University of Edinburgh

Job Description Template

1. Job Details

Job title: Senior Administrator
School/Support Department: PPLS
Unit (if applicable): Institute for Applied Language Studies (IALS)
Line manager: Director of IALS

2. Job Purpose
To provide a professional service to IALS clients and first-class support services to IALS teaching staff to ensure that the large teaching operation is financially viable.

3. Main Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approx. % of time</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1. Recruit, supervise and develop seasonal and permanent administrative staff and procedures to ensure all support services function efficiently. Also assist in advertising and selection of academic staff for promoted posts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2. Manage non-academic aspects of groups coming from overseas institutions, providing Director with information for original quotation, liaising with overseas Programme Coordinator prior to group’s arrival, ensuring all administrative staff have the necessary information to fulfil their part of the service and attending end of course business meeting to review course and facilities provided to ensure client is satisfied and likely to return.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3. As part of IALS management team provide information on administrative staffing, registrations, external classrooms, client requests, agent requests, accommodation, equipment, building (heating, repairs, cleaning) to assist management team to make decisions to ensure day-to-day smooth running of IALS and to foster future business.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4. Acquire suitable external classrooms and suitable accommodation to house overseas students attending IALS summer school and ensure staff and procedures are in place for students to have satisfactory experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5. Prepare plan for refurbishment of building when income allows and manage ongoing repairs to minimize disruption to staff and students to enhance working environment for staff and students.</td>
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4. Planning and Organising
- Over the year, plan deadlines for preparations for summer and year round programme, making accommodation bookings approx one year in advance, delegating updating of database course fields one year in advance, making room bookings approx 6 months in advance, advertising for temporary summer staff 6 months in advance, delegating updating of information sheets to appropriate members of staff 6 months in advance, updating confirming letters 4 months in advance.
- Plan staff cover for expected absences several weeks in advance, and for unexpected absences on the day.
- One week before the start of each courses, inform all relevant administrative staff of their role on the first day, providing them with the up-dated information on location, staffing, students expected, first day programme.

5. Problem Solving
- Complaint from staff about quality of work by one of administrative team – job holder has to sensitively establish the facts, talk to the member of staff concerned, establish their perception of the situation, institute checking procedures and further training if appropriate or if necessary reallocate particular types of work to another member of staff.
- Late cancellation of an expected group can leave unused accommodation. Job-holder is responsible for keeping costs incurred for unused accommodation to a minimum, by guiding registrar in best allocation of remaining students to accommodation.
Complaint from a student who wants services IALS does not offer and who will not accept information given by Registrar. Job-holder listens to complainant sympathetically, explains the constraints on IALS, if possible suggests an alternative solution which does not set an expensive precedent. If issue involves teaching staff, job-holder consults with Director of Studies and Director.

6. Decision Making
- Student requests a refund after the start of a course. Under IALS Terms and Conditions student is not entitled to a refund. Job-holder interviews student to establish reason. If due to illness, then job-holder agrees the level of refund in accordance with past practice. If other reason given, job-holder assesses the request, and if judges a refund is appropriate, passes information to Director with suggestion for a decision.
- Decides on level of seasonal staffing. If an increase on previous years is required, this has to be approved by Director as within budget. Job-holder decides on appropriate advertising, selection and interview panel.
- Decides on changes to IALS procedures and/or systems to respond to changing requirements.

6. Key Contacts/Relationships
- Provide information on IALS as requested to School Administrator and other University groups e.g. EUCLID, HESA returns
- Communication with Human Resources on contracts, maternity leave, sickness absence etc
- Regular communication with Director about details of tenders sent to possible clients.
- Regular communication with Marketing Manager about publicity for services IALS offers.
- Ad hoc meetings with IALS Computing Officer to develop computerised systems.
- Regular communication with Course Directors to ensure needs of their courses are met.
- Meetings with university accommodation providers to negotiate prices and services required for IALS students.
- Communication with Works Department to ensure building is maintained in good order with the least possible disruption to staff and students.
- Regular email and fax communication with overseas institutions and agents who send us groups to ensure a good experience for students due to come and to foster future business.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
- Good education to degree level, preferably in area such as Business Administration.
- At least 3 years experience with a supervisory role in a busy office environment.
- Knowledge of other cultures, preferably with experience of travelling, working and studying abroad.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Knowledge of word processing, spreadsheets and databases.
- Ability to prioritise own work and work of the team.
- An advantage to have experience of working in Higher Education.

9. Dimensions
- Directly reporting: 8 full time, 3 part time (27.5, 20, 5 hours/ week), 1 seasonal (May to September)
- Indirectly reporting: 5 full time, 4 seasonal full time (June to September) 6 seasonal part time (July to August, 10 hours/week)
- All Administrative and teaching staff affected: 16 admin, 50 full and part time teaching staff, + seasonal 11 admin and approx 20 teaching staff.
- Responsible for budget for fabric and fitting, when income allows, approx £60,000.
- Responsible for student flat accommodation budget, approx £250,000
- 1800 full time overseas students learning English, (1,500 during summer programme, 100 per each of 3 x 12 week terms).
- 4000 part-time students learning Modern Languages (~ approx 1,200 per each of 3 x 12 week terms, with 400 over summer period).
- 30 institutions or agents who send groups of students

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
- IALS operates as a self financing unit. Clients must be dealt with quickly and efficiently to ensure income to IALS.
- Job-holder has to deal with any unpredictable events which affect the smooth running of IALS: heating failure, staff illness, bus strikes, road works etc
- Building key holder, on call to Security, IALS staff, Group Leaders for any emergency whenever it arises.