entitlement to benefits and eligibility criteria |  | x |
| Knowledge of Scottish housing legislation and regulations, including purpose-built student accommodation, private rented sector, and social housing |  | x |
| Knowledge of compliance issues relevant to advice provision | x |  |
| Experience of using digital case recording systems |  | x |
| Understanding of the cultural and religious issues affecting advice provision | x |  |
| Experience of working in or with Students’ Unions and an understanding of their role in the Higher Education sector |  | x |
| Experience of delivering training |  | x |
| **Job Related Skills** |
| Ability to provide advice and support on academic student advice issues and to empower students to act on their own behalf as appropriate | x |  |
| Ability to transfer benefits knowledge into manual benefits calculations |  | x |
| Ability to guide students through the benefits application, mandatory reconsideration, and tribunal processes |  | x |
| Ability to educate and empower students to their housing rights and responsibilities in University accommodation, private rented accommodation, and purpose-built student accommodation |  | x |
| Strong communication and administrative skills, including proficiency with IT including Microsoft Office software | x |  |
| **Personal Qualities** |
| A strong ability to listen empathetically and apply critical thinking and exploration skills in the advice process | x |  |
| A positive, student-centred approach  | x |  |
| Ability to demonstrate good networking skills | x |  |
| Reliable and trustworthy | x |  |
| Team focused and self-motivated | x |  |

**Application Procedure**

Applicants are required to submit a CV and cover letter detailing the knowledge, skills, and experience you think makes you the right candidate for the job. Applicants should note that for those invited to interview there will be a pre-interview task which will be issued at least 7 days prior to interview.

**Other Information**

Students’ Unions are a specialised sector where the Student Executive Officers are elected annually and as a result this presents various challenges and opportunities.

The post holder will be a member of staff who will at all times be expected to portray a positive image of the Union, both internally and externally and to set high standards of personal integrity and professionalism, leading by personal example.

* The role is subject to a 6-month probationary period.
* 31 days annual leave per year plus 11 public holidays subject to pro rata as necessary.
* The successful applicant will be eligible to join the relevant workplace pensions scheme as determined by their starting grade.