

Apprenticeship Business Support Officer

Job Specification

Date created: November 2024

JOB DESCRIPTION

Employment status: Permanent, full time

Hours: Full time hours at UCEM are 35 per week, Monday to Friday 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and this role follows this pattern

Location flexibility: The place of work for this role is **Split** between the Horizons office in Reading and your home; the exact split of days/hours is negotiable but will include up to **30 days per year** spent at Horizons (you may work more in the office should you wish)

Please note the following:

- When you work at Horizons you must attend on core office days only
- Core office days are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
- The building is closed to staff on Fridays
- On a Split contract you cannot attend the office on a Monday, unless you have worked a minimum of 3 other core days in the office
- Working at home is only possible if your environment meets certain conditions – see the **Attachment** to this Job Specification document – and if not, you need to work at Horizons

Department: Business Development and Apprenticeships

Line manager: Catherine Young, Head of Apprenticeship Support

Role summary

The Apprenticeship Business Management (ABM) team is a small, dynamic team that provides technical and administrative business support to a range of internal and external stakeholders, thus supporting the smooth running of all apprenticeship business operations. The ABM team use their specialist knowledge, skills and expertise, underpinned by effective collaboration and transparent communication, to remove barriers to learning, drive performance and support apprentices to a successful outcome whilst ensuring UCEM remain fully compliant with all regulatory frameworks.

As the Apprenticeship Business Support Officer, you will undertake a range of technical administrative, funding and compliance activities which aid the effective and efficient operation of UCEM's apprenticeship business processes. In turn, you will assist in achieving high levels of customer satisfaction whilst remaining compliant with both regulatory and contractual requirements. You will manage allocated aspects of UCEM's apprenticeship business operations which relate to changes in apprentice circumstances, funding, compliance, and elements of financial reporting. You will have the opportunity to support both internal and external audit activities, as well as, where necessary, maintaining the management of several apprenticeship related contracts, including subcontracts with external partners.

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Role accountabilities and responsibilities

- Oversee, manage and be responsible for allocated aspects of UCEM's apprenticeship business support operations, such as change of employer, change of apprenticeship, change of pathway, change of personal circumstances, Assessment of Professional Competence (APC), gateway, completions, End Point Assessment (EPA), workshop provision etc.
- Support the integration of UCEM's apprenticeship provision into the wider business operations.
- Collaborate with others, both internally and externally, to make recommendations for developments of established processes and procedures within the apprenticeship provision.
- Contribute to the development, implementation and continuous improvement of lean administrative systems, processes, and practices.
- Support the tracking, monitoring, and reporting of apprenticeship business activity.
- Contribute to and support all activities which mitigate against loss of funding.
- Contribute to financial governance and reporting – draw up new apprenticeship agreements and liaise with finance, where necessary; arrange co-investment terms and liaise with apprentice/employer to discuss and gain agreement.
- Use a range of internal and external systems e.g., SITS, PICS, ACE 360, Apprenticeship Service account, e:Vision, dashboards, process spreadsheets and other systems as required, to complete all required business activities.
- Work closely with employers and EPA Organisations to provide APC, gateway, and EPA data to ensure successful and timely completion of apprentice change of circumstance activities.
- Liaise with Apprenticeship Outcomes Officers (AOOs), Apprenticeship Outcomes Managers (AOMs), Business Development, Employers, and where necessary, the Apprentice to discuss and provide technical guidance on any change of apprentice circumstance, ensuring full compliance to the apprenticeship funding rules.
- Support the management of several apprenticeship related contracts, including subcontracts with external partners.
- Support OFSTED and ESFA activities and actions.
- Commit to regular CPD training activities, to stay up to date with latest apprenticeship funding rules/processes.

Undertake allocated administrative duties to include but not limited to:

- Act as the first point of contact for all apprenticeship change of circumstance enquiries, taking the initiative to screen, allocate and prioritise emails, telephone calls and correspondence, taking appropriate action where necessary.
- Prepare documentation and process requests relating to apprentice change of circumstances, e.g. change of employer, change of apprenticeship, change of pathway, completions etc.
- Prepare documentation and process requests relating to apprentice progression, gateway, end point assessment and completions.
- Invoice requisition and processing: raise purchase orders, keep records, process invoices and confirm receipt of goods/service to enable payment. Liaise with UCEM Finance Team regarding invoicing etc.
- Process coach and counsellor reviews, work assignments and payments.
- Assist with data entry when required.
- Request data from other UCEM teams to collate and sort, and/or assist with the preparation of reports and statistical data.
- Undertake documentation checks, process referrals, and maintain due diligence records relating to apprentice health and safety.
- Support the coordination of internal and external meetings/events as required.
- Prepare agendas and take minutes of meetings, when required.
- Support the configuration and updating of apprenticeship management systems to enable apprentice progression.
- Support the administration of apprenticeship-related surveys, to include but not limited to:
 - ESFA Learner Satisfaction Surveys
 - UCEM induction and year end surveys
- Undertake other such duties of a similar nature which fall within the scope of the post, and which may be required from time to time.

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Line management responsibility:	NO
Budget responsibility:	NO
<u>In this role you will liaise with:</u> Admissions and Enquiries Team; Business Development Team; Academic Standards; Student Engagement Team; Apprenticeship Outcomes Team; Employers; Apprentices, EPAO's etc.	

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Assessment Criteria: A = Application I = Interview T = Test

X denotes both essential and desirable requirements plus how these will be assessed

Qualifications and training	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
GCSE Maths and English Language Grade C or 4 or above	X		X		
Further education level qualifications		X	X		
Degree level qualification		X	X		
<i>Please be aware that as part of onboarding processes, we will seek original documentary evidence of the relevant academic and/or professional qualifications which you include within your job application</i>					
Previous experience	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Experience in a similar role	X		X	X	
Recent business support experience in either an apprenticeship facing role or in a role linked to ESFA funded programmes	X			X	
Experience of undertaking work activity and controls processes which are subject to externally set compliance requirements and external audit/review	X			X	
Within the education sector/Built Environment/Higher Education		X	X	X	
Skills, knowledge, and aptitudes	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Strong communication skills	X		X	X	
Ability to work to deadlines and manage competing priorities in a highly pressurised environment	X		X		
Accuracy and precision, with good attention to detail	X		X	X	
Effective planning and organisational skills	X		X	X	
Digital skills: We use MS Office which includes Teams, Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint	X		X	X	X

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Ability to monitor performance against targets/key performance indicators	X			X	
Proactive and professional manner with a 'can-do', solutions focused approach	X		X	X	
Ability to develop strong working relationships with both internal and external stakeholders	X		X	X	
Strong evaluation and analytical skills	X		X	X	
Ability to work to deadlines and manage competing priorities in a highly pressurised environment	X			X	
A clear understanding of Apprenticeship Funding and Compliance rules and regulations		X	X	X	
Financial planning and management skills		X		X	
Other requirements or special requirements	Essential	Desirable	A	I	T
Alignment to the UCEM core values of Passion, Integrity, Excellence and Support; all employees are expected to demonstrate our values at work: https://www.ucem.ac.uk/core-values/	X			X	
Commitment to delivering positive outcomes for our students; we want our students to be successful	X			X	
You must be prepared to undertake compulsory online training should you be appointed; this includes Data Protection, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Prevent, EDI, and Anti-bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct	X			X	

PAY & BENEFITS

- Salary range £26,000 to £28,000 per annum.
- 26 days paid holiday (rising to 28 with service) plus paid bank/public holidays plus up to 5 paid closure days (typically between Christmas and New Year); all per holiday year Full Time Equivalent. Our holiday year runs from 1 August to 31 July. We also have a holiday buy and sell scheme in place. Sometimes UCEM does not need to close for 5 days per year and any balance, for example 1 day, can be used as a paid Wellbeing Day to take time out for your own physical or mental health.
- Pensions auto-enrolment to the People's Pension salary exchange scheme (the term we use for salary sacrifice). You may opt out of salary exchange but remain in the scheme, or you may choose to opt out altogether.
- Policies in place for all types of family-friendly statutory leave with enhanced pay available from day one of employment (in addition to statutory pay, where applicable).
- Wellbeing support and full access to the Employee Assistance Programme, as well as the Thrive Mental Wellbeing app. Several UCEM employees are trained Mental Health First Aiders and can support staff.
- Cycle to Work and Electric Vehicle salary sacrifice schemes and access to Tax-Free Childcare (Government scheme).
- For Horizons based roles, we may in the future be able to offer parking on site however you must not assume this will be possible. Every now and then we may have a spare parking space become available and you can ask to join the waiting list. UCEM is keen wherever possible, to encourage staff to commute as sustainably as possible.
- Life assurance cover.
- Employer-funded Health Cash Plan (Simplyhealth) and voluntary dental insurance (Unum).
- Charity giving options available including one voluntary paid day, per annum.

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- As a UCEM employee you will have access to Microsoft Office 365 applications for personal use. You will also have access to range of lifestyle discounts (savings on everyday purchases) and access to two learning platforms.

On the *Join the team* page of our website, you will find the full list of employee benefits at UCEM

APPLICATION PROCESS

IMPORTANT! All job applications must be sent to recruitment@ucem.ac.uk and if you apply via a jobs board, please make sure you have sent all required documents otherwise we will be unable to consider your application. In addition, if you apply for this job on the recommendation of an existing UCEM employee, please make sure to mention their name within your application.

To apply for this role, please send the following to recruitment@ucem.ac.uk (you will receive an auto-response):

1. Your up-to-date CV;
2. A covering letter or email message outlining your suitability* for the role; AND
3. A completed **Recruitment Check Form** which is available from the *Current vacancies* page of our website.

The above items constitute a **complete** job application.

*We hope you take time to consider the UCEM values when you prepare your job application. You may also wish to consult our vision and strategy document: <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/our-vision/>

We are committed to driving forward our sustainability agenda to secure a sustainable future and our long-term ambition is to be the world's most sustainable university. We recommend you visit our website to find out more about our **Sustainability Strategy**: <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/sustainability/>

If you are an existing UCEM employee, we request you inform your current line manager of your intention to apply for this role.

NO AGENCIES: We are not using agencies for this vacancy, and we cannot accept any CV submissions. Please do not contact us as we can only repeat this message.

Informal discussion

If you are unsure whether to apply, perhaps because you do not meet all essential criteria, we encourage you to call the hiring manager to discuss this further (details below). If you are excited by this vacancy do not rule yourself out; it still might be worth applying.

For an informal discussion about the role please contact Catherine Young on 0118 467 2466 or email c.young@ucem.ac.uk

For any other enquiries please contact HR on 0118 467 2454/2433 or email recruitment@ucem.ac.uk

Closing date and next steps

Monday 02 December 2024 at noon.

HR will screen all applications in person and all applicants will receive a response confirming the status of their application. We value the time taken to make a job application and the interest shown in UCEM.

Interview details

Dates for interview will be advised to you later in the process.

Please indicate on your Recruitment Check Form any dates that you cannot make, up to 4 weeks from the closing date. This helps us to plan interviews should you be shortlisted, prior to contacting you.

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Applications may be reviewed prior to the closing date and occasionally, you may be invited to interview ahead of the closing date.

Interviews are normally carried out over Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and we may invite you to visit our Reading office, especially when this is your place of work.

Please be prepared for a two-stage interview process, held on different dates. As part of the interview process, you will meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Sometimes we may conduct a telephone interview at first or second stage.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

Here at UCEM we champion equality, diversity, and inclusion in our workforce. We celebrate diversity and the strengths it brings to our staff body, our student community and our Board of Trustees, recognising that people are key to our success. Our aim is to attract, develop and retain a diverse workforce, therefore we welcome and encourage applications from all backgrounds.

Pre-employment checks

UCEM undertakes thorough pre-employment screening as part of its recruitment process. Given we have contracts with Government offices, we make sure our checks comply with the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS). Checks will include identity, right to work, basic disclosure criminal record check, and three years of employment history.

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Attachment – homeworking environment

UCEM is a **flexible employer** and flexibility is built into different places of work location. As such, it is reasonable to ask employees to adhere to some **general principles and ways of working**, in order to make sure flexibility offers value to everyone, including UCEM.

In addition, if all or part of your working week involves working at home, your home environment must meet certain conditions. Otherwise you will be required to work in the office at Horizons.

General principles

- All employees regardless of place of work will be required to take an online Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment and repeat this at such intervals as may be instructed by the Facilities Management Team. The purpose of this is to look after your health and safety at work.
- All employees must adhere to UCEM IT Security and Data Protection policies in their place of work.
- All employees will be expected to be accessible to colleagues during their normal working hours and ensure their Outlook Calendars reflect the accurate place of work.
- All line managers will be expected to be accessible to their team and will be responsible for ensuring the performance of their team.

Remote (Home) requirements and conditions

- Where your place of work involves working at home, you must have suitable conditions in which to work.
- As a minimum, your UK home location must be able to accommodate the UCEM technology and equipment. What this means in practice is that you must have sufficient space in which to house the technology and equipment safely and securely.
- In all cases, UCEM technology and equipment can only be handled and used by you, the employee. It must not be accessible to any other household member, at any time.
- When you are working remotely as part of the DSE assessment, you will be required to provide evidence that your working environment meets DSE requirements, such as providing a photo of your workstation setup.
- You must also provide a secure and reliable internet connection which allows you to work as effectively as if you were in Horizons, **including undertaking video and audio calls and connecting permanently to the VPN.**
- In the case of known broadband outage you should plan to work at Horizons or elsewhere – noting that elsewhere must still meet the place of work requirements. Should you be unable to do either of these options, you will be required to take holiday. In the event of unexpected outage, you should discuss with your line manager whether you need to find an alternative place of work or take holiday.
- For the avoidance of doubt, the provision of the required broadband, will be self-funded.
- It is expected that you will house technology and equipment at a suitable work desk, which gives you the space needed to work safely and confidentially. This space in your home must be away from other household users, such as space in a room which is not frequented by other household members.
- Your work environment must remain professional at all times. This means you must be able to work remotely without interruption from household members and noise, and your surroundings should mirror what an office environment would look like (clean/tidy, free of clutter and distractions).
- It is not appropriate to work from a sofa or other location which is not in keeping with presenting a professional work environment. Opting to use the blurring function on Teams/Zoom is not an acceptable workaround.
- If you do not have space to accommodate these requirements or your circumstances change, you are not permitted to work at any location other than Horizons.