# Glasgow University Students’ Representative Council

# Head of Advice

**Job Description and Person Specification**

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| **Location:** | McIntyre Building, University Avenue, Glasgow G12 8QQ |
| **Salary:** | £29,614 - £36,382 appointment at level commensurate with skills and experience |
| **Hours:** | 35 Hours per week – Flexible Working |
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| **Probationary Period:** | 6 Months |
| **Pension:** | |  | | --- | | GUSRC will make a pension contribution of 8% to the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST).  Employee contribution 4% | |

**About GUSRC**

Glasgow University Students’ Representative Council (GUSRC or SRC) is an independent registered charity whose primary function is to represent and support all students at the University of Glasgow. As well as representing students, we provide a range of support services and social and personal development opportunities. The organisation is made up of a council of 40 annually elected student officers, led by 4 paid sabbatical student officers, as well as a team of full and part-time staff who are led by the Permanent Secretary and department managers.

**Summary and background to the post**

The Advice Centre is a flagship SRC service, providing a confidential information and advocacy service which seeks to address a wide range of challenges impacting on students’ wellbeing and ability to successfully complete their studies. The Advice Centre is unique in that it is able to advise and advocate independently for students in relation to University regulations and processes.

In addition, the Advice Centre plays an important role in enhancing the SRC’s student representative function via support of the elected student representatives and providing anonymised casework evidence to support policy development and campaigning.

We are looking for a team player with leadership skills and a commitment to social justice to head up the Advice Centre.

The successful candidate will deliver some direct advice work and will be responsible for the smooth operation of the service and fulfill a leadership, support, and supervisory role for other members of the Advice Centre team.

# Purpose of Post

To ensure the smooth running of the Advice Centre and to provide frontline support to students appropriate to their needs.

Provide leadership, strategic direction, and day to day operational management of the Advice Centre team.

To assist the Permanent Secretary and elected officers in the development of the service in line with the aims and values of the SRC.

#### Duties and Responsibilities

#### 1. Personnel

1.1 Supervision of work of the Advice Centre Staff Team (including conducting support/supervision sessions and appraisals as per GUSRC’s personnel policies).

1.2 Ensuring that the professional development and support needs of the Advice Centre staff are met.

1.3 Develop a positive ‘can do’ culture within the team, ensuring agreed objectives are met, whilst promoting a collaborative approach to working with internal SRC departments.

#### 2. Advice, Representation and Training

2.1 Inform advise and advocate for University of Glasgow students predominantly but not exclusively in the following areas:

* Academic Appeals, Complaints and Student Conduct Procedures
* Housing Issues
* Student Financial Support
* Council Tax
* Benefits and Tax Credits
* Employment Rights

Specific areas of representation/advocacy will include:

* University hearings (e.g., appeals, conduct, fitness to practise)
* First Tier Tribunal (Housing and Property Chamber)

2.2 Ensure that, in all areas of its work the Advice Centre adheres to the principles of providing advice that is free, confidential, non-judgemental and impartial.

* 1. Identify and establish links with other sources of specialist advice where appropriate.
  2. Co-ordinate an annual induction training programme for the incoming Sabbatical Officer team and contribute to Council Training as required.
  3. Overall responsibility for ensuring smooth running of Class Representative Training, including recruitment, induction, and support of Class Representative trainers, updating of training materials and liaising with the Vice President Education (a sabbatical officer) and the staff Administrative Team as required.
  4. Responsible for updating relevant web content and information, liaising with VP Education and University staff as necessary.

##### 3. Service Monitoring and Development

* 1. Ensure quality control mechanisms are in place through the effective casework management and staff support.
  2. Ensure the Advice Centre adheres to all relevant legislation including data protection and equality legislation.

3.3 Identify trends and patterns and make recommendations as to how the organisation can best address them.

3.4 Liaise with appropriate Elected Officers, University Departments and external agencies in terms of service planning and joint initiatives.

##### 4. Communication and Campaigning

4.1 Provide support and guidance to Elected Officers with policy and representation work, including drafting briefing notes, policy proposals and committee papers as required.

4.2 Provide information for inclusion in publicity and campaigning material (including website, social media and annual report).

4.3 Responsible for ensuring regular updates and development of advice pages on the SRC website.

4.4 Attend appropriate meetings within the organisation and externally.

4.5 Work with staff and student officers across the organisation in raising awareness of issues impacting on student welfare and quality of life.

**5. Professional Development**

5.1 Retain and (where appropriate) develop an understanding of the policy framework and legislation pertaining to student welfare and higher education.

5.2 Attend relevant training events, conferences etc.

**6. Miscellaneous**

6.1 Perform such other duties as may from time to time be required by the Permanent Secretary.

6.2 Work in a manner that reflects the values of the organisation as outlined in the constitution and strategic plan.

* 1. Act in accordance with all organisational policies and procedures.
  2. Participate in the strategic planning and review process.
  3. Able to work occasional evenings or weekends.

**7. Accountability and Management**

7.1 Directly responsible to the Permanent Secretary on a day-to-day basis.

7.2 Line manager to Advice Centre staff.

**8. Additional Notes**

The job description outlines the main responsibilities/duties of the position. It is designed for the benefit of the post holder and GUSRC in understanding the prime functions of the post. It should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

Normally every job description will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects the nature of the work being undertaken. The job description may also be reviewed in light of a change in priorities or changing team/operational requirements.

**9. Person Specification** – see following page

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| Person Specification | | |
| Attributes | Essential | Desirable |
| Experience | * Experienced line manager * Two out of the last six years of working in an advice service role (case work, advice, advocacy) * Experience of producing high quality written information materials | Training development and delivery |
| Knowledge &  Skills | * Computer Literate * Good understanding of at least one of the following areas:   1. Welfare Benefits/Tax Credits  2. Money Advice  3. Student Finance  4. Housing Law  5. Issues relating to academic advice work  **Team Working & building relationships**   * Ability to work as part of and lead a team * An open and flexible approach with the capability to build effective working relationships with colleagues both internally and externally   **Organisation and Communication**   * Excellent time management skills and the ability to manage others to deliver to deadlines and within agreed budgets and to a consistently high standard. * Ability to work flexibly, manage working time effectively and prioritise projects appropriately. * Excellent written and verbal communication skills. * Capacity to identify casework trends and translate into coherent briefing and policy advisory papers. * Strong negotiation skills. * Computer Literate. Proficient in use of common IT Packages. | Awareness of  current UK and Scottish Government objectives in relation to higher education |
| Qualifications |  | * Qualification in a relevant discipline |
| Motivation & Outlook | * Commitment to Social Justice and understanding of equal opportunities principles and practise * Approachable, Personable * Motivated, Empathetic and Flexible * A team player, willing and actively seeking opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and other departments |  |