



Academic and Welfare Adviser

Applicant Information and Job Description and Person Specification

Summary

Aston Students' Union (SU) is a membership organisation for students studying at Aston University. The SU is led by elected student officers supported by a staff team. It is an independent charity and company that exists to impact positively on the life of Aston University students. The SU provides a range of services to enhance the student experience. Services are varied and include advice and support, a student representation framework, over 100 clubs and societies, an accommodation service, headline annual events alongside much more.

Job Summary

We are looking for an experienced, committed and dynamic individual to join our advice team who are responsible for providing advice to 15000 students at Aston University. Experience of providing advice or working in higher education along with excellent communication skills are required to deliver high quality and empowering advice on academic, housing and money issues affecting students. Academic appeals, complaints and disciplinary matters make up the majority of the caseload. As a result, a key part of the role will be advising students on the University's academic policies and procedures.

Principle Purpose of Job: To support the Union's advice service to provide Aston students with professional, impartial, confidential and high quality advice on a range of issues related to their academic studies as well as housing and money management.

Work Location: Aston University Campus: Aston Students' Union, B4 7BX

Responsible to: Advice and Support Manager

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

Aston Students' Union is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on Race, Age, Disability, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Religion or belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy and maternity or any other protected characteristic. If you require any reasonable adjustments to assist you in the application or interview process, please get in touch to discuss your needs.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- A. To provide Aston students with professional, impartial, confidential and high quality advice on a range of issues related to their academic studies as well as student accommodation and money management.
- B. To advise clients face to face, by telephone, email and through online chat services.
- C. To provide high quality advice and information on a range of academic issues including but not limited to academic appeals, academic offences, complaints, disciplinary, exceptional circumstances, fitness to practice, progression and withdrawals.
- D. To provide high quality advice to students regarding their rights and responsibilities in matters related to housing and student accommodation including student's rights, tenancy agreements, deposits, disputes, rent arrears and liability.
- E. To provide a tenancy agreement checking service for students.
- F. To occasionally provide basic money advice and assistance with personal budget sheets and income maximisation.
- G. To accurately record advice and case information confidentially using our case management system in a timely manner.
- H. Advise students on other issues related to their student life including but not limited to harassment and hate crime.
- I. Accompany students to meetings and hearings to provide support and/or representation where appropriate.
- J. Proactively develop and lead projects aimed at improving the wellbeing of Aston students.
- K. To assist with the promotion of the Advice service to Aston students and throughout the University.
- L. To create engaging digital content for our various communication channels i.e. social media, website and newsletters.
- M. To ensure the advice sections of the SU website are up to date and relevant.
- N. Undertake any administrative tasks or duties as required that are commensurate with the status and role and support the working of the SU.
- O. Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of Aston University's policies and procedures, higher education, student welfare matters and best practice in advice.

General Responsibilities:

- A. Any other duties reasonably required by the Student Activities & Voice Manager or Senior Management team.
- B. Where required to attend meetings with the University and other stakeholders related to student advice areas.
- C. Keep up to date with changes in union, university and national policy that impact on the work of the union or on the student membership, and support others to understand such changes.
- D. Ensure that equal opportunities, diversity and data protection policies are adhered to in all activities.
- E. To attend all training and supervision sessions when required.
- F. To monitor and update the relevant areas of the Students' Union website.
- G. Ensuring that day to day activities embrace sustainability and reduce the impact upon the environment by minimising waste and maximising recycling; saving energy; minimising water usage and reporting any electrical faults, water leakage or other environmental concerns to the facilities or line manager etc.
- H. To undertake other duties that may be assigned by the employer, as might reasonably be expected within the grade of the post.
- I. Ensure that day to day activities embrace sustainability through monitoring the social, economic, environmental and human rights impact of the Students' Union
- J. To reduce the impact upon the environment by minimising waste and maximising recycling; saving energy; minimising water usage and reporting any electrical faults, water leakage or other environmental concerns to the facilities or line manager etc.

Standards

- A. The post holder will be expected to both professionally and personally, display a positive image of Aston SU.
- B. The post holder will be expected to uphold the values of Aston SU and demonstrate high standards of professionalism, respect for others, integrity and accountability.
- C. To actively demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- D. The post holder will be expected to abide by the Union's various policies such as the Equality and Diversity policy and the Anti Bullying and Harassment policy at all times.

Person Specification

Essential:

- Be educated to high standard including Maths and English GCSE or equivalent.
- Have experience working as an advisor/ caseworker or an equivalent role working with students in higher education.
- An understanding of the principles of a free and confidential advice service.
- Experience of using a case management system.
- Knowledge and understanding of managing data protection in an advice service.
- Ability to present information clearly and concisely in writing or verbally.
- Ability to manage working time effectively and prioritise workload appropriately.
- Good information gathering and research skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Attention to detail
- Excellent communication skills (both verbal and written)
- Excellent IT skills including experience with Microsoft Office and using social media platforms
- Proactive with a “can do” positive attitude to challenges
- Committed to the principles and practices of equality and diversity
- Ability to work in line with data protection and GDPR legislation

Desirable:

- Good working understanding of a representative and democratic environment.
- Experience working in a higher education institution
- Knowledge of Aston University

Applicant information

- Starting salary; **£25,285**
- Job type: Full Time, Permanent
- Pension; 7.5% Employer Contribution
- Free NUS Totum Card.

- If you would like to clarify any information or have an informal chat about the role, please email s.hussain30@aston.ac.uk .
- To apply, please send a CV and covering letter to our HR, Governance and Admin Coordinator, Shadab Hussain on s.hussain30@aston.ac.uk . The covering letter should detail how you meet the criteria required for the role.
- Applications received after the closing date stated in the advert will not be considered.
- **Application closing date:** 12 noon **Wednesday 14th June 2023**
- **Interview date:** TBC