

Advice and Support Manager (Lead Adviser)

Applicant Information and Job Description

**Summary**

Aston Students’ Union operates an established and well respected, free, independent

and confidential advice service (currently known as the Advice and Representation

Centre). The service is available to all members, primarily Aston University students.

We operate a generalist advice service and advise on all issues including money,

housing rights, consumer, employment rights with a primary focus on academic

issues. Academic issues including appeals, complaints and disciplinary actions make

up the majority of the caseload.

**In the last 2 years in the students have rated the service as the best at Aston**

**University in the internal satisfaction survey.**

Aston Students’ Union is looking for an experienced, committed and dynamic individual to

lead the service forward and to act as a Lead Adviser within the service. We estimate that around 50% of your time will be dedicated to advice delivery and around 50% to managing the service. This is an exciting position with the opportunity to shape advice and support for 15,000 students.

**Principle purpose of job:** To oversee the management, delivery and development of Aston Students’ Union’s independent advice service.

To manage the Aston Students’ Union Welcome Desk.

To give generalist advice and support to members.

**Work Location:** Aston Students’ Union - Aston University campus

# **Responsible to: Membership Services Manager**

# **Responsible for:** **2 x Part time Welfare Advisers**

**1 x Part time Advice Receptionist**

**6 x Part time Welcome Desk Assistants**

**Other ad hoc casual staff**

**Salary: Starting - £28,660 P/A**

**Grade 7 - £26,243 - £34,189 P/A**

**Fixed term: 18 months (may be made permanent, dependent on funding and performance)**

**Staff benefits:**

Annual Leave. 25 days Annual Leave per year, plus university closure days, plus public holidays.

Employer pension scheme. Aston Students’ Union operates a contribution-based pension scheme and will match contributions to 7.5% of earnings.

Discounts. Staff are entitled to a free NUS Extra/Totum discount card entitling staff to various discounts at retail and leisure outlets.

All staff are Associate Members of Aston Students’ Union meaning staff benefit from any benefits available to members.

**Specific Responsibilities:**

## Ensuring Aston Students’ Union provides a professional and quality advice and

## support service.

1. To lead, motivate and manage the Advice team to develop all areas of work relating to the student advice and support.
2. Lead when possible the development of innovative, and non-traditional methods of providing student advice and support.
3. Ensure effective quality assurance systems are in place for the service.
4. Provide guidance to the team on responding to complex case work or challenging situations.
5. Ensure that effective feedback mechanisms are in place for the advice service and inform evaluation of the service.
6. Work to achieve the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation, leading the assessment process, including the biannual audit.
7. Support the elected student officers to deliver on their commitments to student support.
8. Identify, develop and establish appropriate partnership activity with the university in relation to student advice and support.
9. Work with the Membership Services Manager and others to build effective relationships with staff members at all levels of the university.
10. Ensure relevant information is passed throughout the students’ union helping to influence policy and practice.
11. 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.
12. To manage and develop advice and support information campaigns.
13. Lead the development and implementation of new policies, procedures or systems to enhance the advice service and the experience of its users.
14. To carry out the role of Lead Welfare Adviser, advising clients face to face, by telephone, email and through online chat services.
15. In the role of Lead Welfare Adviser to attend Exam Boards, Academic Appeal Committees, Disciplinary Committees and meetings etc to accompany or represent clients.

## Ensuring Aston Students’ Union provides a professional student led Welcome Desk

## service.

1. To manage and coordinate the Students’ Union Welcome Desk.
2. To set and manage service standards for the Welcome Desk.
3. To plan and manage the rota for the Welcome Desk to ensure a professional and welcoming service.

## General Responsibilities:

* 1. To work with the Membership Services Manager to lead on the development of the advice and support strategy for Aston Students’ Union, in line with the overall organisational strategy.
  2. To manage the finances of the team, including preparing, monitoring and meeting all budgets and following procedures.
  3. To continually develop the Advice team so that all staff remain experts in their field and identify opportunities for personal and career development.
  4. To support the strategy and direction of the Membership Services team and support cross-departmental working.
  5. To contribute to the student union’s strategic plan and work towards achieving its vision.
  6. To work in close appropriate collaboration with elected student officers to develop new schemes and projects and help them in formulating and achieving their relevant goals and objectives.
  7. To monitor and update the relevant areas of the Students’ Union website.
  8. To promote all of the students’ unions policies such as on equal opportunities.
  9. To attend all training and supervision sessions when required.
  10. To undertake other duties that may be assigned by the employer, as might reasonably be expected within the grade of the post.
  11. To deputise for the Membership Services Manager as and when required.

The nature of the role will, at times, require additional commitment over and above standard office hours. Payment for these hours is incorporated in the salary offered

# **Diversity**

**Aston Students’ Union is committed to equality of opportunity for all. We welcome applications from individuals regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, age, gender, or disability status.**

# **Person Specification**

Essential – E

Desirable - D

* Good general education, typically to degree standard, including Maths and English at least to GCSE or equivalent. - E
* 2 years’ experience as working as an adviser or caseworker. – E
* An understanding of the principles of a free and confidential advice service. - E
* Experience of using a case management system. – E
* Knowledge and understanding of managing data protection in an advice service. - E
* Demonstrable working knowledge of higher education and the issues affecting students today. - E
* Good working understanding of a representative and democratic environment. - D
* Experience of strategically leading a team to produce clear results against set targets. - D
* Experience of managing change. - D
* Ability to effectively promote and evaluate a service. - E
* Computer literacy (standard office software including spreadsheets) and keyboard skills. - E
* Ability to present information clearly and concisely in writing or verbally. - E
* Demonstrable experience of developing and maintaining complex relationships with internal and external stakeholders. - D
* Able to present a variety of arguments and viewpoints whilst maintaining a neutral position. - D
* Experience of managing budgets. - D
* Ability to work effectively within a democratic structure. - E
* Ability to take a constructive and co-operative approach to solving problems. - E
* Ability to manage working time effectively and prioritise projects appropriately. - E
* Ability to motivate others to achieve. - E
* Good information gathering and research skills. - E
* Ability to work as part of a team as well as independently. - E
* Attention to detail. - E
* A commitment to the principles and practices of equality and diversity. - E
* A “can do” positive attitude to challenges. - E

**Applicant information**

* If you would like to clarify any information or an informal chat about the role, please contact 0121 204 4848 or email [r.broome@aston.ac.uk](mailto:r.broome@aston.ac.uk) .
* To apply, please send a CV and covering letter to our Membership Services Manager, Richard Broome on [r.broome@aston.c.uk](mailto:r.broome@aston.c.uk) . The covering letter should detail how you meet the criteria required for the role.
* All applicants must be either EU nationals or hold a current permit that will entitle them to work in the UK – you must provide proof of this right to work before starting a job.
* Applications received after the closing date stated in the advert will not be considered.
* **Application closing date:** 12 noon on Thursday 31st January 2019
* **Interview date:** TBC