University of Edinburgh
Job Description

1. JOB DETAILS
Job Title: Helpdesk Assistant
School/Support Department: Information Services/Library, Museums & Galleries
Unit (if applicable): Digital Library Division
Line manager: Helpdesk Supervisors

2. JOB PURPOSE
To provide a full and effective range of IS Helpdesk services to students and staff of the University of Edinburgh and associated institutions, and many other external users and visitors.

3. MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES
• Directing users and facilitating their access to appropriate IS resources and services by delivering a front of house Helpdesk service: giving advice in person and by telephone on using the building, on services provided by the Library, EUCS, MALTS and Edinburgh University Data Library, and on using the Library catalogue, electronic resources including database searching and IS websites. Providing a first point of contact for all other IS enquiries, referring onwards as appropriate.
• Facilitating the circulation of library stock and laptop loans to library members using an online library system: providing support for self-service machines and operating staff mediated issue and return; sorting returned items for re-shelving.
• Enabling access to library and information services by registering University of Edinburgh and external library users within the framework of the Library’s Admissions Manual, and replacing lost or damaged student and staff University cards on request.
• Cash handling: processing cash and credit card transactions resulting from users’ purchases and payments.
• Undertaking a range of other duties in support of library and information services to users, eg: responding to queries received through enquiry management systems and the IS Helpdesk e-mail account; maintaining stationery and stock supplies; producing and displaying notices and leaflets; maintaining the high demand Reserve (core text book) collection; fetching books for disabled users; supporting the self-service photocopying facility in order to ensure a continuous service for users.

Please see Job Context for variations for the job holder contracted to work evenings/weekends

4. PLANNING AND ORGANISING
A rota directs the job holder to staff the Helpdesk or undertake other duties. Additional tasks are assigned to the job holder by the Helpdesk Supervisors. Workload on the Helpdesk is largely determined by the number of users seeking assistance and the volume of book returns; the job holder works under considerable pressure at frequent peak times. The job holder is responsible for completing assigned other duties to a high standard in the allocated time without supervision

5. PROBLEM SOLVING
• Clarifying users’ enquiries by utilising reference enquiry techniques; drawing upon a range of knowledge and information sources in order to provide an appropriate answer or correct referral.
• Investigating user records on the online library system to resolve user queries, for example about charges and borrowed items.
• Basic troubleshooting equipment; resolving or reporting faults as appropriate and tracking progress.
6. DECISION MAKING

The job holder, through participation in general team meetings and group communication, contributes to decisions taken on the application of IS procedures and policies to a given set of circumstances. The job holder delivers services in accordance with IS procedures and policies, supported by documentary guidelines. The job holder decides upon the appropriate referral of enquiries not answered by the Helpdesk.

7. KEY CONTACTS/RELATIONSHIPS

Internal
• Potentially all IS users: to provide a full frontline Helpdesk service.
• Library, Computing and other IS staff: as part of the normal interaction required in the provision of an efficient library and information service.

External
• Staff and students of other institutions, members of the public, overseas visitors: to provide information on IS; to advise on access according to Library and Computing Regulations; and to give general directional advice.

8. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE NEEDED FOR THE JOB

• Good communication and interpersonal skills
• User focus and excellent customer care skills
• Accurate and methodical approach
• Capable of fulfilling the physical demands of the role, such as moving large numbers of books and using trolleys to transport them
• IT literate and able to learn new IT applications
• Numerate
• Flexible in undertaking a range of work tasks and able to deal with problems as they arise
• Able to work independently as well as in a team
• Experience of working in a library environment is desirable

9. DIMENSIONS

Services provided by the Helpdesk are available to the whole of the University community of 21,000 students and 7,500 staff, as well as members of other institutions and visitors. In excess of 2,000 enquiries are answered per week with about two thirds being in person. Main Library is the primary Library for around 12,500 UoE students, or around 59% of the students. Circulation 2004/5: 510,049 or 67% of the total University Library first loans.

Number of staff in team: AA4 x 1; AA3 x 1; AL2 x 2 (part-time); CN4 x 7 (3 part-time); CN3 x 1; CN2 x 16 (many part-time)

10. JOB CONTEXT AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

The Helpdesk is based on the Ground Floor of Main Library and delivers services face to face, by telephone and online. The Helpdesk operates as a central point of information for users seeking help or assistance on any aspect of the service provision from Information Services either satisfying enquiries directly or by referring them on the appropriate IS service for satisfaction by Library, Edinburgh University Computing Services, Media and Learning Technology Services and Edinburgh University Data Library.

The proportion of time spent on main responsibilities differs for the job holder contracted to work evenings/weekends. At evenings and weekends, considerably more time is spent providing a front of house service (75%) and less time spent on other duties (25%). The job holder may, for short periods of time, provide a Helpdesk service without supervision. There is an additional responsibility for implementing closing procedures in order to secure the Helpdesk and to ensure the availability of self services.