University of Edinburgh

1. Job Details

Job title: Head of Student Administration Services  
School/Support Department: Student and Academic Services Group  
Unit (if applicable): Registry  
Line manager: Head of Operations

2. Job Purpose

To manage and deliver Student Administration Services to meet the needs of staff, current and prospective students of the University whilst ensuring that the service’s policies and resources are developed and promoted to support the University’s strategic objectives on the delivery of services on a customer service platform.

3. Main Responsibilities

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1. Responsible for Student Administration Services Business Processes review and development to ensure that all services are delivered within a customer focussed environment as stated as part of the University’s Strategic Plan. The front of house service is the very public face of the University and it is essential that this service is provided by a high quality customer care team. This is a change management role involving major business process re-engineering and seeking novel IT solutions which will impact on the EUCLID project as well as having an immediate impact on reducing activity expenditure.

2. Responsible for the planning, organisation, management and leadership of the Student Administration Services Group to meet the needs of students and staff of the University in order to satisfy the requirements of registration, assessment, academic progression and graduation regulations, ordinances and resolutions. This includes responsibility for the quality and delivery of registrations, student record maintenance, examinations and graduations and involves assessing that the delivery of these activities, are being achieved in a cost effective manner. This includes the management of the Student Administration Services resources ensuring that the staff resource is effectively managed and that staff are working to their potential and are being fully developed to meet the needs of the client group.

3. Responsible for contributing to the formulation of University policies with reference to student academic assessment and academic progression matters as a member of SUGSC. Responsible for assessing the impact of all new University academic policies on the operational activities of the group and for the design of new business solutions to deliver high quality implementation levels. As a member of the Registry Operational Management Group is responsible for contributing to the operational management decisions of Registry.

4. Planning and Organising

- Planning the work of the section is influenced by the timings and changes being made to the high profile core activities of the section i.e. Examinations, Graduations and Registration. Planning to these operational activities takes place one year ahead to meet the time frames of the Academic Cyclic Calendar and the EUCLID project allowing sufficient time for development and validation. Management and delivery of the annual registration service for all new students takes place across two venues and spans a period of two weeks. This is essential to the University as it is one of the first points of contact for the new students and their parents and if not customer focused could reflect badly on the institution and impact upon student retention. Careful advance planning is also essential for the examination diets and graduation ceremonies, as these impact on the academic progression of every student and on the external image of the University. The dates of graduation ceremonies are set up to five years in advance,

- In conjunction with the Deputy Head of Group planning/reviewing the workloads of the section, on a quarterly/monthly/weekly basis ensuring that the activity milestones and on-going service
demands are being achieved. Within this planning and prioritising personal work on a quarterly calendar the majority of which is project based and is self initiated allowing flexibility to be reactive to daily requests.

- Planning associated with the implementation of the new student record system is on a three year programme due to the complexities of the impact of this project on the business processes and on the role of Registry and other student services providers.

5. Problem Solving

- Gives advice and direction on problems associated with examination assessments to academic members of staff ensuring that the regulations are being upheld. Decides how recommendations for examination adjustments for disabled students will be implemented. As the University Examinations Officer provides solutions to problems associated with the management of examinations relating to student, invigilators and venue difficulties.
- Responsible for finding solutions to operational problems during Graduations and Registrations. This presents a wide range of diverse problems which require a combination of common sense and confident intuitive thinking.
- Developing strategic institutional solutions to problems created as a result of changes to legislation i.e. European Diploma Supplement which was driven by changes made by the EU.
- Developing strategic institutional solutions to business delivery problems i.e Examination Scheduler which has impacted on more efficient use of the University Estate for examinations.
- Developing policies with reference to examination administration and assessment regulations, monitoring and recording for consideration by SUGSC and SPSC.

6. Decision Making

- Decides on the organisation and management of the activities of the group including the deployment of resources to achieve the group's performance targets.
- Decides what action is required with reference to staff performance and disciplinary issues. Is responsible for the design and implementation of staff development and training programmes.
- Recommends to the Director of Registry and Head of Operations new business process solutions to improve the efficiency of service to the client group.
- Influences the operational decisions of Registry as a member of the Registry Operational Management Team.
- Controls and plans and has responsibility for the administration of the Graduation ceremonies and makes all necessary decisions to ensure that the ceremony runs smoothly.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

Working relationship with:-

- The Vice-Principal for Learning and Teaching on academic matters pertaining to assessment, examinations and recording of student progression.
- Other Heads of Group within Registry and the Head of Registry Operations as part of the Registry Operational Management Group and through this influencing the work of a large and diverse range of activities which covers a wide range of direct and indirect services to students and staff.
- The Head of Systems and MIS when developing new IT solutions to ensure that design and delivery of such are meeting the rules and regulations of the University.
- Members of the University Academic Staff as a member of committees i.e. SUGSC, PG Forum, Specific Learning Difficulties and various SUGSC working groups.
- Staff of the Disability Office with reference to adjustments for students with special needs.
- Members of Academic Affairs Section on matters relating to the regulations and governance of assessment.
- Estates & Buildings with reference to the use of the estate for examinations.
- Staff in the College Offices and Schools with reference to examinations, graduations and registrations developments.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

- Educated to degree level with more than five years of Higher Education experience in a Registry environment.
• Leadership – wide experience of managing complex relationships, establishing and maintaining trust and providing support, adaptable personal style to suit diverse situations.
• Strategic Planning – proven track record and experience of designing and implementing organisational change.
• A high level of IT knowledge in order to be able to design new IT solutions.
• Negotiation – able to present effective case for change and can respond flexibly to opposing viewpoints.
• Communication – must be analytical, able to communicate effectively internally and externally using a range of media.
• Good organisational skills and have the ability to prioritise and work under pressure with the ability to make rapid safe decisions.
• Experience of the management of high profile public events such as Graduation ceremonies.

9. Dimensions

Providing leadership for Student Administrative Services Group which has a staff of 17 people. This group delivers:

• 2,500 examinations resulting in 150,000 sittings impacting on the progression of 22,500 students
• 15 Graduation ceremonies involving 5,000 students and their families and friends. Examination and assessment support to all academic staff.
• Registration of 22,500 students impacting on the financial well-being of the student and institution and supporting down the line services such as cards, fee recovery, course registration and student loans.
• Personal customer support to 19,340 students.

10. Job context and any other relevant information

This post has a major change management role to ensure that the staff and the business processes are ready for the implementation of EUCLID whilst at the same time delivery high quality operational activities.