CANDIDATE BRIEF

Personal Assistant/Support Worker, School of Sociology & Social Policy, Faculty of Social Sciences

Salary: Grade 5 (£25,742 – £29,605 p.a. depending on experience)

Reporting to: Dr Shruthi Venkatachalam

Reference: ESLSS1120

Fixed term until April 2026 because as there is a need for temporary cover

'We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements.'

Personal Assistant/Support Worker
School of Sociology and Social Policy
Faculty of Social Sciences

Do you have high-quality written English skills? Are you an experienced administrator with excellent organizational skills? Are you someone with experience or interest in providing assistance in navigating physical environments? Are you friendly, empathetic, and adaptable, able to work efficiently with a researcher with vision impairment?

You will be an enthusiastic and highly organised individual with excellent interpersonal skills and a high degree of proficiency in written English to provide assistance as a support worker and personal assistant to Dr Shruthi Venkatachalam as a member of research staff with visual impairments. You will assist in enabling Dr Venkatachalam to carry out some research and administrative duties.

The primary role of the support worker will be to provide practical assistance and accessibility support. You will be able to demonstrate a high-quality written English skills in proofreading and a high degree of competence with Microsoft Word. In addition, you will have a high level of attention to detail and be able to work to deadlines.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Accompanying the Researcher to meetings, conferences, and events, providing assistance in navigating physical environments.
- Supporting with reading materials, including physical copies of documents and texts.
- Managing emails, including condensing content, prioritizing, deleting, raising awareness of important information, meeting response deadlines, and filing.
- Making travel arrangements (international and domestic), including dealing with expense claims.
- Making documents, library resources, and forms accessible, including internal University documents and external documentation.
- Sourcing library materials, conducting searches of electronic databases and publications, and making accessible versions of these documents.

- Proofreading, formatting, language, and referencing checks of documents, including academic articles, research reports, and social media posts.
- Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations for workshops and conferences.
- Assisting in notetaking during meetings and workshops.
- Editing audio-visual materials.
- Supporting with streaming online content.

These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

Qualifications and skills

Essential

- High-level literacy skills gained through a degree in arts, humanities, or social sciences, or relevant work experience with a familiarity of academic referencing (e.g Harvard Style)
- Experience guiding a blind/partially-sighted person.
- An understanding of disability issues and an interest in equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Evidence of accuracy and attention to detail.
- High-level technological capability and adaptability, with experience using MS Office in an office environment and the ability to learn new systems quickly.
- Evidence of working well as a team member and independently, using your own initiative as a proactive, motivated self-starter.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills in a work environment.
- Excellent proactive organizational skills, with the ability to prioritize workloads, handle large quantities of complex information, and work under pressure to meet deadlines.
- Understanding of health and safety in an office environment.

Desirable

- Interest in web design/web management.
- Ability to test websites for accessibility using tools like WAVE, AXE, or browser-based inspection tools.
- Creating and editing accessible documents in various formats (Word, PDF, HTML).

- Basic knowledge of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript for quick web page adjustments.
- Familiarity with CMS like WordPress or Drupal.
- Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research techniques.
- Experience in using academic databases and accessing journal articles.

Additional information

Working at Leeds

We are a campus based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our Working at Leeds information page.

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education. Within the Faculty of Social Sciences we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian, people who belong to a minority ethnic community; people who identify as LGBT+; and disabled people. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

Information for disabled candidates

Information for disabled candidates, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found on our Accessibility information page or by getting in touch with us at hr@leeds.ac.uk

Criminal Record Information
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information page.