



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Head of Student Cases (Complaints, Appeals and Conduct), Secretariat



Salary: Grade 9 (£53,353 - £61,823 p.a. depending on experience)

Reporting to: Deputy University Secretary

Reference: CSSEC1045

Location: University of Leeds (with scope for hybrid working)

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements

Overview of the Role

You will carry lead responsibility for the University's procedures for determining and resolving student complaints and academic appeals; and for managing student disciplinary issues and other matters which might affect a student's progression, award or place in the University, with a focus on delivering a positive student experience. You will have considerable expertise in the application of academic regulations, or a comparable regulatory framework, and will ensure the efficient and effective management across procedures as well as a consistent, practical and pragmatic approach to individual cases.

You will keep under review the relevant policies and procedures, aiming at all times to provide for fair, robust and timely processes for handling student cases. You will be responsible for identifying course, service and general regulatory improvements (from individual cases) and will ensure that any agreed changes are implemented.

This role leads and manages the Student Cases Team. You will also be a member of the Secretariat's management team and, in this respect, will be expected to play a key role in the development of the wider team and the broader governance agenda. The nature of the role is such that you will be expected to liaise with, and where necessary to advise, academic and support staff located in any school or service across the University, including the staff of the Leeds University Union's Student Advice Centre.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Leading the processes by which the Secretariat will discharge its responsibilities for:
 - appeals against the decisions of examiners for taught and research students;
 - the University's Student Complaints Procedure;
 - cases of alleged academic malpractice and cheating in examinations;
 - students whose attendance or progress is unsatisfactory;
 - student discipline and health and conduct;
 - student fitness to study;
 - considering extensions to leave or candidatures beyond normal limits;
 - special cases that require consideration of the application of University regulations.



- Maintaining a sophisticated knowledge and understanding of the internal and external landscapes and regulatory requirements relating to student conduct, complaints and appeals and related matters, ensuring that the University's relevant policies and procedures are reviewed and developed to remain fit for purpose and aligned with institutional priorities;
- Providing strategic leadership, direction and line management to the team of staff responsible for handling student cases; setting standards and ensuring appropriate support, training and development plans are in place and that the roles and responsibilities of team members evolve in response to the needs of the University;
- Working closely with relevant people and units across the University to co-ordinate and oversee systems for the effective management of student conduct, complaints and appeals and to provide expert advice and guidance to colleagues;
- Determining the application of the academic regulations to complex student cases, particularly where matters of principle or policy arise in circumstances not previously encountered; to issue advice to members of the University community accordingly; and to ensure its implementation as appropriate;
- Acting as Secretary to the University's Committee on Applications, the Committee on Student Discipline and the Committee on Student Health and Conduct, and to arrange for the servicing of other committees and groups associated with the processes listed in (1) above;
- Acting as the University Secretary's nominee in the investigation and prosecution of matters relating to student discipline, health and conduct;
- Facilitating the consideration of special cases and recommendations for posthumous and aegrotat awards;
- Preparing the University's responses to complaints raised via the Office for the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education;
- Preparing and present reports (on student cases) for consideration by the University's principal committees and/or senior officers; and to ensure that the lessons learned from complaints and appeals are effectively disseminated and drive improvements to the student experience;
- Addressing urgent welfare matters identified in student cases, engaging all relevant parties to secure an effective outcome;
- Developing and deliver presentations to groups of staff and students relevant to the area of work;



- As a member of the Secretariat's Management Team, to assist the University Secretary in promoting and maintaining best standards of corporate governance - this may include, for example, contributing to the development, promulgation and review of the University's corporate governance processes; advising colleagues and others; and contributing to Secretariat training events;
- Undertaking all activities in line with the University's values and standards;
- Undertaking such other duties as may be required.

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

- Knowledge and experience of working at a senior level within a higher education environment or similar, with the ability to understand and deliver within the strategic context;
- Authoritative knowledge of relevant regulatory frameworks and work practices. This includes a good understanding of external environmental factors affecting higher education, the priorities and challenges facing students in the current environment and the implications for the effective management of student conduct, complaints and appeals;
- The ability to lead and manage the procedures for the resolution of student complaints, appeals, disciplinary and other progress matters, to provide specialist advice and apply this in a consistent and practical way to individual cases;
- Experience of translating legislation and regulation into operation and sensitivity to the demands and viewpoints of stakeholders in this process. This will include excellent negotiation and influencing skills;
- Proven ability to design and implement improvements to policy and process that draw on best practice and to refine these as necessary to ensure they remain fit for purpose;
- Excellent people management skills, with experience of leading and managing individuals and teams to achieve common objectives, including with and without formal line management responsibility;



- Sensitivity to the circumstances of students, including cultural awareness, and understanding of the needs of different groups of students and an understanding of equalities legislation;
- Highly developed written and verbal communication skills, including formal investigative report writing and correspondence with students, colleagues and external agencies;
- The ability to assimilate, summarise and convey complex information, which is accurate and concise, and tailored to meet the needs of different audiences whilst working with sensitivity and tact;
- Experienced in making judgements and resolving complex problems taking informed decisions, and providing advice and assurance to senior colleagues. The postholder must be able to display awareness of their own impact and inspire confidence and command authority;
- High level of self-motivation and personal accountability, with a successful track record in managing and delivering complex workload, co-ordinating activities across different timescales;
- The ability to maintain strict confidentiality in all areas of work, with a good understanding of data protection.

Desirable

- Experience of working at a senior level in higher education;
- Competence in the use of IT – Microsoft Office is the current suite of software in use in the Corporate Services;
- Experience of servicing an institution's principal committees;
- Experience of successfully leading projects and initiatives to deliver results in often complex and difficult situations;
- Experience of contributing to the development of corporate governance procedures.

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

At the University of Leeds, we are committed to providing a culture of inclusion, respect and equity of opportunity that attracts, supports, and retains the best students and staff from all backgrounds. Whatever role we recruit for we are always striving to increase the diversity of our community, which each individual helps enrich and cultivate. We 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, or candidates with 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.

