

Job Description

Head of Student Wellbeing and Belonging

Directorate of Student Life & Library Services

Grade: H

Role profile: SMH1

Full time

Permanent

	Duties of the role
Overall purpose of the role	The role reports to the Associate Director of Student Life and leads the team that is responsible for creating and leading a whole-university approach to student wellbeing, inclusion and belonging. They will deputise for the Associate Director of Student Life when required. The Head of Student Wellbeing and Belonging will take a leadership role in ensuring that all students feel safe, supported, valued and are able to thrive academically and personally. They will be responsible for overseeing appropriate policies in relation to students, including Disability, Autism Support, Mental Health, Safeguarding, Student Death, and Students at risk. They will contribute to university planning, quality assurance, and regulatory requirements (e.g. OfS, TEF) and use data, insight, and student feedback to continuously improve services and ensure that the student wellbeing and belonging service plays a key role in student retention and attainment. You will have substantial leadership experience of student services and will bring strong knowledge and experience of student belonging and wellbeing practices, with experience of working in a student focused role in a higher education setting. You will be well networked with relevant external organisations and sector bodies to enhance provision and share best practice. In undertaking these responsibilities, you will liaise with students, colleagues across the Directorate, academic and professional colleagues across the University, and external organisations, to design and deliver wellbeing and belonging strategies, as well as early intervention frameworks and inclusive practices which enhance student engagement, retention, and success. The work conditions will involve a hybrid work model. It is important that you have a visible presence on campus, and it is expected that you will work on campus for at least 3 days per week. There is also a requirement for occasional 'on call' duty for student related serious incidents.
Main duties and responsibilities	To proactively lead and develop the University's student services provision which is aligned with institutional priorities and student needs, including the design and implementation of a university-wide student wellbeing and belonging strategy.

	Duties of the role
	• To line manage staff within your team and to oversee budgets, projects, and resources as appropriate. • To take a leadership role in the shaping and embedding of student wellbeing and belonging policies and practices, guidance documents and other resources, working in partnership with academic and professional colleagues and the students' union to ensure the development of inclusive opportunities for under-represented student groups. • To act as a key point of expertise and advice on student support, student belonging and wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion for academic and professional services staff and to act as the University's safeguarding lead and deputy chair of the Student at Risk committee. • To ensure the delivery of a high-quality and student-centred service provision which is accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of a diverse student body. • To oversee work relating to preventative, early intervention and targeted belonging and wellbeing initiatives in collaboration with colleagues in the Directorate and the wider University. • To ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements, such as safeguarding, equality, data protection, OfS (including Condition E6), Ofsted, QAA, Prevent. • To lead data-informed initiatives relating to the continuous improvement of student services that respond to digital trends such as Artificial Intelligence and to act as system owner for key data platforms. • To use student data and surveys (e.g. NSS, PTES) to identify trends which inform student services practices and monitor performance against KPIs and benchmarks, reporting impact and outcomes to senior staff. • To report annually on work relating to Student Wellbeing and Belonging activities to various committees and to represent Student Wellbeing and Belonging Services in the formation of draft guidance and policy as well as reviewing processes and leading on improvements to service provision. • To build and maintain partnerships with the students' union and external bodies, including local authorities, the health service, social service, police, and sector bodies such as AMOSSHE, UMHAN. • To monitor compliance across Student Wellbeing and Belonging Services for mandatory training, DBS checks and accreditation renewals. • To actively engage in professional development and stay informed of best practice in the sector. • To collaborate on cross-University projects and participate in committees, working groups, and project teams aimed at enriching the overall student experience, as well as preparing reports to meet regulatory requirements. • To foster a culture of co-creation with students and encourage student participation by amplifying their voice in decisions that affect their university life. • To represent the University externally when needed and serve as a proud ambassador and advocate for De Montfort University.

	Duties of the role
	This role will require an enhanced DBS check.
General Responsibilities	• Perform any other duties commensurate with the job grade as reasonably required from time to time at the direction of the line manager. • Role model and act in accordance with the University's Leadership and Management Standards and Behaviours framework aligned to DMU values: ◦ Collaborative - encourage my team to collaborate and share best practices, set clear and aspirational goals, create outcome-focused work plans, and recognise strengths and support development. ◦ Compassionate - provide honest and constructive feedback, foster a safe and open work environment, deliver difficult decisions with credibility, and act with integrity and transparency. ◦ Creative - create an environment that encourages questioning and idea sharing, minimises bureaucracy, facilitates open discussions about mistakes, and involves teams in continuous service improvement. ◦ Community minded - encourage diverse perspectives, promptly address conflicts and inappropriate behaviours, and foster a culture of mutual respect. • Treat all DMU staff, students, contractors and visitors with dignity and respect. Provide a service that complies with the Equality Act 2010, eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations with particular attention to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or none), sex and sexual orientation. • All members of staff are responsible for their contribution to improved environmental performance and in reducing greenhouse gas emissions at DMU. It is therefore required that all members of staff are aware of how the Environmental Policy relates to their own role at the university. Staff conduct must reflect the values inherent in the Environmental Policy and where required staff must cooperate with environmental compliance and conformance requirements to help minimise our emissions to air, water and land. • Provide a service that complies with the Equality Act 2010, eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations with particular attention to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or none), sex and sexual orientation.

Person Specification

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Area of responsibility	Requirements	Essential or desirable		*Method of assessment			
				A	I	T	D
Qualifications	Educated to degree level or equivalent and substantial professional experience related to the role which has involved critical thinking, analysis and problem solving.	Essential		X			X
	Evidence of continuing professional development.	Essential		X	X		X
	Postgraduate qualification in education, leadership, psychology, mental health, social work, wellbeing, or a related field.		Desirable	X			X
	Relevant professional accreditation, e.g. Advance HE, CMI, AMOSSHE.		Desirable	X			X
Experience	Proven experience of leading and developing student services within a higher education setting, including the management of complex budgets and specialist contracted staff.	Essential		X	X		X
	Excellent knowledge and understanding of student services, wellbeing and belonging provision within UK higher education and the evolving needs of students.	Essential		X	X		X
	Substantial knowledge and understanding of SFE and other funding bodies' processes.	Essential		X	X		X
	Proven experience of strategic planning and delivering organisation change, with particular reference to enhancing the student experience.	Essential		X	X		X

Area of responsibility	Requirements	Essential or desirable		*Method of assessment			
				A	I	T	D
	In-depth knowledge and understanding of current legislation and best practices in student safeguarding, wellbeing, belonging, and support services.	Essential		X	X		X
	Proven experience of managing complex student welfare issues, including crisis intervention, developing emergency protocols, and safeguarding procedures.	Essential		X	X		X
	Proven experience of putting in place data and metric informed strategies and policies which enhance the student experience.	Essential		X	X		X
	Familiarity with institutional frameworks and national guidance on Prevent, Safeguarding, and Duty of Care responsibilities.	Essential		X	X		X
	Experience of working with international students and awareness of global initiatives relating to student services.		Desirable	X	X		X
	Experience of leading services across multiple campuses.		Desirable	X	X		X
	Understanding of QAA quality frameworks and OfS regulatory requirements.		Desirable	X	X		X
	Experience of working with Access and Participation Plans and/or widening participation initiatives and contributing to institutional performance metrics, audits, and reviews.		Desirable	X	X		X
Skills and abilities	Excellent communication and presentation skills, with the ability to motivate and develop high-performing teams and to engage confidently and effectively with students, staff, senior leadership, and external stakeholders.	Essential		X	X		X
	The ability to lead in a supportive and empathetic manner and to foster an inclusive working environment that respects diverse perspectives.	Essential		X	X		X
	A proven methodological and accurate approach to the completion of tasks, with the ability to work independently, prioritise demands and meet deadlines.	Essential		X	X		X

Area of responsibility	Requirements	Essential or desirable		*Method of assessment			
				A	I	T	D
	Demonstrated ability to produce high-quality written reports and presentations.	Essential		X	X		X
	A sound understanding of the University's strategy and values and a demonstrated commitment to ensuring adherence to the University's Equality and Diversity policy.	Essential		X	X		X
	Proven experience of initiating and supporting work that actively addresses gaps and potential bias in student and wellbeing services.	Essential		X	X		X
	Excellent IT skills, with an up-to-date knowledge of innovative technologies and how they may be used to enhance the student and staff experience, including streamlining processes and informing training.		Desirable	X	X		X
Additional requirements	The ability to commit to on-campus work on 3 days per week as part of hybrid working and occasional 'on call' duty for student related serious incidents.	Essential		X	X		X
	Willingness to work occasional out of office hours (e.g. evenings and weekends).	Essential		X	X		X

***A = Application Form; I = Interview; T = Test; D = Documentary Evidence**