Doctoral Support Officer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department:</th>
<th>Graduate School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade/ Salary:</td>
<td>Grade 5, £32,442 - £36,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Type:</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours:</td>
<td>35 per week (Full time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>New Cross, London (hybrid working pattern in place)</td>
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Goldsmiths

Goldsmiths, University of London is a world-leading centre of educational excellence where ground-breaking research meets innovative teaching and thinking. We’re looking for inspiring and talented people to help build on our global reputation while also growing personally in a true learning organisation.

We are happy to supply information in alternative formats for disabled applicants. Please contact hr@gold.ac.uk to make your request.

Passionate about advancing equality and celebrating diversity. Together, we are different
Graduate School

The Graduate School plays a key and proactive role in supporting the experience of doctoral students (MPhil/PhD), as well as supporting academic staff in supervision and support roles. It is a virtual and physical home for Goldsmiths' community of approximately 750 doctoral students and the hub for a range of administrative functions, events and activities. The Graduate School’s role encompasses the oversight and coordination of examinations for doctoral degrees. The Graduate School is also involved in the allocation and management of funding (including studentships via Research Councils) to support postgraduate research activity.

We aim to provide a strong and supportive infrastructure, building on the excellent work of academic departments and other support services, by providing facilities, advice and generic skills training and by encouraging intellectual and social contact across disciplinary boundaries. Central to our vision is that the Graduate School should be an interdisciplinary space, to encourage doctoral students to have intellectual and social contact with each other beyond their departmental and disciplinary boundaries.

Job description

Reporting to: Doctoral Support Manager

Summary:
We are seeking enthusiastic and organised professionals to work as part of a team of three Doctoral Support Officers providing specialised administrative support for Goldsmiths’ doctoral students (MPhil/PhD programmes). Working within – and with the support of - the experienced Graduate School team, the postholders will, in particular, provide key points of contact and support for doctoral students, supervisors and departmental postgraduate research convenors within a defined group of academic departments.

A key aspect of this support will be to establish accurate records of all doctoral students within these departments and to contribute to the key administrative processes necessary to maintain these. The roles will also involve input into the Graduate School’s
support and pastoral care provision for doctoral students and necessary administrative functions relating to their academic development (including events such as departmental induction and disciplinary training).

An understanding of the issues relevant to doctoral students and this particular level of study, along with experience of the administration that is critical for delivering an excellent student experience will be important. The postholders will also be required to build and maintain strong working relationships with designated departmental convenors and supervisors within their departments and to work with them to deliver key support for their students.

As set out below, each Doctoral Support Officer will undertake a core set of duties common to each of the three roles. In addition to this, each will be assigned one area of specialised duties, covering a specific area of support for our doctoral cohort and where appropriate, aligned with existing experience and, where possible, interest.

Core duties

- To be a key point of contact and liaison for both doctoral students and for staff supporting doctoral students (especially departmental convenors)
- To establish and maintain records (including registration timelines) of all current and incoming doctoral students within a designated group of departments, including key information on supervisors, submission deadlines and other key dates.
- As part of a team, to work in providing - and where appropriate signposting - pastoral care for doctoral students where it is needed.
- To develop a working knowledge of the systems used to track and record doctoral student registration and to invoice fees.
- To attend and provide appropriate administrative support for MPhil/PhD-related committees within designated academic departments, to include taking formal notes (minutes).
- To provide essential support where required for Departmental MPhil/PhD assessments.
- To prepare and communicate department-specific information for doctoral students where required.
- To work with department convenors to foster community among cohorts of doctoral students (including facilitating flows of information)
- To provide administrative support for the transfer of registration (upgrade) process, including:
  - Identifying students due for upgrade in collaboration with departmental convenors
  - Receive and log upgrade / transfer meeting reports (and chase reports following meeting).
- To receive and file final completed and agreed ethics approval application forms.
- To provide support for the Annual Progress Monitoring process.
- To provide, where necessary, additional administrative support at a departmental level for modules compulsory for doctoral students, including registration, updating VLE pages and recording and disseminating results.
- Where necessary, to support departmental convenors in delivering cohort building activities for doctoral students

**Areas of speciality (each postholder will be assigned to one of these)**

**Examinations support**
To provide support for the administrative processes of doctoral examinations, including:
- To liaise with examiners external to Goldsmiths to help process pay and expenses claims, including helping to verify Right-to-Work documents provided
- To make travel bookings and/or processing pay claims for examiners;
- To help to maintain records of the doctoral examinations process
- To develop a working knowledge of the key processes for doctoral examinations
- To handle queries from candidates and supervisors relating to the doctoral examination process
- To administer the Graduate School Fellows scheme for completed doctoral students

**Registration and casework support**
- To provide registration advice to students
- To review and coordinate the approval of Change of Circumstance forms including liaising with Registry colleagues as appropriate
- To provide advice on fee invoicing to students and colleagues as appropriate
• To lead the monthly Return from Interruption process
• To support the Doctoral Support Manager (DSM) in undertaking progression checks on a termly basis
• To support the DSM in resolving student casework as required, including signposting to and liaison with other relevant services (e.g. Goldsmiths Immigration Advisory Service)
• To develop relationships with colleagues in Registry Operations to support the timely processing of record changes and invoicing

**Studentship and funding support**

• To provide, where necessary, a point of liaison between MPhil/PhD offer holders, prospective supervisors, departmental convenors and Goldsmiths Admissions team.

• To update departmental doctoral bursary information and to support the application process for such funds

• To help ensure departmental web pages are up to date in regard to doctoral study and funding opportunities, and where necessary, support the maintenance of the Graduate School website.

• To provide administrative support for departmental selection committees (note taking, drafting letters and feedback for both successful and unsuccessful nominees).

• To support the process of updating external-facing materials relevant to doctoral studies

• To assist with administering applications for departmental doctoral student research funds and Research Training Support Grants within designated departments, including booking travel and processing expense claims where necessary

**Further duties**

• You will be required to undertake any other duties as may reasonably be required.

• Ensure that you are aware of and aligned with Goldsmiths’ Regulations, Strategy, and Objectives to work together to proactively advance Equality and Diversity.
• At all times to help maintain a safe working environment by participating in training as necessary and following the Goldsmiths' Health and Safety Codes of Practice and Policy.

**Person Specification**

Detailed below are the types of qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge which are required of the post holder. Selection will be made upon evidence of best-fit with this criteria.

The Essential criteria sections show the minimum essential requirements for the post, therefore if you cannot demonstrate in your application you meet the essential criteria categorised below, you will not be invited to interview.

The Desirable criteria sections show additional attributes which would enable the applicant to perform the role more effectively with little or no training.

The Category column indicates the method of assessment:

\[
\begin{align*}
A & = \text{Application form} \\
C & = \text{Certificate} \\
I & = \text{Interview} \\
R & = \text{Reference} \\
T & = \text{Test} / P = \text{Presentation}
\end{align*}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Criteria 1 - Qualifications</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education to equivalent of degree level or above</td>
<td>A</td>
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| Desirable Criteria 1 - Qualifications | |
|--------------------------------------| |
### Essential Criteria 2 - Experience
- A minimum of 1 year’s work experience of higher education (HE) or equivalent
- Experience in core office management competencies including procedural and event management

### Desirable Criteria 2 - Experience
- Experience of working with doctoral students (MPhil/PhD)
- Experience of creating and maintaining online student records

### Essential Criteria 3 – Knowledge
- Working knowledge of key current issues and challenges within HE

### Desirable Criteria 3 - Knowledge
- A good understanding of both the social sciences and the arts and humanities
- An understanding of the broad training needs of doctoral students

### Essential Criteria 4 - Skills
- Ability to work independently and pro-actively with a flexible approach and take full responsibility for a range of tasks
- Excellent communication skills. You will be experienced in engaging positively, carefully and accurately with a variety of stakeholders, with the ability to adjust the message to suit the audience
- Familiarity in the use and adaptation of IT software including use of the Microsoft Office suite
- Experience of working with students and academic/administrative colleagues within a university setting – dealing professionally and empathetically in sometimes challenging situations
- Ability to deal with a varied and complex workload, prioritising tasks while working under pressure and to deadlines. You will have the ability to work independently and as a committed team member

### Desirable Criteria 4 - Skills
- Ability to use web-based facilities (eg. Moodle) for online learning
Please also note that where qualifications are required, employment is conditional on the verification of them. Qualifications (must be original documents) will be checked on the first day of appointment.

For more information about the role, please contact Lauren Sperring (l.sperring@gold.ac.uk)

July 2023

Summary of Benefits

If you choose to work with us, you’ll become part of a learning organisation that is committed to professional and personal development, with a comprehensive and innovative staff development programme.

You’ll also have access to frequent lunchtime and evening talks, seminars and performances, and annual performance and development reviews.

Our other benefits include:

- Competitive salary
- On-site cinema, Curzon Goldsmiths, with staff discounts and special screenings
- Working in Zone 2, with fantastic transport links and interest free travel to work loans
- Excellent annual leave entitlement plus additional closure days at Christmas and Easter
- Membership of USS or LPFA pension scheme, dependent upon grade
- Access to exclusive discounts, including high street retailers
• Maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and adoption leave and pay and tax efficient childcare voucher scheme
• Contractual sick pay provision
• Free eye tests
• Wellbeing initiatives including the Chaplaincy and Staff Choir
• On-site dining facilities and gym
• Access to University of London facilities such as Senate House Library

Further information

For more information about Goldsmiths, please visit: www.gold.ac.uk/about.

We can supply information in alternative formats for people with a visual impairment or dyslexia. For this please contact hr@gold.ac.uk or visit www.gold.ac.uk/hr.

Thank you for your interest in working with us, we wish you all the best with your application.