University of Edinburgh

Job Description Template

This template is for use in writing Job Descriptions (JDs) for any purpose. This template can be expanded as required, but should usually be no more than 2 pages long. Please consult and follow the Guidance on Writing Job Descriptions.

1. Job Details

Job title: Research Support Administrator

School/Support Department: CREID, Educational Studies, Moray House School of Education

Unit (if applicable): Centre for Research in Education, Inclusion & Diversity (CREID)

Line manager: Director of CREID

2. Job Purpose

To provide wide-ranging support for all of CREID’s research activities including providing a robust administrative infrastructure for multiple projects; as well as direct involvement in research and the dissemination of project findings through a variety of mediums.

3. Main Responsibilities

(Normally between 4 and 10. Percentages should total at least 95% (and no more than 100%))

1. Research infrastructure: advise the Director and other CREID staff on funding opportunities for research ensuring that research is carried out in accordance with the policies and procedures of the School, University, professional bodies and funding councils. Assist with the development of research grant applications, providing realistic costings for each of the activities in the application, as well as developing an overall budget for the proposal. Maintaining a running record of research grant opportunities to ensure they align to CREID’s research strategy. Designing and managing grants for funded projects. Development of a 5 year financial plan to ensure the efficient, long-term management of the Centre. 25%

2. Networking and dissemination: develop relationships with key internal and external contacts to ensure a mutually advantageous relationship exists. Ensure that all the Centre’s research is effectively disseminated in a variety of forms including managing web sites for research projects; assisting with the publication of CREID’s work through joint authoring of surveys, journal articles and book chapters; preparing conference presentations; participating at educational research conferences; acting as principal editor of newsletter, annual report and briefings. 25%

3. Support for ongoing research (both internal and external): provide conceptual input based on knowledge of the relevant literature and its major theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches. Carry out literature searches and document findings in report form. Collecting, processing and managing data. Analysis of quantitative data using excel, SPSS, including ANOVA, factor analysis, etc. Analysing qualitative data using content analysis and appropriate software (e.g. NVivo) where appropriate. Mentoring and overseeing the work of Research Associates and any clerical staff employed on funded research projects. 25%

4. Support for research-related activities: Develop and update a variety of sources of information to increase the profile of CREID’s work and interests both internally and externally, for example the annual report. Edit briefing reports, using desk top publishing, to publicise the findings of projects. Ensure that the programme of CREID activities is systematically tracked and evaluated. Organise research seminars, conferences and colloquia held both internally and externally targeting a variety of audiences including academics, practioners, user/interest groups, voluntary organisations and government bodies as appropriate. Ensuring that each event is 25%
managed professionally and comes in on budget.

4. Planning and Organising
The ability to plan and prioritise work in response to competing and evolving demands. This can include timely submission of proposals and tenders. Financial planning over the lifespan of grants and a five year financial plan. Auditable infrastructure for grant finances, reports at the completion of a project, and event management.

5. Problem Solving
Problems tend to be very varied due to the range of activities the job holder is involved in. The identification of possible issues and a proactive approach to addressing them before they escalate is a key skill. An example of which could include identifying and resolving issues relating to the financing of a complex, multi-partnership, European grant.

6. Decision Making
The job holder is expected to work independently and be comfortable using their knowledge and experience to take responsibility for a range of decisions. Areas for decision making include CREID’s financial structure; editorial role for a variety of public communications; and allocating and prioritising work for the student clerical assistant. If issues are referred to the Director, then the job holder would provide background information on it and provide possible solutions to facilitate the decision making process.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships
Internally – School Staff, ERI, Finance (college & grant)
Externally - Regular contacts include Scottish Executive, Scottish Parliament, ESRC, EU Equal, EU Sixth Framework, Universities of Glasgow, Leeds and Strathclyde.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
The job holder must have a robust knowledge of the field of inclusive education and of educational research perspectives and approaches. Possess proven quantitative and qualitative research experience. Have excellent administrative, financial and communication skills. A degree in a relevant discipline is also necessary.

9. Dimensions
Combine operational and strategic support for the Centre; including line management of a student clerical assistant who works two days a week, the provision of mentoring and training for three research fellows; support for 17 grants with CREID’s total funding circa £1.2m.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
CREID’s research focuses on policy and practice in the field of social inclusion and equality. Since its inception, CREID has attracted a substantial amount of research income from a diverse range of funders, and is working in partnership with other universities, public bodies, the voluntary sector and service user groups.