Imperial College London

Job Description

Job Title: Senior Disability Advisor

Section: Disability Advisory Service

Department/Division: Educational Quality

Job Family/Level: Professional, Technical and Operational Services Services, Level 4

Responsible to: Head of Imperial College Disability Advisory Service
Director of Student Support

Responsible for: Disability Advisors (in conjunction with the Head of the Disability Advisory Service)

Key Working Relationships:
(Internal) Director of Student Support, Head of the Disability Advisory Service, Disability Advisory Service team, Departmental Disability Officers, Imperial College Student Union Sabbatical officers, the Personal Assistant to the Pro Rector (Education), International Office.

Other agencies involved in student welfare
College Tutors, Senior Tutors, Departmental academic and administrative staff, Registry, Imperial College Health Centre, Student Counselling Service, Hall Wardens, Student Accommodation Centre, Student Union Advice Centre, College Safety Office, Facilities Management, Diversity and Equality Office, Occupational Health Service, Campus Services, Outreach and the International Student Support Service.

Key Working Relationships:
(External) Student Finance England, Student Awards Agency for Scotland, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Finance Wales, Research Councils UK, Local Authorities and Social Services, External professionals (Educational psychologists, Medical practitioners and DSA Needs Assessors), National Association of Disability
Summary of post

As part of the Disability Advisory Service team, and responsible to the Head of the Disability Advisory Service, the Senior Disability Advisor will contribute to a student-centred specialist advice and guidance service. The post holder will lead the operational management of the advice team; provide line management and case work supervision to the team of Disability Advisors (currently comprising two part time staff). S/he will maintain their own case work portfolio, providing advice and assistance for individual applicants and current students, and oversee arrangements for their support, dealing in particular with the more complex cases. S/he will take responsibility for the casework allocation within the team so as to ensure the progress of support for all disclosed students. Under the direction of the Head of the Disability Advisory Service and the Director for Student Support, the post holder will contribute to the work of the Disability Advisory Service in the formulation, promotion, monitoring, and review of the Service delivered to disabled students at Imperial College London, including those students with specific learning difficulties, to ensure legal and contractual obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Key Responsibilities

Management

- Provide day to day leadership and case work supervision for the team of Disability Advisors (currently comprising two part time staff).
- Manage the continuing professional development of the advice team.
- Take responsibility for the casework allocation, and the progress of student support, for all disclosed students.
- Oversee the Departmental Disability Officers scheme, ensuring that a disability contact is named by each department and that training and development opportunities are cascaded.
Advisory Lead

- Provide confidential, impartial advice and support to students with a range of disabilities including: physical and sensory impairments, specific learning difficulties, Asperger's Syndrome, and enduring mental or physical health difficulties, to enable them to participate fully in their studies at Imperial College London.

- Advise students on applications for the Disabled Students' Allowance.

- Undertake initial screening for risk factors of specific learning difficulties, and advise on referral for full diagnostic assessment where appropriate.

- Support individual students in accessing support from social services for the provision of personal care.

- Provide advice to departments (academic and non-academic) on the provision of appropriate reasonable adjustments to support individual disabled students.

- Advise prospective disabled students and their families on accessibility issues, the support available to students at Imperial College, physical and sensory impairments, specific learning difficulties, Asperger's Syndrome, and enduring mental or physical health difficulties.

- Advise academic staff and departments/divisions, Estates, and Accommodation on appropriate reasonable adjustments to ensure individual students can access their studies.

- Work collaboratively with the members of the Disability Advisory Service team.

- Contribute to the Disability Advisory Service by providing an advice service across all College campuses.

Strategy

- Work with the Head of Service and the Specific Learning Difficulties/Dyslexia Coordinator to develop long term goals for the benefit of the department and the College as a whole.

- Contribute to the work of the Disability Advisory Service in the formulation, promotion, monitoring and review of the Service delivered to disabled students at Imperial College London.

- Take responsibility for overseeing the collection and monitoring of statistical data on disabled students at Imperial College London. Work with the Service Office
Manager on analysing the data collected to identify trends and areas for further analysis and improvement, to inform the development of the Service.

- Support the Head of Service in reviewing and evaluating the development of the Advice Service to contribute to the annual reports for the Student Welfare Committee, Disability Action Committee and Equalities Committee. Review and evaluate student usage of the Service, highlight trends, and propose courses of action to influence strategic planning for the Service.

- Contribute to the regular review of Service policies and procedures.

Committees and Meetings

- Together with the SpLD Coordinator, deputise for the Head of the Disability Advisory Service when she is absent and provide support to her in the development of the Service, attending committee meeting as appropriate.

- Together with Specific Learning Difficulties/ Dyslexia Co-ordinator, provide support to the Head of the Disability Advisory Service in the development of the Service.

- In conjunction with the Head of Service and the Specific Learning Difficulties/ Dyslexia Coordinator, contribute to, and deliver, disability awareness training.

Other Duties

- Under the direction of the Head of Service, lead on specific projects, including Disability Awareness Week and the employability of disabled graduates, and other relevant projects that enhance the student experience.

- Under the direction of the Head of Service provide professional advice and support about disability issues to the Disability Advisory Service team, the broader College community, and external agencies.

- Undertake other duties, projects, or special tasks assigned by the Director of Student Support.
Applicants are required to demonstrate that they possess the following attributes.

**Imperial Expectations**
These are the 7 principles that Imperial leaders, managers and supervisors are expected to follow:
1) Champion a positive approach to change and opportunity
2) Communicate regularly and effectively within, and across, teams
3) Consider the thoughts and expectations of others
4) Deliver positive outcomes
5) Encourage inclusive participation and eliminate discrimination
6) Support and develop staff to optimise talent
7) Work in a planned and managed way

**Education and Qualifications**
- Educated to degree level or equivalent.

**Knowledge**
- A proven track record of giving advice, guidance, and facilitating support for disabled people, and preferably with disabled students.
- Evidence of relevant continuing professional development in the field of disability support.
- Knowledge of the legal framework within which disability support is delivered, preferably within an educational environment.
- Expert knowledge of the range of ‘reasonable adjustments’ in relation to an inclusive learning environment.
- Experience of working with clients from a diverse range of cultural and socio-economic groups.
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding of a range of disabilities and specific learning difficulties, and the effects of these on accessing learning.
- Expert knowledge of the Disabled Student's Allowance.
- Be able to demonstrate a sound understanding of the Equality Act 2010.
Experience of undertaking screening for indicators of specific learning difficulties.

**Competencies, Skills and Abilities**

- Proven competence in interacting effectively with both Service users and staff at all levels across the College, recognising the demands of an academic environment and the specific challenges that these present.
- Proven ability to use own initiative and work independently.
- Experience of providing leadership and supervision for a small team.
- Evidence of working and liaising effectively with senior staff and external bodies relevant to disability issues.
- Be able to demonstrate a commitment to working collaboratively as part of a team.
- Excellent IT skills, including Microsoft Office, and experience of databases.
- Experience of data management, including the writing of reports, and problem identification / resolution.
- The ability to prioritise and plan activities, and work accurately under pressure to meet deadlines.
- Proven ability to keep thorough and accurate client case notes, and ensure compliance with confidentiality policies, professional standards, and Data Protection legislation.
- An understanding of the importance of equality of opportunity within an advice service environment.
- The ability to deal sensitively, diplomatically, and maintain boundaries within a confidential setting.
- The ability to remain calm, adaptable, and professional within a busy environment when dealing with challenging clients in difficult situations.
- Willingness to travel to different campuses.
- A commitment to continuing professional development.
The following would be advantageous:

- Experience of delivering disability awareness training.
- Be able to demonstrate a higher level of expertise in providing advice and practical support within one or more of the following groups: physical or mobility difficulties, hearing impaired, mental health issues, or autism spectrum conditions.
- Experience of having worked in a higher education institution.
- Knowledge of welfare and disability benefits.

Any other requirements

As this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a satisfactory standard Disclosure and Barring Service check will be required for the successful candidate. Further information about the DBS disclosure process can be found at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/ or by telephoning 0870 90 90 811. You may also wish to view the College’s policy statements on the Recruitment and Employment of Ex-Offenders and the Secure Storage, Use, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information.