Job Description

Academic Librarian

Salary: Grade 7
Contract: Part time, ongoing
Location: Canterbury Campus/Medway Campus (will be across both campuses)
Responsible to: Academic Library Services Manager
Job family: Administrative, professional and managerial

Job purpose

Engages and partners with academic Schools, as embedded information liaison specialists, to ensure excellent communication and collaboration between IS Learning and Research Resources (LRR) across relevant education and research matters.

Supports students and academics when they need help with the identification, selection or use of library and information resources for their academic activity. Designs and delivers specialised, discipline-specific digital literacy training to support all levels of academic activity ensuring they are visible and valued by Schools.

Works with Schools to develop and enhance our academic library collections to support education, engagement and research activity and to inform the strategic and operational development and delivery of the specialist Learning and Research Resources service offer for research and education.

Key accountabilities

The following are the main duties for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Establish and sustain excellent working partnerships at all levels with designated Schools, and through their networks to develop a detailed knowledge of School education, research and engagement priorities, to inform, develop and maintain a service offer that supports disciplinary needs.

- Foster collaborative agreement and interdisciplinary working across Schools, such as for the adoption of common systems, processes and ways of working, in order to deliver visible, valued and consistent experience of LRR services.

- Provide support, expertise, guidance and training, as required for the range of LRR services, referring to specialist LRR teams so that library collections and services for education and research meet disciplinary needs.

- Lead on development for designated areas of service, working closely with the Academic Library Services Manager and as part of a matrix LRR team, to inform planning, liaison practices and maintain continual service improvement.

- Work closely with and across Schools to identify short and long term resource requirements, plan and monitor spend, address issues, identify funding requirements and create investment plans for library resources, to ensure proactive and well managed spend supporting education and research needs.

- Lead on strategic collection development for designated disciplines, and engage and work in partnership with Schools to build awareness of, co-create and promote the use of relevant collections within education, research and external engagement activity.

- Design, embed and lead in the delivery of embedded information literacy programmes to support student skills development aligned to the intended learning outcomes for academic courses and modules.

- Plan, manage and deliver IS projects and engage in departmental planning processes to ensure effective representation of divisional and academic requirements and to inform effective service development.

- Participate in professional activities and networks to ensure excellent professional practice, in order to maintain a culture of innovation and best practice.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- Is required to develop sustainable, respectful and collegial relationships with university colleagues at all levels so as to flag and address opportunities, issues and concerns that may arise.
- Deal with high levels of uncertainty and change, supporting colleagues and teams to provide an exemplar for wider colleagues to embrace new ways of working, process change and service redesign.
- Deciding when to deal with managerial or confidential enquiries or to refer elsewhere.
- Managing a demanding annual work-plan and working collaboratively with colleagues and teams, prioritising activity in light of their workload to ensure delivery of an efficient and customer focused service.
- Work collaboratively with all stakeholders to reach agreed ways forward for identified areas of challenge, listening, negotiating, and advising to address complex issues and offer sustainable solutions.

Facts & figures

- Services delivered directly to: Academic Schools, all students and staff including Medway campus. Internal and external partners, schools, colleges and users.
- Services: Resource requirement services (including the Reading List Service). Enquiries and embedded training services.
- Acquire and demonstrate the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours to support the ethical use and creation of copyright material within the University.
- Annual budget: Awareness of costs of resource spend against available funds to ensure optimal use of budget. Offers input to resource planning processes to support service maintenance, development and decision making. Project budgets c£100 - £1,000.
- Project portfolio: Annual project management or membership of project teams (c. 1-3 yearly).
- Training and events: Regularly for students, staff, departments, internal and external partners, schools and colleges. University Open Days.
- External scrutiny: NSS, REF, Periodic Course Reviews, accreditations.
- Membership of: IS Team meetings, IS project teams, some IS governance groups. Representing as required.

Internal & external relationships

Internal:

- Academic Schools and Professional Services Departments (PSD) staff – communicating, collaborating, training, supporting. Dealing with issues and concerns, liaising for support and service developments and feedback.
- Students – advising, training, supporting.
- IS managers – advising and supporting.
- IS staff – managing, advising, supporting.

External:

- Other Universities, professional and academic networks – networking, liaising.
- Professional bodies – networking, presenting and training, conference attendance.
- External suppliers and contractors – feedback and monitoring.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Conflict resolution
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends
- Ability to occasionally travel in a timely and efficient manner between campuses

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- Degree/postgraduate qualification in library/archive/information management or equivalent experience (A)
- Ability to manage and address complex issues, such as through coordinating and directing staff across multiple teams via projects or working groups, to support optimal outcomes for education, research and engagement services (A,I)
- Comprehensive experience of engagement and liaison, with the ability to communicate clearly and frame important issues, to influence stakeholders and support good decision-making (A,I)
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to balance a variety of tasks whilst delivering results and meeting deadlines (A,I)
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work confidently and diplomatically with people in all parts of the organisation and at all levels (A,I)
- Broad range of knowledge and understanding of information provision across education and research, such as open access and copyright, with specialist knowledge of information literacy to deliver training and support (A,I)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills with the ability to create and present clear and concise information to deliver excellent specialist support for students and academic colleagues (A,T)
- The ability to gather, analyse and present data and information effectively (A)
- Good IT skills (A)

- Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research (I)

- Commitment to deliver and promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- Professional registration (e.g. CILIP Certification, FHEA, etc) (A)

- Experience of managing projects (A)

- Financial monitoring or budget experience (A)

- Experience or knowledge of higher education settings (A)

- Familiarity with M365 (A)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage