

Doctoral College Manager

Job Ref: REQ240555

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Background

The Doctoral College

The Doctoral College is an interdisciplinary group of colleagues from across a range of Academic Schools and Professional Services, working together to support around 1400 Doctoral Researchers across our Loughborough and London campuses. The College enhances the doctoral experience by promoting a vibrant community with outstanding support for personal and professional development to those undertaking research degrees. The Doctoral College Office (based in the Academic Registry) is a small, dedicated team within the broader Doctoral College.

Further information on the Doctoral College is available here <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/study/doctoral-college/>

The Academic Registry

The Academic Registry is responsible for central student and programme administration at the University and supports the work of the University's academic Schools, governance, and academic decision-making processes. It has three sections, the Student Office, the Programme Quality and Teaching Partnerships Office, and the Doctoral College Office (of which this role is a part).

Further information on the Academic Registry is available here: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/registry/>

Further information on the Doctoral College Office is available here: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/registry/dco/>

Background to the role

The Doctoral College Office (DCO) team is responsible for a broad range of administrative processes and Doctoral Researcher lifecycle activities whilst maintaining the University's core student records. This varied role is one of two Doctoral College Manager positions within the team. The two postholders work collaboratively across a range of activities, including some student casework, managing the team of DCO Administrators, and providing specialist guidance and support for all aspects of research degree administration, from admission to graduation.

At Loughborough University, the Doctoral College Office plays an integral role in supporting colleagues within each of our Academic Schools to deliver student lifecycle activities. The Doctoral College Manager provides ongoing advice to academic and administrative colleagues on the University's regulations, policy, and procedure as well as research degree funding and financial processes. The role requires strong technical understanding of various University systems and will play a significant contribution to deliver compliance procedures and produce statutory reports for internal and external stakeholders.

Working with the other Doctoral College Manager, the postholder will work with a high degree of autonomy and will be responsible to manage the planning and delivery of the Doctoral College Office's operational workloads across the team. The role will also work to support the training of School Administrators with the aim of driving greater consistency and efficiency in operational activities, as well as improving the Doctoral Researcher experience.

The successful candidate will join a high-performing team with strong people, data, and digital skills. Training and development will be provided across all elements of the role, and opportunities to be involved in wider project and operational activity may also be available.

Job Description

Job Grade

Management and Specialist Grade 6

Job Purpose

Based within the Doctoral College Office (DCO) in Academic Registry, this post is a key management position which works collaboratively to manage a team of DCO Administrators. The team is responsible for a range of Doctoral Researcher administrative processes and maintains the University's core student records. The specific responsibilities of this postholder include Doctoral Researcher recruitment and engagement operations, research degree finance, immigration compliance, statutory reporting, as well as some aspects of registration and examination processes.

In addition, the post holder shares responsibility for handling a case load of complex student circumstances and provides specialist advice on research degree regulations and procedures, regularly monitoring Doctoral Researcher records and continuously monitoring DCO processes to ensure compliance across our activities. The post also includes some project work and contributions to wider DCO, Academic Registry and University priorities.

Job Duties

1. In conjunction with the other Doctoral College Manager and Officer, to manage the operational workloads of the Doctoral College Administrators including responsibility for: line management (one or two direct reports); Performance and Development Reviews; performance management; structure of duties; recruitment and succession planning; training and sharing of knowledge amongst the team.
2. Under the direction of the Assistant Registrar (Recruitment & Partnerships), to take a leading role in management of operational processes for administering the central applications and admissions procedure for Doctoral Researchers. This will include:
 - a. Supporting the assessment of eligibility for admission and tuition fee purposes, interpretation and application of regulations and liaison with Academic Schools, the Admissions Office, and applicants.
 - b. To oversee the advertising process for PhD opportunities, liaising with colleagues in Schools and Marketing and Advancement as necessary to ensure that adverts are placed in a timely way.
 - c. To support the Assistant Registrar (Recruitment & Partnerships) to carry out analysis of post graduate student population data and develop reports for informing recruitment initiatives and studentship allocation decisions and contributing to projects aimed at improving operational aspects of admissions policy, processes, and systems.
3. To share responsibility with the other Doctoral College Manager for managing a student case load, including:
 - a. Under the direction of the Assistant Registrars, providing support and guidance to complex cases that have been escalated from the DCO Administrative team, escalating more serious cases onto the Assistant Registrar (Quality & Experience) or (Recruitment & Partnerships), where appropriate.
 - b. Under the direction of the Assistant Registrars, providing advice to School and DCO staff on complex student records and related issues and the application of University regulations in specific student cases i.e., managing requests to waive regulations in exceptional circumstances.
 - c. Provide advice to Academic Schools, the Associate Deans (Research & Innovation), and Directors of Doctoral Programmes on aspects of research degree programme administration.
 - d. Supporting the Senior Assistant Registrar in coordinating and reviewing materials connected to student complaints or appeals as appropriate.
4. To develop a thorough understanding of the UK Visa and Immigration's points-based immigration system requirements and compliance. Working with the other Doctoral College Manager to take a leading role at university-level in managing the University's operational student engagement processes including:
 - a. Reviewing and improving processes and systems associated with recording, evaluating, and following up on student engagement.
 - b. Developing and maintaining guidance for staff and students and providing training and advice to School staff undertaking student engagement processes, including providing responses to complex queries.
 - c. To monitor Doctoral Researcher records to ensure that the visa information held is accurate and to ensuring prompt reporting of any students whose sponsorship circumstances have changed.

- d. To represent the Doctoral College on the Immigration Compliance working group and keep the team updated with changes in policy or process.
5. To develop a thorough understanding of research degree financial procedures including a detailed understanding of the rules of funding bodies for different schemes and providing specialist advice to Schools and applicants. Working alongside the other Doctoral College Manager duties will include:
 - a. Oversight of financial checks and authorising offers for university studentship funding.
 - b. Responsibility for managing the tuition fee billing process for research students.
 - c. Work closely with colleagues in the Finance Office when a doctoral researcher is identified as a debtor and to follow up on complex cases in accordance with the debtor policy and relevant regulations.
 - d. Oversight and running of the monthly payroll for payment of studentships.
 - e. To work closely with the Assistant Registrar (Recruitment and Partnerships) to develop an understanding of the rules for funding bodies schemes and maintain oversight of the allocation of internally funded studentships, scholarships, and other financial awards.
 6. Collating and managing data quality for statutory returns for the Doctoral College Office, which includes:
 - a. Higher Education Statistics Agency annual returns
 - b. Returning information to the Research Councils on their funded research students via the JeS system.
 - c. Monitoring and updating annually the returns and to assist with all aspects of the administration of the EPSRC Doctoral Training Partnerships and other Research Council funding schemes.
 - d. Monitoring expenditure on Research Council funded students and the preparation of the annual financial statement exercise.
 7. To have oversight of the Doctoral College annual reporting schedule using this as a tool to identify and drive improvements to process and data quality within LUSI and other corporate systems, working closely with the Student Records & Operations (SRO) team and IT Services.
 8. Interrogating student systems across a range of processes to produce management information and/or identify data anomalies for correction, including documenting these processes.
 9. To work closely with colleagues across the University to develop, review and improve policy, processes, and systems to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. This will include development and implementation and testing of University systems.
 10. To contribute to the development, review and improvement of guidance and web information for students and staff, including responsibility to produce training and support material for Doctoral Research Administrators in Schools and Professional Services staff.
 11. To deputise for the Assistant Registrars or the other Doctoral College Manager in their absence, providing guidance, training, and support to staff in the Doctoral College and Academic Schools.
 12. To act as secretary to one or more formal University committees or groups.
 13. To undertake ad hoc project work or other occasional duties as required by the Senior Assistant Registrar or Academic Registrar which are commensurate with the grade and nature of the post.

Points To Note

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

Special Conditions

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and Information Security.

Organisational Responsibility

Reports to the Assistant Registrar (Quality & Experience).

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
- 3 – Interview

Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage	
Experience	Previous work experience (or equivalent) in a professional capacity	1,3	
	Experience of using corporate systems/networked databases	1,3	
	Experience of supervising staff in a customer focused environment	1,3	
Skills and abilities	Strong analytical and numeracy skills including a high level of attention to detail and the ability to manipulate large datasets	1,2,3	
	Excellent practical IT skills and comprehensive knowledge of relevant desktop software, including spreadsheet, email/calendar management and word processing packages	1,2,3	
	Proven ability to work effectively and collaboratively in a team in a high-pressure environment	1,3	
	Excellent organisational and time management skills, including proven ability to prioritise a varied and busy workload with competing demands	1,2,3	
	A proactive and flexible approach, including a proven ability to use own initiative and the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing working environment	1,3	
	Excellent problem-solving skills and a proven ability to master new areas of knowledge and skills rapidly and independently	1,3	
	Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, exercising tact and confidentiality	1,2,3	
	Ability to write clearly, concisely, and persuasively for a variety of audiences	1,2,3	
	Training	Be committed to, and actively participate in, a programme of continuing personal and professional development	1,3
	Qualifications	Strong educational background including at least a second-class honours degree (or equivalent), or relevant work experience at an equivalent level	1
Other	Appreciation of the importance of and commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion	1,3	
	Empathy with the aims and objectives of the University	1,3	
	Commitment to excellence and to the continuous improvement of the services for which the postholder is responsible	1,3	

Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Previous work experience in higher education administration	1,3
	Experience of the administration of Research Degree Programmes in higher education	1,3
	Experience of working with large, networked database systems.	1,3
Skills and abilities	Proven ability to lead and manage a team effectively under pressure	1,3
	Good understanding of MS Office 365 tools (e.g. Teams, OneDrive, Forms, Lists, Planner)	1,3

Conditions of Service

The position is FULL TIME 1FTE and OPEN-ENDED. Salary will be on Grade 6, £33,966 to 44,263 at a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment.

The appointment will be subject to the University's normal Terms and Conditions of Employment for Academic and Related staff, details of which can be found here: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/conditions-of-service/grade6andabove/>.

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which are available at <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/leave-absence/family-leave/>.

We also offer an on-campus nursery with a salary sacrifice scheme (further details are available at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/benefits/family/>).

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>

Doctoral College Office

