



**Corporate Services  
Strategy and Planning Office**

**Senior Planning Officer (Student Funding and Access Agreement)**

**Fixed Term for 12 months (maternity cover)**

**Secondment opportunities will be considered**

The Senior Planning Officer plays a key role in leading, managing and developing the in-year monitoring process for the OFFA Access Agreement and, from this, is responsible for completion of the annual statutory return to both OFFA and HEFCE. Reporting to the Head of Team you will also be responsible for taking a lead in the development of the University's student funding package and play a key role in monitoring, interpreting and responding to sector wide policy, funding and regulatory consultations. You will also contribute to the wider funding and statutory returns work in the Strategy and Planning office.

With significant experience of high level administrative responsibilities within a higher education environment, you will have a sound understanding and familiarity of external and internal planning, monitoring and reporting.

Strategic in your thinking, and creative and flexible in your approach you must be able to deal with complex academic and financial information. You should also have a sound understanding of the widening participation agenda, regulatory requirements on HEIs through HEFCE and OFFA, and student funding and finance policy.

You must be able to proactively identify issues or areas for development suggesting and leading the formulation of solutions. Working autonomously, you will need to quickly create and maintain strong working relationships with staff at all levels throughout the organisation and be effective across a range of formal and informal teams and.

**University Grade 8 (£38,511 - £45,954 p.a.)**

**Informal enquiries may be made to Tina Egan, tel +44 (0)113 343 4788, email [t.egan@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:t.egan@leeds.ac.uk)**

**Closing Date 30 March 2015**

**Ref: CSSPO1000**

**Click here for further information about working at the University of Leeds  
[www.leeds.ac.uk/info/20025/university\\_jobs](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/20025/university_jobs)**

## **Job Description**

**Responsible to: Director of Strategy & Planning**

**Reports to: Head of Team**

### **Main duties and responsibilities**

#### **Access Agreement Monitoring, Development and Reporting**

- Lead and develop the in-year process which monitors our performance against Access Agreement performance indicators, targets and objectives. This involves the leadership of a cross institutional network of specialists in Faculty, Service and Leeds University Union and the direct reporting to the Pro vice Chancellor for Student Education.
- Lead the completion and submission of the Access Agreement, Student Opportunity and National Scholarship Programme annual statutory return. Ensuring a collegiate approach, work effectively internally and externally across a range of professional services to identify risk and ensure institutional compliance.
- Co-lead with Educational Engagement the development of the University's Student Financial Support Package ensuring institutional decisions are consistent with existing internal policy and reflect/respond to a constantly changing external policy environment positioning the University's financial offer effectively and appropriately amongst its peers.
- Ensure all possible student funding decisions are debated effectively, transparently and fairly through the Taught Student Financial Support Sub Group. Govern all business relating to student finance through this mechanism ensuring effective reporting of decisions or escalation of issues to the Pricing Scholarships and Financial Support Steering Group.
- Provide clear, objective guidance and advice to the Head of Team, members of the University Executive Group and other Heads of Service where appropriate.
- Produce high quality internal written reports on progress, national policy changes or influencing internal policy development and decisions.
- Be proactive in sharing good practice across the professional corporate services, institution or sector where appropriate.
- Evaluate the process and take and support opportunities for reflection on and improvement to the monitoring process and its relationship with other strategic monitoring processes.
- Scan policy developments/latest research outcomes across the sector, reporting findings and identifying implications for the University as appropriate.

- Contribute high level expertise to the development of future Access Agreements, specifically institutional investment levels and student financial support development.

## **Other**

- Lead the development and formulation of the University's Annual Monitoring Statement ensuring compliance at all levels; maintain effective working relationships across professional corporate services and report to the Finance Director as lead signatory.
- Ensure the University contributes to external policy development by developing/ contributing to institutional responses to external consultations where appropriate.
- Contribute to analysis and research on this broad funding environment initiated by both the institution and external stakeholders.
- Work flexibly and creatively to support the team in the increasingly complex and rapidly changing area of HE funding, supporting wider funding and statutory reporting activities as required.
- Responsive to the increased and changing reporting requirements across the broad funding landscape.
- Demonstrate a commitment to personal and professional development.
- Work with Strategy and Planning as part of a team sharing good practice, developing strategic initiatives and supporting each other's development and professional well-being.
- The job description provides a frame work for the role of the Senior Planning Officer and should not be regarded as a definitive list of duties and responsibilities which will develop and change over time.
- Any other duties as may reasonably be required, consistent with the grade of the post.

## **Career Expectations**

The University of Leeds is committed to developing its staff. All staff participate in the Staff Review and Development scheme and we continue to work with individuals, supporting them to maximise their potential.

Progression to a higher grade is dependent on an individual taking on an increased level of responsibility. Vacancies that arise within the area or across the wider University are advertised on the HR website - <http://jobs.leeds.ac.uk> - to allow staff to apply for wider career development opportunities.

## **University Values**

All staff are expected to operate in line with the University's values and standards, which work as an integral part of our strategy and set out the principles of how we work together. More information about the University's strategy and values is available at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/comms/strategy/>.

## Person Specification

Letters after each criterion indicate the method of assessment which will be used during the selection stage: A = Application form, I = Interview, T = Test

### Essential

- Educated to degree level (A)
- Knowledge and experience of a higher education environment (A)
- Experienced in leading HE statutory returns - in particular for the HEFCE WPSA, NSP and AMS and the OFFA Access Agreement – and in ensuring clear auditable records to satisfy public and internal compliance and accountability (A,I)
- Experienced in generating, processing and reporting complex academic and financial information (A,I)
- Experience of developing and monitoring progress against institutional strategies and proposing areas for development (A,I)
- Experience of working with senior leaders, academics and professional managers in an HE environment (A,I)
- Experience of leading and managing individuals and groups to achieve common objectives, including informally without formal line management responsibility (A,I)
- Experience of working with a variety of high demands and priorities with competing deadlines (A,I)
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with an ability to:
  - Clearly and confidently communicate complex and sensitive information effectively and accurately
  - Construct high quality reports, committee papers, and strategies (A,I)
- Ability to review situations using strong problem solving and analytical skills to gather and assess relevant information and provide objective advice and guidance (A,I)
- Highly developed administrative and organisational skills with real attention to meeting deadlines and delivering a high quality output (A,I)
- Highly developed facilitation skills providing structure so that key decisions or inputs can be made at appropriate points (A,I)
- Excellent IT skills, including experience with MS Office
- Confident and professional approach in working with colleagues across all disciplines (A,I)
- Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships and networks with staff at all levels (A,I)
- Ability to work effectively both as part of a team and independently with limited supervision (A,I)

- Solutions focused with a proactive and innovative approach (A,I)
- Ability to work with sensitivity and tact, retaining a clear focus on outcomes (A,I)
- Ability to demonstrate a commitment to own personal development and that of others (A,I)

### **Desirable**

- Experience in developing and implementing student financial support arrangements (A,I)
- Experience of leading responses to HE policy consultations, particularly in the widening participation area (A,I)
- Ability to act as a primary contact for external agencies such as HEFCE and the Office for Fair Access (A,I)

## **Additional Information**

The University offers generous terms and conditions of employment, a wide range of benefits, services, facilities and family friendly policies. Full details are available on the Human Resources web pages accessible at [www.leeds.ac.uk/hr](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/hr)

## **The Partnership**

The Partnership has been developed by students and staff and describes the mutual expectations of us all as members of the University of Leeds community. More information about the Partnership is available at <http://partnership.leeds.ac.uk>

## **Disclosure and Barring Service checks**

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check is not required for this position. However, applicants who have unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings, including any pending criminal proceedings must indicate this in the 'other personal details' section of the application form and send details to the Recruitment Officer at [disclosure@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:disclosure@leeds.ac.uk).

## **Disabled Applicants**

The post is located in the EC Stoner Building. Disabled applicants wishing to review access to the building are invited to contact the department direct. Additional information may be sought from the Recruitment Officer, email [disclosure@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:disclosure@leeds.ac.uk) or tel + 44 (0)113 343 1723.

Disabled applicants are not obliged to inform employers of their disability but will still be covered by the Equality Act once their disability becomes known.

**Further information for applicants with disabilities, impairments or health conditions is available in the applicant guidance.**