

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	International Advice Officer	Grade:	SG6
Department:	Student and Academic Services	Date of Job Evaluation:	April 2021
Role reports to:	Senior International Student Adviser		
Direct reports:	None		
Indirect reports:	None		
Other key contacts:	Home Office, UKCISA, International Compliance & Advice Staff		
<p>This role profile is non-contractual and provided for guidance. It will be updated and amended from time to time in accordance with the changing needs of the University and the requirements of the job.</p>			

Purpose of Role

Based within Student services, the [International Student Advice Service](#) provides information, guidance, and specialist immigration advice to applicants and students (and their dependents) through a mixture of confidential one-to-one sessions, group workshops, and via email/social media.

Working alongside the International Student Advisers, the International Advice Officer will provide practical assistance and first-level support to international students (including those from the EU/EEA) on a wide range of matters, from basic immigration queries through to assistance with bank accounts and accessing healthcare.

The role holder will support the International Student Advisers by managing an effective triage and coordinating referral of more complex cases, whilst also maintaining their own caseload of non-complex queries. They will take the lead on outreach work, building awareness of the department amongst the wider university community, and supporting strategies to provide proactive advice.

Key Accountabilities

- Provide practical assistance and guidance to students, applicants, recent graduates, and their dependents, via email, one-to-one appointments and drop-ins. This may be in-person, on the phone, or online via MS Teams (or similar).
- Provide basic immigration advice, up to the equivalent of OISC Level 1, following all cases through to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Provide first-level welfare and pastoral support to international students, facilitating referral or signposting to other specialist services or the International Student Advisers where required.
- Support the International Student Advisers with complex casework, undertaking research, performing document checks and arranging follow-up at their discretion.
- Assist with the provision of support to international students as they adapt to life in the UK, helping them to overcome culture shock by providing assistance with everyday matters such as opening bank accounts, obtaining a national insurance number, and access to healthcare.

- Develop and maintain an effective triage system to manage incoming enquiries, working collaboratively with the Student Centre to ensure that all enquiries are answered within service standards and to a professional manner.
- Recognise and refer complex casework onto the International Student Advisers, allocating the work appropriately according to individual caseload and skillsets.
- Link new enquiries with existing casework where appropriate, ensuring a joined up and consistent level of service.
- Manage bookings for workshops and appointments, assessing each request to ensure that a booking is the most appropriate course of action.
- Ensure students are aware of the police registration requirements, through the delivery of workshops, online guidance, and printed materials.
- Work with the pre-sessional team to facilitate the support for pre-sessional students as they prepare visa extensions prior to progression to their substantive programme.
- Organise, promote, and support with the delivery of specialist workshops, on topics such as post-study work options, Schengen Visas, and the EU Settlement Scheme.
- Support the development of strategies to proactively engage with international students, particularly those identified as at risk.
- Support and promote the Start Up Visa and Graduate Route, in conjunction with colleagues in the Compliance Team, Generator team, Employability and Careers Service and Faculties.
- Issue letters in support of applications under the Skilled Worker Route, Start-Up Visa, Graduate Route, or any other route.
- Contribute to the continuous development of the service webpages.
- Create, maintain and coordinate the distribution of printed guidance and promotional materials, such as flyers, leaflets, and forms.
- Support welcome and induction activities, contributing to the online International Welcome Programme and attending faculty welcome sessions as required.
- Assist with the organisation and delivery of the airport meet & greet service.
- Produce and collate statistics on service provision and contribute to reports as required by the Senior International Student Adviser.
- Develop and maintain excellent links with key faculty and professional services staff, providing advice and advocating the needs of international students across the institution.
- Actively seek and promote opportunities to support the international student experience, supporting and organising events at key times of the year.
- Work in close collaboration with the Compliance Team and Student Centres, liaising with them and advocating on behalf of individual students.
- In accordance with the limitations of the confidentiality policy, immediately alert the Student Visa Compliance Manager of any identified risk to immigration compliance, and to support an effective and timely resolution.
- Work at all times in accordance with the [UKCISA Code of Ethics](#) and also, where applicable, the [OISC Code of Standards](#).

Knowledge and competence

- Maintain up-to-date knowledge and expertise of the UK immigration rules as they apply to students, maintaining the competencies required to provide advice at OISC level 1.
- Recognise and work within the limits of one's own competencies, referring students to the International Student Advisers, other specialist services, or for external advice where appropriate.
- Undertake and maintain records of ongoing training and personal/professional development (CPD), and to supplement this through professional networking opportunities.

Generic

- Support the work of the International Compliance and Advice Service, assisting the CAS Officers, Compliance Staff, and the Student Visa Compliance Manager as required.
- Support internal and external audits; as appropriate, when required by the Senior International Student Adviser.
- Take part in International Compliance & Advice team meetings and activities, and those of the wider Student & Academic Services Directorate.
- Represent and promote the service or University at internal and external events or meetings.
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of all processes and procedures, actively seeking ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness of working practices.

Managing Self

- Work in a consistent, organised, accountable, and transparent manner, delivering excellent levels of customer service and acting professionally at all times.
- Manage own workload by setting challenging but achievable daily targets.
- Maintain a personal caseload, ensuring that any deadlines are monitored and met, and follow-up work is completed in a timely manner.

Core Requirements

- Adhere to and promote the University's policies on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Information Security
- Ensure compliance with Health & Safety and Data Protection Legislation
- Support and promote the university's Sustainability policies, including the Carbon Management Plan, and carry out duties in a resource efficient way, recognising the shared responsibility of minimising the university's negative environmental impacts wherever possible

Additional Requirements

This is a professional, demanding role within a complex organisation with an ambitious strategic plan and agenda for change. The role holder will be expected to show flexibility in working arrangements, including working hours, to ensure that Student and Academic Services delivers the required level of service.

- Support other services and projects within Student & Academic Services and the wider university as required.
- Undertake any other duties as required by the Senior International Student Adviser, or the (Deputy) Director of Student & Academic Services, commensurate with the grade.
- Travel to or work from any UoG site as necessary.

Key Performance Indicators

- The international student experience, as measured by the International Student Barometer and other surveys such as the NSS and internal stakeholder/student satisfaction surveys
- All emails and enquiries answered within agreed turnaround times
- Casework completed in full accordance with OISC requirements and the [Statement of Service](#)
- Successful internal and external audit outcomes (including UKVI audits)
- Case outcomes, such as visa applications and administrative reviews

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL

Experience

- Experience of supporting students with complex issues
- Significant experience of working both individually and as part of a team
- Experience of providing a high-level of service within a customer-facing environment
- Experience of managing own workload and working without direct supervision

Knowledge

- An understanding of UK immigration system as it applies to students
- Good understanding of UK Higher Education and the needs and demands of international students within this
- Recognition of the challenges faced by international students in the UK and how to overcome these
- Knowledge of GDPR requirements and an understanding of the importance of confidentiality

Skills

- Computer literate, with the ability to use Microsoft Outlook and Word to a high standard
- Ability to convey complex information succinctly in writing
- Able to prioritise and deliver a demanding and complex workload, maintaining multiple cases and working to tight deadlines
- Ability to manage own workload and work without constant supervision, setting and achieve challenging targets and holding oneself to account
- Ability to approach cases objectively and empathetically, with a high degree of sensitivity
- A customer-focused approach
- Ability to learn new skills and adapt to new ways of working
- High-level of attention to detail
- Ability to remain calm and professional under pressure

DESIRABLE

Experience

- Experience of providing advice, preferably within in an educational context
- Experience of working with and maintaining case files
- Experience of working in a regulated environment
- Experience of cross-cultural communication and the provision of services to people from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Experience of working with the Banner or similar student record system
- Experience of business process design and implementation
- Experience of working with a casework management system
- Experience of presenting to large groups

Knowledge

- Understanding of the concept of continuous improvement

Qualifications

- OISC accreditation (Level 1)

Other

- Membership of a professional organisation such as AISA or ICN

- Ability to approach problems in an intuitive and logical manner and seek creative solutions
- Ability to work as part of a team to achieve shared objectives and a consistent service

Personal Qualities

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with an empathetic approach
- Highly intuitive with well-developed non-verbal communication skills
- A positive and professional approach with a can-do attitude
- Confident and able to secure the confidence of others
- Highly motivated with a resilient personality
- Flexible and adaptable with the ability to work overtime during peak periods
- Highly organised with a transparent, collegiate approach

Qualifications

- Educated to degree-level or equivalent, or with demonstrable relevant experience