University of Edinburgh

Job Description

1. Job Details

Job title: User Support Work Group Leader

School/Support Department: Information Services

Unit (if applicable): Data Library/EDINA

Line manager: User Support Manager

2. Job Purpose

Leader of two workgroups with responsibility for the provision of detailed and comprehensive helpdesk support, online documentation and the EDINA website. Responsible for promotion of the EDINA national services and organisation and supervision of workgroup staff members’ workload.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. Provide expert support and advice on the use of EDINA services; particularly complex queries referred by junior staff.  
   Approx. % of time: 20%

2. Direct and manage the development and delivery of JISC funded national services in collaboration with EDINA senior service delivery managers and engineers.
   Approx. % of time: 15%

3. Business Development, including liaison with vendors of core datasets and facilitating negotiations with JISC with the aim of acquiring access to these datasets for the academic community.
   Approx. % of time: 10%

4. Provide supervision and guidance to User Support staff workgroup members
   Approx. % of time: 10%

5. Promotional and outreach activity, including presenting and leading workshops at relevant conferences and exhibitions
   Approx. % of time: 20%

6. Liaise with user support and service delivery teams to ensure timely delivery of service upgrades
   Approx. % of time: 15%

7. Contribute to monitoring and reporting procedures
   Approx. % of time: 5%

8. Advise senior management on user support strategies and working practices
   Approx. % of time: 5%

4. Planning and Organising

The post-holder is required to plan and organise activities in collaboration with senior colleagues or take delegated responsibility for longer term planning of policies and procedures for the overall direction of the workgroup area.

Forward planning between six months to three years is required for the effective project management of new service roll-out or existing service improvements. Forward planning is also required before the end of service agreements. There is a continual planning cycle for data updates, addition of new facilities and upgrades to the user interface. Input to the planning of a possible extension to the current service is also required.

Promotional activities including organised events must be arranged in good time, in order to present a forthcoming calendar to the funding bodies and other stakeholders.

5. Problem Solving

Identifying and resolving both user enquiries and service problems as they occur requires a depth of technical knowledge and excellent analytical skills. Good judgment is required in resolving problems, involving others where appropriate or dealing with them personally. The post-holder must ensure
effective delegation to workgroup members occurs. Other challenges include overcoming technical problems at conference venues and providing instant clear responses to delegate enquiries.

6. Decision Making
The post-holder works largely on their own initiative referring where appropriate to the User Support Manager or Service Delivery Managers for guidance. The majority of the day to day decisions, do not require upward reference, but are expected to be open to scrutiny and justification. The post-holder makes strategic recommendations to senior managers on a range of service issues and identifies trends and recurring problems, in order to devise policies and procedures for resolution, and to inform service revision and decides with the Service Delivery Manager the appropriate time to implement changes. The post-holder determines the priority of competing demands on the promotional budget within the constraints of service level definitions and ensures that effective delegation to workgroup members occurs.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships
The post-holder is required to liaise with senior members of staff at JISC; senior executives from vendors of core datasets; key senior librarians and support staff within subscribing institutions; senior academics and high-profile users of the EDINA services. The post-holder works closely with other members of the EDINA user support team, including the training officer and service delivery teams and senior management within EDINA.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
Relevant academic qualifications, a good honours degree as a minimum, a postgraduate degree plus 3-5 years related experience. A thorough knowledge of the higher and further education sectors, and an appreciation of the use and availability of data in the commercial world is also essential. The post-holder is required to attend and present papers to national and international conferences and to deliver presentations to external organisations. Excellent writing, IT, organisational and supervisory skills, including technical explanations in non-technical language and considerable practical experience in supporting an online, specialised service are also prerequisites. Some supervisory experience is desirable.

9. Dimensions
EDINA services are used by over 400 institutions from UK higher and further education with over 400,000 user sessions per year. Subscribers use the services for a number of teaching, research and course work purposes and expect the service to be reliably available round the clock. An effective, efficient and professional helpdesk and web presence is essential to maintain the reputation of EDINA as a national data centre. The post-holder represents EDINA and the UoE at national and international conferences and professional meetings by presenting papers and taking part in debates/discussion groups.

The post-holder has overall responsibility for marketing and outreach within EDINA and expert bibliographic user support. Other responsibilities include: Workgroup leader for Web and Documentation group (1 Computing Assistant, 2 Computing Officers), Helpdesk Manager (2 Computing Assistants) a total 4.5 FTEs and acts as Deputy User Support Team Manager.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
The activities of EDINA and its performance have a high national and international profile.