

1 Advertisement

Post Title: Research & Evaluation Manager (Evidence)

School/department: University Operations and Strategic Planning

Hours: Full time considered up to a maximum of 1 FTE / 37.5 hours

Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

Location: Brighton, United Kingdom

Contract: Permanent

Reference: 21056

Salary: starting at £35,333 to £42,155 per annum, pro rata if part time

Placed on: 01 August 2023

Closing date: 28 August 2023. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

Expected Interview date: To be confirmed

Expected start date: To be confirmed

We are proudly committed to ensuring fair access and widening participation in higher education. We recognise that not everyone has the same start in life or the same opportunities to succeed, and we aim to address this to ensure equality of opportunity for under-represented groups at all stages of the student lifecycle. Our [Access and Participation Plan](#) outlines our current strategy and we are excited to start writing the new phase of our approach to this vital area of work.

You will work in a small central team to support the Senior Research & Evaluation Manager to provide evaluation capacity for the Access and Participation Plan Programme. Your role will include working with delivery staff to provide bespoke evaluation support and theory of change development. You will also help to establish the evidence base for our interventions by conducting literature and rapid evidence reviews and create a Knowledge Hub to share knowledge across delivery teams. Where you identify gaps in evidence, knowledge, or practice, you will design and develop research proposals for commissions or project work.

You will be an advocate and a champion for high quality, robust evaluation to help build evaluation capacity amongst Access and Participation teams. As we develop our capacity, you will ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to plan evaluations and report on the effectiveness of interventions.

This role will directly work to create the evidence base for What Works in Access and Participation and will help to shape our future provision to ensure equality of opportunity for students of all backgrounds and characteristics.

Please contact Robyn Long R.Long@sussex.ac.uk for informal enquiries.

The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

2. The School / Division

Please find further information regarding the Access and Participation Plan at <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/terms-and-conditions/access-agreements>

3. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: Research & Evaluation Manager (Evidence)

Department: University Operations and Strategic Planning

Section: Research & Evaluation

Location: Sussex House / Home Working

Grade: 7

Responsible to: Senior Research & Evaluation Manager

Responsible for: Research & Evaluation Officer

Key contacts: APP Managers and staff, Deputy Heads of Access, Access and Participation Manager, Employer Engagement Managers, Planning Officers, Academic staff, Professional Services staff in Schools

Role description: To provide high quality research and evaluation support for the University's Access and Participation Plan Programme

The post holder will work as part of a small, central Research and Evaluation team focused on building an evidence base for the interventions the University undertakes as part of our Access and Participation Plan (APP) Programme. They will work directly with APP delivery staff to provide bespoke evaluation support for interventions. Our approach will utilise mixed methods research design, and the post holder will collaborate with colleagues with expertise in qualitative and quantitative research to plan and conduct evaluations that will triangulate findings.

The post holder will lead our work to build an evidence base for what works in Access and Participation. They will support delivery teams in creating Theories of Change for interventions and outcomes mapping and will conduct literature reviews and rapid evidence reviews to provide the underpinning research base for our interventions. The post holder will identify gaps in evidence,

knowledge, and practice and design and develop research proposals for commissions and project work. They will also lead on designing and maintaining an APP Knowledge Hub for practitioners and delivery teams, to ensure our future interventions are research-based.

Working with academic colleagues across the University, the post holder will identify relevant research activity and work to translate this into usable insights for delivery teams. They will also identify existing or planned interventions within academic and professional services departments, connect this work to the wider APP Programme, and support the evaluation of these interventions.

The post holder will contribute to developing wider training for APP delivery staff on a range of APP related research and evaluation issues.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Manage, promote, and maintain high quality Research & Evaluation services, engendering a culture of continuous improvement.
2. Manage the operational outputs of the team, including literature reviews, evaluation plans, research findings, and reports.
3. Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, such as GDPR, and University policies, including Ethical Review requirements, interpreting the same and acting or advising on their practical application.
4. Work in partnership with other key stakeholders within the Research & Evaluation Team and the wider APP delivery teams to ensure a seamless service.
5. Plan and deliver evaluations, and work with delivery teams to ensure appropriate reporting and dissemination activities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Team Management and Leadership

- 1.1 Provide management and leadership to motivate the team to achieve targets and objectives delegating according to ability.
- 1.2 Ensure the availability of resources to achieve targets and objectives including the selection, induction, performance management and development of all team members.
- 1.3 Ensure team understanding and application of operational standards are embedded in the team culture and methods of working.
- 1.4 Support the development of others, providing training and coaching in area of expertise.
- 1.5 Foster an ethos of continuous improvement.
- 1.6 Provide line management and coaching across a matrixed programme of work.

2. Service Delivery

- 2.1 Working within university policy and procedure, undertake day-to-day management of operational matters in the research and evaluation of the Access and Participation Plan Programme. Plan and implement activities across the team to ensure the achievement of departmental targets and objectives.
- 2.2 Ensure effective systems and procedures are in place to support the achievement of key performance targets in Research & Evaluation.
- 2.3 Plan and implement improvements to systems and procedures in Research & Evaluation to ensure effective administration within area of responsibility.
- 2.4 Maintain appropriate records and documentation commensurate with policy and procedure, including GDPR, the Code of Practice for Research and Ethical Review requirements.
- 2.5 Provide reports internally and externally as appropriate. To undertake analysis, interpretation, and presentation of research and evaluation data to inform decisions related to the Access and Participation Plan Programme.
- 2.6 Identify critical issues when resolving problems and use university policy and procedure to support the application of appropriate resolutions.

3. Policy and Procedure

- 3.1 Work within policy and procedure, providing advice to enquiries on the application of policy/procedure as required.
- 3.2 Contribute to policy decisions and improvement in area of research and evaluation.

4. Customers and Stakeholders

- 4.1 Proactively work with internal and external stakeholders, colleagues, or students to ensure effective service delivery, exchange information and provide data to inform decisions as necessary, showing appropriate sensitivity when needed.

5. Research and Evaluation

- 5.1 Design and conduct evaluation activities for a range of interventions using appropriate research and evaluation methodologies and methods. Oversee the conduct of process evaluations as required. Work closely with staff to establish evaluation schedules for all interventions and provide bespoke evaluation support and guidance for evaluating interventions.
- 5.2 Design and conduct appropriate literature and evidence reviews as needed.
- 5.3 Design and deliver staff training and learning resources on a range of evaluation methods, approaches, and issues.
- 5.4 Design and develop internal evaluation monitoring database to collate evaluation plans and reports across the Programme. Design and develop an external publishing site for evaluation reports.
- 5.6 Write and co-author impact evaluation reports and articles to a publishable standard. Represent the University at national conferences, national and regional working groups, and other fora as appropriate to the role.
- 5.7 Design and develop research proposal for commissions and project work as needed.

To carry out any other duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities whenever reasonably instructed.

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time

without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Leading a team of 1 to 2 staff
- Responsible for building an evaluation evidence base for Access and Participation Plan Programme interventions according to the expectations outlined by the Office for Students.
- Responsible for evaluation capacity building across Access and Participation Plan Programme teams
- The post holder reports to the Senior Research & Evaluation Manager, working under general direction within a clear framework the post holder will manage their own work (and possibly their direct reports) to achieve their agreed objectives. The role holder will play a key role in supporting the Divisional leadership team to achieve the strategic and operational goals of the University, Professional Services & their Division. The post holder is expected to work collaboratively across the University and with key stakeholders to deliver single team working that efficiently and effectively supports the achievement of those goals and objectives.
- Support achievement of the Unit's compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory compliance obligations, including (but not limited to): UKVI, Health & Safety, the Prevent Duty, data protection, Competition and Markets Authority requirements and equal opportunities, as appropriate to the grade and role. Additionally, to promote good practice in relation to University policy, procedure and guidance in relation to those compliance matters in respect of students, staff and other relevant parties.
- Balance effectiveness and cost-efficiency in the management of the budgets you are accountable for, demonstrating compliance with Value for Money and Return on Investment principles to support the University's strategic aim to achieve a world-class standard of teaching and research by managing our resources effectively and efficiently.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Normally educated to degree level, or other equivalent qualification, or relevant level of experience, as appropriate to the role.
2. A detailed practical knowledge and understanding of research and evaluation methodologies.
3. Effective management skills
4. Well-developed oral and written communication skills with the ability to present policy and procedure in a way that can be understood the audience.
5. Planning and organisational skills, including project management with the ability to delegate to team members where appropriate.
6. Well-developed interpersonal skills with the ability to effectively influence in area of expertise, effectively contribute to team working to build and develop working relationships.
7. Analytical skills with the ability to generate effective solutions and make effective decisions
8. Commitment to customer service excellence
9. Effective IT Skills on MS platform. Experience using functional databases.

ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA

1. In-depth understanding of a wide range of social research or evaluation methods for process and impact evaluation, including qualitative and quantitative methods, (quasi) experimental and/or theory-based approaches such as Theory of Change.
2. Strong numerical and analytical skills including knowledge of appropriate usage of different data types and analytical approaches.
3. Experience in designing and conducting research or evaluation projects using a range of methods to generate causal or empirical evidence of impact.
4. Experience using data analysis software.
5. Intellectual curiosity and the ability to keep abreast of current and developing trends and policy in widening participation, higher education, and research and evaluation.
6. Experience of writing literature reviews, reports and articles, and producing recommendations for stakeholders with varying levels of knowledge and understanding
7. Robust awareness of ethical and compliance issues relating to educational research and evaluation

8. An empathy for the Access and Participation or Widening Participation agenda, and an understanding of the issues current issues in this field
9. Ability to pass a DBS check

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Knowledge of the Higher Education sector.
2. Postgraduate qualification in a relevant discipline (e.g., Social Research Methods, Evaluation or Education).
3. Experience conducting research or evaluations with children or in educational settings.