JOB DESCRIPTION

1. JOB TITLE: Widening Participation Officer: Diversity and Inclusion

2. ROLE CODE: MRAOS7

3. DEPARTMENT: Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions (MRA)

4. ORGANISATION CHART:

5. JOB PURPOSE:

The post-holder is responsible for the Widening Participation (WP) activity within the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Service, along with the existing WP Officer (0.6fte). This includes organising all WP based events and activities, while also being a point of reference for information, advice and guidance for prospective students, with specific focus on those applying from non-standard routes of entry.

The role has two areas of focus, of which 0.4fte (2 days) of the role is a job share with the current 0.6fte WP Officer, while the other 0.6fte (3 days) concentrates on expanding the University’s recruitment base with respect to
diversity - most specifically BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) applicants. The post holder works collaboratively with colleagues in the Outreach Office to fulfil the strategic objectives of the WP post, while also enhancing the diversity-specific aims of the Department and the University.

6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Widening access and participation is a fundamental part of the University's recruitment strategy. An increasing commitment to educational inclusion by funding bodies and post-16 providers means that liaison between the University and the post-16 sector, and the co-ordination of University-based WP activities, are an important, and form a central theme within the remit of the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Service.

7. WORK PERFORMED AND/OR KEY RESULT AREAS:

7.1 Communication

7.1.1 Communicates extensively with people both inside and outside the institution with regard to institutional, local and national WP activities and updates (such as University and Departmental colleagues, prospective students and their parents/guardians/advisers, head teachers, sixth form advisers, AimHigher, the Connexions Service, event organisers.)

7.1.2 Communicates in person, by telephone and in writing to inform, advise, and guide prospective students from across a diverse range of applicants and potential applicants. This includes those from underrepresented groups, gifted and talented pre-HE students and mature students.

7.1.3 Develops the most suitable approach in regards to the level and content of each group communications, in order to best meet their advice and guidance needs. The post holder must also perform these same functions on a one-to-one advisory basis.

7.1.4 Provides a comprehensive advisory service for applicants to all programmes of study offered at Chester, and to promote student diversity through widening participation activities.

7.1.5 Promotes the offerings of the University to a wide range of students from standard and non-standard routes of entry, to support the University’s diversity policies, with particularly with reference to those with a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background, students who declare themselves as disabled (hidden or physical), and any other minority group.

7.1.6 Supports colleagues in other departments by disseminating information to help them develop an understanding of Government and institutional access policies.
7.1.7 Forms links with partner institutions, community groups and employers, and identifying progression routes from these providers to the University.

7.1.8 Develops external links within the context of local Cheshire networks (Cheshire West and Chester, as well as Cheshire East), to further secure progression opportunities for sub regional, non-traditional students.

7.1.9 Interacts extensively with academic and administrative staff at the University and with external agencies.

7.1.10 Acts as the departmental contact for all enquiries in need of special attention. These may include enquiries such as disability support, general diversity issues, and the University’s Diversity and Equality strategy.

7.1.11 Acts as the central point of reference within the University for advice and guidance about post-16 qualifications and non-standard higher education qualifications. The remit includes drafting appropriate guidelines for advising prospective students, with a specific focus on the requirements of applicants from groups currently under-represented in higher education.

7.1.12 Must be able to provide talks, presentations, information, advice, guidance in any academic or pastoral subject related to higher education application to any potential audience when requested.

7.2 Teamwork and Motivation

7.2.1 Develops and maintains interactive projects with University colleagues and with external agencies, such as specific school partnerships that encourage applicant and student diversity.

7.2.2 Works closely with colleagues across the institution involved in the Widening Participation strategy, such as Student Guidance and Support Services and the Finance Department in order to identify mature students eligible for extra funding support, applicants with special needs and non-traditional entry qualifications.

7.2.3 Liaises with academic staff and other internal departments in the provision of student/applicant information, notably those colleagues within the Outreach Team and the wider Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions department.

7.2.4 Works closely with all teams within the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Service to ensure that they are aware of any legislation regarding our responsibilities with regards to diversity.

7.2.5 Works closely with the University’s admissions teams to ensure that the offer-making process promotes diversity. This could take the form of participating in the offer-making process and maintaining an offer-based statistical record.
7.3 Liaison and Networking

7.3.1 Works closely with the Project Co-ordinator: Minority Ethnic Recruitment Project, based within the Faculty of Education and Children’s Services, to develop a University wide strategic approach.

7.3.2 Works closely with colleagues based in Student Support and Guidance to establish BME Student focus groups.

7.3.3 Works with Academic staff across the Institution who are undertaking research Diversity and Equality, where appropriate.

7.3.4 Develops and maintains the institution’s Widening Participation (WP) profile by forming operational links with other educational providers, community groups and employers.

7.3.5 Acts as operational link between Aim Higher colleagues and the University of Chester.

7.3.6 Works closely with colleagues in Marketing to support the effective development of University marketing and communications operations in support of WP and student recruitment objectives.

7.3.7 Represents the University of Chester on external committees and partnership groups (e.g. Open College Network, Access Consortium, Cheshire Guidance Partnership).

7.3.8 Supports Further Education consortium co-workers by facilitating progression routes from schools, the community and employers to FE and HE.

7.3.9 Builds and maintains a network of partner feeder institutions, and to undertake fieldwork with under-represented groups within the network.

7.3.10 Represents the University on regional committees and groups, for example, the previous system of Education Action Zones, while also supporting LSC (Learning Skills Council) funding bids with them.

7.3.11 Maintains links with partner institutions in order to fulfil the University’s widening participation strategy. Maintaining networks of contacts is integral to the role.

7.3.12 Attends internal groups associated with diversity issues. This may include attendance at committees such as the Disabled Persons Sub-Committee, and the Disabled Students Group. Attendance of the Diversity and Equality meeting may be required alongside the Director of the MRA department.

7.3.13 Liaises with internal contacts such as teaching and non-teaching staff; senior managers, admissions tutors, programme leaders, heads of subject,
admissions and recruitment colleagues, Careers, and Student Guidance and Support Services.

7.3.14 Liaises with external contacts such as members of the public, school and college tutors and advisers, LEA staff and careers officers, as well as continuously forming new links and memberships with local strategy groups within the concept of WP issues.

**7.4 Service Delivery**

7.4.1 Works to meet the objectives determined by the University’s Single Equality Scheme.

7.4.2 Works with Staff/Student Diversity Officers as and when required.

7.4.3 Co-ordinates community, schools and colleges liaison activities relating to WP, including giving seminars and workshops.

7.4.4 Manages on and off campus based events and activities to enhance opportunities for Access to HE students currently excluded from post-16 provision.

7.4.5 Provides an advisory service to all potential students requesting guidance, with particular emphasis on applicants from groups currently under-represented in higher education.

7.4.6 Advises partner institutions and individuals about the University’s opportunities bursaries schemes.

7.4.7 Offers higher education information, advice and guidance to post-16 tutors and careers advisers, and offering a customer-focused service for all internal and external clients.

7.4.8 Offers advice and guidance to students wishing to enter undergraduate programmes.

**7.5 Decision Making**

7.5.1 Reporting directly to the Outreach Manager, the post holder has considerable freedom to develop the role as well as the activities of the post.

7.5.2 Daily work is unsupervised, although overall direction and departmental strategy will be formulated by the Director of the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions, and Outreach strategy devised with the Outreach Manager, in line with current government directives on educational inclusion.

7.5.3 Alongside day-to-day tasks, on-the-spot diversity-specific decisions are made in regards to the wider remit within the role, ensuring appropriate monitoring and evaluation processes are being adhered to.
7.5.4 Works in collaboration with the Widening Participation Officer (0.6) to ensure a co-ordinated approach is delivered across the role and allows the decision making process to be agreed upon across the Outreach office.

7.5.5 Make independent decisions on a day-to-day basis in regards to issues affecting the role, while also working with the Outreach Manager in decisions affecting strategy and delivery.

**7.6 Planning and Organising Resources**

7.6.1 The post holder is not a budget holder. However, responsibility for oversight of expenditure and reporting for diversity-related activities within the Outreach cost centre fall within the remit of the post holder.

7.6.2 Devises and co-ordinates recruitment and admissions-based WAP projects, events and partnership initiatives.

7.6.3 Personal responsibility for equipment including hardware and software for internal use, as well as for equipment and materials for external use.

7.6.4 Responsible for co-ordinating the financial arrangements between the Department and AimHigher, agreeing and monitoring AimHigher costs for academic staffing support at events, and the charge back system through the Department.

**7.7 Initiative and Problem Solving**

7.7.1 Negotiates progression links with external institutions and agencies from post-16 courses to the University of Chester programmes of study.

7.7.2 Develops links with other regional groups, for example, Education Action Zones, to increase the University’s profile within the sub-region.

7.7.3 Develops links with other potential providers with a view to increasing applications from ethnic minority groups.

7.7.4 Responsible for specific targeting of events, schools, colleges and local networks aimed at increasing awareness, and enrolments, of those students from an ethnic minority group.

7.7.5 Arranges and conducts guidance interviews for non-HE students, signposting the appropriate pre-HE programmes and making appropriate referrals.

7.7.6 Acts as the central point of reference within the University for advice and guidance about post-16 qualifications and non-standard higher education qualifications. The remit includes drafting appropriate guidelines for advising prospective students, with a specific focus on the requirements of applicants from groups currently under-represented in higher education.
7.7.7 Delivers impartial information, advice and guidance, to prospective students while always ensuring the integrity of its delivery as a staff member at the University of Chester.

7.7.8 Must be fully equipped to answer questions on external organisations other than the University of Chester while ensuring an appropriate level of professionalism is always maintained, e.g., have an awareness of the courses provided by other Universities.

7.7.9 Must be able to provide talks/presentations/information/advice/guidance in any academic or pastoral subject related to higher education application to any potential audience when requested

**7.8 Analysis and Research**

7.8.1 Supports the University’s e-learning strategy, and encourages its use in community environments.

7.8.2 Maintains a statistical record of WP admissions, and tracks their continued trends and achievement.

7.8.3 Evaluates and disseminates WP statistical material.

7.8.4 Manages data collection that contributes towards curriculum developments that facilitate the transition from post-16 curriculum and HE, and advises on student support within the context of WAP.

7.8.5 Collects and manages specific data with regard to applications and external schools contacts with respect to diversity requirements, ensuring appropriate data is collected and analysed in regards to the key performance indicators of the Outreach Team.

7.8.6 Analyses UCAS management information with respect to diversity recruitment.

**7.9 Sensory and Physical Demands**

7.9.1 Generally, as expected of an administrative post.

7.9.2 Significant amounts of travelling, off campus work and some out of hours work.

**7.10 Work Environment**

7.10.1 Working Conditions: Individual workstation in a shared office. Considerable off-campus work, as well as some travelling.

7.10.2 Will be expected to spend some time at the University’s Warrington Campus.
7.10.3 Hazards: As expected from office equipment.

7.10.4 Is expected to show sensitivity to those the role holder comes into contact with.

**7.11 Pastoral Care and Welfare**

7.11.1 Responsible for actively contributing to the implementation of University policies (e.g. on Diversity and Equality, Health and Safety, Staff Development etc.) and to seek to ensure that these policies are followed by their colleagues across the MRA department.

7.11.2 Encourages and motivates colleagues within the Outreach Team.

**7.12 Team Development**

7.12.1 Attends workshops relating to guidance and developments in higher education, and keeps colleagues up to date with changes in the post-16 sector, as they impact upon the WP mission of the University.

7.12.2 Keeps colleagues apprised of government policy on inclusion.

7.12.3 Maintains an up-to-date understanding of government policy, new post-16 qualifications, the 16-19/HE interface, insofar as they affect progressions routes, and mentors and advises colleagues involved in admissions and recruitment of these issues.

7.12.4 Regularly updates and informs colleagues within the MRA Service regarding Government policy and procedure in regards to Diversity issues.

**7.13 Teaching and Learning Support**

7.13.1 Provides cascade training on pre-HE sector issues for other colleagues in the department and across the university where necessary.

**7.14 Knowledge and Experience**

7.14.1 An honours degree or equivalent qualification.

7.14.2 A minimum of three years experience in an education-related field or institution, including experience specific experience in a diversity setting.

7.14.3 Experience in the use of PC database, spreadsheet and word processing packages is also necessary.

7.14.4 Specific knowledge of post-16 qualifications and higher education entry criteria is essential, and an understanding of the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and the principles of work-based learning are desirable.
7.14.5 An understanding of progression routes, the changing structure of 14-19 education, and current government directives on inclusion are also essential.

7.14.6 Familiarity with issues relating to educational inclusion and progression is also essential, with specific knowledge within the field of minority representation within the HE sector.

7.14.7 Must have the ability to build and maintain complex networks of contacts, and some experience of working with young people.

7.14.8 Personal qualities should include tact, diplomacy and patience, being a good listener, yet firm and confident with advice and guidance.

7.14.9 A lively personal interest in education, and a willingness to learn are also valuable assets.

7.14.10 A Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check is required.


7.15 General

7.15.1 Undertakes any other duties commensurate with your grade, and/or hours of work, as may reasonably be required of the role by the Outreach Manager, Director of the MRA Department, as well as Senior Managers responsible for Widening Participation.

7.15.2 Takes responsibility for upholding and complying with the University’s Equality and Diversity policies and for behaving in ways that are consistent with fair and equal treatment for all.

7.15.3 Complies with all University Health and Safety policies.

7.15.4 Performs other general duties as may be reasonably requested.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Essential OR Desirable</th>
<th>Method of identification (i.e. application form, interview, test)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifications:</strong></td>
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<td>Selection Panel use this section to match your skills and abilities to the criteria outlined</td>
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<tr>
<td>An honours degree or equivalent professional qualification</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Application Form</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proven Experience:</strong></td>
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<td>A minimum of 3 years’ experience in an education-related field or institution.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Application Form and Interview</td>
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<td><strong>Knowledge, skills and abilities:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Other Attributes:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Good organisational skills, tact and diplomacy.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Flexibility of approach, ability to work on one’s own initiative, and capable of integrating into a closely-knit team.</td>
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**Essential Requirements** are those, without which, a candidate would not be able to do the job. Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the short listing stage.

**Desirable Requirements** are those that would be useful for the post holder to possess and will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirement.
UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT
WIDENING PARTICIPATION OFFICER – DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

SALARY SCALE
University Scale OS7, points 23 - 26, £24,273 - £26,523 per annum payable monthly in arrears.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT
It is a requirement of this post that within 12 months of appointment, the post-holder should live within a 30 mile radius or within a one hour travelling time by public transport from the University.

HOURS OF WORK
Monday to Thursday 9.00am - 5.30pm
Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm
A flexible approach to work will be required as there may be occasions when it would be necessary for you to work additional hours as dictated by the workload.

HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT
22 days per annum (pro-rata during the commencement and cessation years), rising to 27 days after five years’ continuous service. Two extra statutory days per annum during the Christmas period.

CRB CHECKS
The successful applicant will have to undergo a CRB check before an appointment can be made.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION
Successful candidates will be required to complete an Occupational Health questionnaire, and may be required to undergo a medical examination.

ESSENTIAL CERTIFICATES
Short-listed candidates will be asked to bring to interview, proof of qualifications as outlined on the Job Description and Person Specification provided. Upon appointment, copies of essential certificates will be required by HRM Services.

PENSION SCHEME
The University is an admitted body to the Cheshire local government pension scheme. All support staff are eligible for membership of the scheme, and upon appointment, will be asked to indicate whether or not they wish to join the scheme.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
The University has a policy of equal opportunity aimed at treating all applicants for employment fairly.

SMOKING POLICY
The University operates a No-Smoking policy.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD
A nine months’ probationary period applies to all University posts.

CLOSING DATE
Completed application forms should be returned to HRM Services, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ, no later than Thursday 11th November 2010 at 12:00 noon quoting reference number HRMS/10027.