

Post Details		Last Updated:	
<b>Faculty/Administrative/Service Department</b>	DVC R & I/Doctoral College/Research Degrees		
<b>Job Title</b>	Senior Administrative Officer (Research Degrees)		
<b>Job Family</b>	Professional Services	<b>Job Level</b>	3
<b>Responsible to</b>	Research Degrees Manager		
<b>Responsible for (Staff)</b>	N/A		
<b><u>Job Purpose Statement</u></b>			
<p>The post holder will be responsible for delivering a professional administrative service as a senior member of the University's Doctoral College Programme Management team. Responsibilities will be commensurate with the level of their appointment and will include providing support within a specialist team to research students and supervisors in the three Faculties. The post holder will organise and prioritise their work within an established operating environment, responsible to the Research Degrees Manager. The post holder may need to deputise for the Research Degrees Manager. They will need to be able to establish and maintain good working relationships across the University, including academic and professional services staff based within Faculties and with central staff, such as in Student Finance.</p>			
<b><u>Key Responsibilities</u></b> This document is not designed to be a list of all tasks undertaken but an outline record of the main responsibilities (5 to 8 maximum)			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To build and maintain effective working relationships with academic staff and colleagues from the wider Doctoral College.</li> <li>2. To coordinate an efficient administration and management of activities relating to research degree students to deliver a high quality and professional service to staff and students. This may include maintaining student records on SITS and Je-S, resolving student/staff enquiries, supporting committees, monitoring student progress, administering examination processes.</li> <li>3. To maintain an up to date knowledge of University Regulations and Faculty/University policy in relevant areas and to support and advise staff (e.g. Associate Deans of the Doctoral College and Postgraduate Research Directors) and Faculty Research Degree Committees accordingly.</li> <li>4. To contribute to, and where appropriate take the lead, improving processes and procedures for research degree students.</li> <li>5. To contribute as a full member to the Admissions, Progression and Examination Sub-Committee (APESC) and providing secretarial support in the absence of the Research Degrees Manager.</li> <li>6. To coordinate key student/Faculty events such as Faculty and local departmental inductions for new research students.</li> <li>7. To undertake small projects as directed by the Research Degrees Manager.</li> </ol> <p>As directed by the Research Degrees Manager, work in other areas within the Doctoral College supporting colleagues to meet the business needs.</p> <p><b>N.B. The above list is not exhaustive.</b></p>			

**All staff are expected to:**

- Positively support equality of opportunity and equity of treatment to colleagues and students in accordance with the University of Surrey Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Work to achieve the aims of our Environmental Policy and promote awareness to colleagues and students.
- Follow University/departmental policies and working practices in ensuring that no breaches of information security result from their actions.
- Ensure they are aware of and abide by all relevant University Regulations and Policies relevant to the role.
- Undertake such other duties within the scope of the post as may be requested by your Manager.
- Work supportively with colleagues, operating in a collegiate manner at all times.

**Help maintain a safe working environment by:**

- Attending training in Health and Safety requirements as necessary, both on appointment and as changes in duties and techniques demand.
- Following local codes of safe working practices and the University of Surrey Health and Safety Policy.

**Elements of the Role**

This section outlines some of the key elements of the role, which allow this role to be evaluated within the University's structure. It provides an overview of what is expected from the post holder in the day-to-day operation of the role.

**Planning and Organising**

The post holder, together with the other senior administrative officers, has responsibility for programme management of research degrees across the three Faculties and will work closely with the Research Degrees Manager in all aspects of the student lifecycle. They will carry out much of their activities with limited daily guidance from their line manager, and as such they will have some latitude within their daily work routine to proactively organise and prioritise their own work and the work of their teams to ensure that key deadlines and objectives are met. It is critical that the post holder demonstrate initiative and flexibility in the arrangement of their work priorities; this will include successfully managing any conflicting demands, including across central and Faculty Student Services hub teams, possessing an awareness of the options available and being able to make effective and appropriate decisions with other Senior Administrative Officers.

Project work will come from their line managers with a focus on meeting the needs of students, academics and staff in the wider Doctoral College.

**Problem Solving and Decision Making**

Within the scope of the role the post holder will be presented with a variety of sometimes complex student and/or administrative issues, where the most appropriate course of action will often be a matter of choice, influenced by prior exposure or experience. In other instances, work actions are very well defined procedurally and the post holder is able to reference and apply established policies and procedures in order to determine a suitable course of action/outcome or apply their specialist knowledge of relevant regulatory frameworks.

Although the role is covered by standard instructions and procedures, there may be some latitude to alter the sequence of procedures, based on varying situations encountered. The post holder may also experience more unusual queries or issues, where there is little established guidance or protocol. In these cases the post holder is required to interpret past precedents and apply their judgement to determine an appropriate course of action or in exceptional cases where resolution is not straightforward to refer the matter to a senior member of the team for guidance/resolution.

**Continuous Improvement**

The post holder is a key staff member responsible for running activities or processes and is required to suggest improvements or developments to current working practices and to the services provided by the team, in order to ensure an effective service to students and staff. They will be expected to input in to departmental or University level groups to determine and then implement process improvement

**Accountability**

This post involves working with limited daily guidance but usually within established policies and procedures. The post holder will act as a point of contact and provide information for less experienced staff members, including temporary or agency staff in all areas. The post holder will be expected to provide advice and guidance to colleagues within faculties as well as within central teams. This role has a significant impact on the student experience.

**Dimensions of the role**

This post involves co-management of research degree programmes alongside senior administrative colleagues but does not have any budgetary responsibilities.

### **Supplementary Information**

In performing their duties the post holder must be aware and compliant with university regulations and show excellent attention to detail in maintaining/updating information in SITS. They are responsible for providing excellent customer service both on the telephone, via email and in person to students, staff and external associates and to respond to their enquiries in a courteous and helpful manner.

**Person Specification** This section describes the sum total of knowledge, experience & competence required by the post holder that is necessary for standard acceptable performance in carrying out this role.

#### **Qualifications and Professional Memberships**

HNC, A level, NVQ 3, HND level or equivalent with a number of years' relevant experience.

Or:

Broad vocational experience, acquired through a combination of job-related vocational training and considerable on-the-job experience, demonstrating development through involvement in a series of progressively more demanding relevant work/roles.

E

**Technical Competencies (Experience and Knowledge)** This section contains the level of competency required to carry out the role (please refer to the Competency Framework for clarification where needed and the Job Matching Guidance).

**Essential/  
Desirable**

**Level  
1-3**

Broad relevant experience

E

1

Excellent IT skills, particularly in MS Office packages, and familiarity with databases

E

2

Accuracy and attention to detail

E

2

A proactive approach, with the ability to use initiative in dealing with issues as well as a flexible approach to work, able to multi-task, satisfying the needs to different groups

E

3

Experience of working independently in relation to less routine activities

E

2

Customer Care experience or training

D

2

Experience of the SITS system for student and programme administration

D

2

Motivation to engage in ongoing continuous professional development

D

N/A

Experience of the Higher Education Sector

D

N/A

Basic awareness of the activities of the University

D

N/A

#### **Special Requirements:**

**Essential/  
Desirable**

Some weekend/evening work may be offered during the year.

D

Annual Leave may be restricted at key times during the year.

E

**Core Competencies** This section contains the level of competency required to carry out this role. (Please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed). n/a (not applicable) should be placed, where the competency is not a requirement of the grade.

**Level  
1-3**

Communication

2

Adaptability / Flexibility

2

Customer/Client service and support

2

Planning and Organising

2

Teamwork

2

Continuous Improvement

2

Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills

3

Leadership / Management

2

Creative and Analytical Thinking

2

Influencing, Persuasion and Negotiation Skills

1

This Job Purpose reflects the core activities of the post. As the Department/Faculty and the post holder develop, there will inevitably be some changes to the duties for which the post is responsible, and possibly to the emphasis of the post itself. The University expects

that the post holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. This could include undertaking relevant training where necessary.

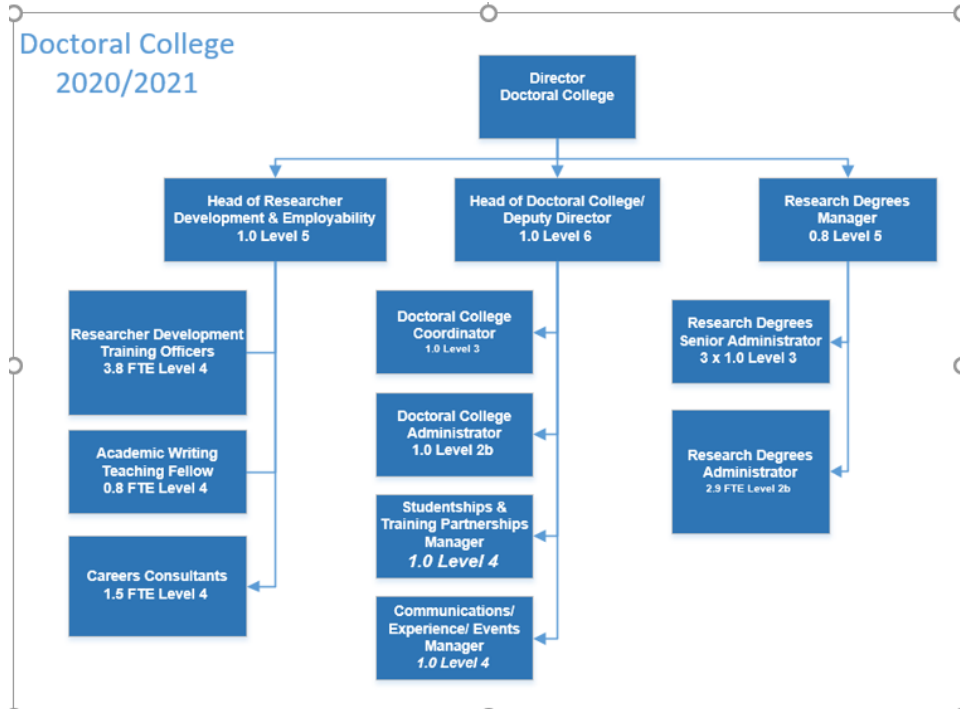
Should significant changes to the Job Purpose become necessary, the post holder will be consulted and the changes reflected in a revised Job Purpose.

### Organisational/Departmental Information & Key Relationships

The post is within the PVC R&I Portfolio which is responsible for a wide range of administrative and support services including Research Strategy, Innovation, Partnerships, Research and Innovation Services, and the Surrey Business Park.

The Division comprises five Directorates and this post is in the Doctoral College Directorate. Staff work in centrally-based teams. Staff work closely together to deliver effective and efficient support and training for researchers. The Directorate therefore has a key role in supporting the University in achieving its strategic goals.

### Department Structure Chart



### Relationships

#### Internal

All University Departments/Schools but notably:

- Associate Dean (Postgraduate Researchers)
- Faculty Directors of Postgraduate Research Programmes
- Postgraduate research student supervisors
- Quality and Enhancement Directorate (Senior Academic Quality Officer (Postgraduate))
- University Library (Director of Researcher Development)
- Colleagues based within Student, Data, Records and Systems