Student Welfare Lead

Further Particulars

Job Title: Student Welfare Lead
Hours: 37.5 hours
Salary: £43,000 to £52,000 pa (depending on skills and experience)
Contract Type: Permanent
Reporting to: Dean; Registrar & Director of Admissions (line manager)

The College

Hertford College (“the one with the bridge”) is a constituent college of The University of Oxford, and a registered charity. Hertford is one of the larger Oxford colleges in terms of student numbers, with roughly 750 students, two-thirds of whom are undergraduates. The main site lies in the heart of Oxford, with origins from the thirteenth century (the current Hertford College was founded in 1874).

The Fellowship, which has responsibility for the governance of the college, currently consists of forty fellows. In addition, thirty lecturers supplement teaching provision, and around 125 members of administrative and domestic staff coordinate and support key activities. Fellows, lecturers, and students are drawn from a range of disciplines across the four Divisions (Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences, and Medical Sciences). Academic and administrative offices are on the main site, as is accommodation for many students, complemented by further accommodation at various other sites around Oxford.

The college has a reputation for being both progressive and friendly. It was one of the first originally all-male colleges to admit female students, and the ratio of female students to male remains comparatively high. For over fifty years, Hertford has championed access for students from backgrounds under-represented at Oxford, and this continues to be the focus of our outreach work.

Further information about the college is available at http://www.hertford.ox.ac.uk.

The Role

The holder of this new post will lead on student welfare provision and the encouragement of wellbeing amongst the College’s student body. Working closely with a broad range of staff, both within the College and in the wider University and beyond, the Student Welfare Lead will ensure that students have access to timely and appropriate welfare and wellbeing support throughout their academic studies. They will combine work as a first point of contact for students, coordinating and/or signposting to appropriate onwards support, with oversight of student casework and policy work associated with student welfare. They will also coordinate initiatives to promote wellbeing amongst the student body. The role does not extend to staff welfare and wellbeing.
The role draws together responsibilities that were previously split between the Chaplain (casework), the Dean (policy work), and the Academic Services Manager (Disability Coordinator). The welfare team includes the College GPs and nurses, the College Counsellor, four Junior Deans (graduate students who provide out-of-hours welfare support across the College’s accommodation), and student welfare representatives and peer supporters. The Student Welfare Lead will work closely with the Registrar (who leads the College’s academic administration) and the Dean (an academic who represents student welfare issues on the College’s Governing Body without normally being involved in individual student cases or day-to-day activities related to student welfare). They will develop good working relationships with other College Officers, tutors, and administrative and domestic operations staff. They will also liaise with the central Oxford University Student Welfare and Support Services, which include the Oxford University Counselling Service and the Disability Advisory Service.

The ideal candidate for the Student Welfare Lead role will have excellent interpersonal skills, proven organisational skills and administrative experience, commitment to student welfare and wellbeing, and professional experience relevant to the position. Relevant experience could come from a variety of backgrounds, such as providing pastoral care in an academic setting, counselling, and/or dealing with a range of psychological, emotional, and practical problems as a health or social care professional. The post-holder will need to have or quickly develop a good understanding of University life and student welfare issues, including those relating to mental health and disability. The role does not involve providing counselling support to students, but the post-holder will need to have a good instinct for when a student may benefit from being signposted to counselling services or other pastoral or medical care.

The role requires some flexibility of working, especially in termtime, but, except in an emergency, the Student Welfare Lead would not be expected to be a direct point of contact for students in the evening, at weekends, or on days when not working.

**Main duties of the role**

**Welfare support for students**

The Student Welfare Lead will establish themselves as a familiar and accessible figure around the College, acting as one of the first ports of call for students with welfare issues or personal, emotional, or psychological concerns. They will offer advice, assurance, and signposting to all students as necessary.

When dealing with individual student cases the Student Welfare Lead’s role will involve:

- meeting with students for confidential consultations;
- supporting individual student casework, where it relates to a welfare matter;
- where appropriate, referring students to other sources of support or medical care available within and outside of College;
- overseeing, as Disability Coordinator, day-to-day support to students with disabilities and the implementation of Student Support Plans (SSPs);
- liaising with applicants and offer-holders about welfare and/or disability-related needs and queries;
- maintaining records that comply with legal and statutory requirements including General Data Protection Regulation.

**Leading student welfare in the College**

The Student Welfare Lead will lead on and develop further student support activities as coordinator of the wider welfare team. In this capacity, they will:
build up good knowledge and practice around supporting students' welfare, wellbeing, and resilience in the College and the University, and pass on knowledge and training to others;

ensure that clear information about welfare provision, wellbeing, and resilience is effectively disseminated within the College in Freshers’ Week and is updated across the year (including by giving presentations, coordinating workshops, and producing welfare communications);

liaise sensitively with academic and non-academic staff, including College Officers, tutors, and members of the welfare team, regarding student welfare issues;

provide guidance and support in dealing with students in acute mental distress to ensure that emergencies are dealt with in a safe and timely way;

act as one of the College’s Safeguarding Officers;

line-manage the College’s four Junior Deans, being their point of report for welfare matters, and being involved in their recruitment;

provide regular support to the undergraduate and postgraduate student Welfare Reps, and to the College’s Peer Supporters (in the latter case, acting as the designated link to central training and supervision);

contribute to relevant committees, including by convening termly meetings of the College’s Student Welfare Committee and representing the College at the inter-collegiate Welfare Forum.

Welfare strategy and policy development

The Student Welfare Lead will lead on, develop, and help implement the College's welfare strategy, supporting students’ welfare, wellbeing, and resilience in the College in line with best practice, and making recommendations for improvements, including:

- developing and helping implement activities that support students' welfare, wellbeing, and resilience in the College in line with best practice;
- keeping up to date with legislation and relevant Conference of Colleges and University policies and procedures;
- taking the lead in drafting, reviewing, and updating College policies and procedures relating to issues connected to student welfare, as necessary;
- maintaining confidential records throughout the year, to ensure cases are documented appropriately and followed through to completion, and to inform the drafting of documents and reports for the College’s Governing Body and committees;
- attending and contributing to University and Conference of Colleges workshops, panels, and task groups on student welfare issues.

Professional responsibilities

The Student Welfare Lead will be expected to:

- undertake any necessary training and continuing professional development in order to stay up to date professionally;
- comply with Health and Safety regulations and the broader values of the College (including in equality, diversity, and inclusivity).

Other duties

The post-holder may be required to undertake other duties as commensurate with the level of responsibility for this post, and undertake training as necessary, to ensure that the post-holder remains fully able to deliver the best student welfare provision in the College.
Person Specification

**Essential**

- relevant qualifications and/or professional experience and a good understanding of the mental health and disability-related issues that students experience;
- excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including an ability to work collaboratively with a wide range of students and staff, and the ability to supervise and support welfare team members;
- evidence of the ability to think strategically and to design and implement programmes and policies informed by best practice;
- evidence of a strong understanding of cultural diversity, and experience of managing sensitive situations with discretion;
- good organisational and administrative skills, including the ability to make good decisions and use own initiative;
- ability to maintain a level of emotional and professional resilience and appropriate boundaries in relation to the demands of a welfare-focused post;
- competency in working with sensitive data, databases, and IT systems, including an ability to prepare reports for committees and other bodies;
- willingness to work out-of-hours during an emergency if required.

**Desirable**

- experience of working in a student-facing role within a Higher or Further Education institution.

Terms and Conditions

This is a full-time permanent appointment, available from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.

The salary will be £43,000 to £52,000 pa, depending on skills and experience. The post is eligible for membership of the USS pension scheme.

Benefits

**Annual leave:** The college offers an annual leave entitlement of 28 working days (five to be used for Christmas Closure), plus Bank Holidays, pro-rata for part-time employees. Bank holidays which fall within the full terms of the University of Oxford are normally worked, for which time off in lieu will be given. The holiday year runs from 1 October to 30 September. Colleagues in student-facing roles are not normally permitted to take annual leave during term-time. Additional holiday days are awarded as longer services awards.

**Employee Benefits Platform:** Free access to thousands of discounts and savings via vouchers, reloadable cards, cashback, and online voucher codes.

**Free Meal:** When on duty, lunch is provided free of charge when the kitchens are open.

**Pension:** The post is eligible for membership of the USS Pension Scheme. Further details can be found at [https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/pensions](https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/pensions).

**Health and Welfare Support:** Employee Assistance Programme. Free annual flu jab.

**Travel Pass Loan:** A discounted travel scheme is available with monthly deductions from salary.
Cycle to Work Scheme / Bike Loan: Monthly deductions from salary. On site cycle repair service at discounted rates.

Sports Facilities: Access to the University Sport club.

University Card: for discounts in shops, cafes and restaurants and University Leisure facilities.

Other staff benefits are outlined on the HR section of the college website: https://www.hertford.ox.ac.uk/and-more/vacancies.

The appointment is subject to a probationary period of six months. The college will initiate a DBS check prior to employment. You may also be required to submit to a medical assessment that is satisfactory to the College, a medical questionnaire will be provided if relevant to your employment.

Application and Appointment Procedure

Those wishing to apply for the post should email the following to hr@hertford.ox.ac.uk by noon on Wednesday 14 June 2023:

1. CV (maximum two sides of A4);
2. A covering letter detailing how your experience and skills meet the criteria for the post (maximum two sides of A4);
3. The names and contact details of two referees;

Applicants are also asked to complete and return an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form (available from the college website www.hertford.ox.ac.uk/about/vacancies). The information collected on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form does not form part of the selection process and will not be circulated to the selection panel. It will be used solely to monitor the effectiveness of the college’s equality policy. Completed forms should therefore be sent to hr@hertford.ox.ac.uk as a separate document, and not contained in the same string as the other application materials.

Interviews are scheduled to take place in the week commencing Monday 3 July 2023. References will only be taken up for candidates shortlisted for interview.

Candidates must be eligible to work in the UK, and the appointment will be subject to provision of proof of the right to work in the UK before employment commences. Regrettably, the college is not able to sponsor applicants for a UK work visa for this post.

The position may be discussed further with the Dean: oliver.noblewood@hertford.ox.ac.uk.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we have implemented a privacy notice to inform you, as a prospective employee of our college, of the types of data we will process about you. We also include within this notice the reasons for processing your data, the lawful basis that permits us to process it, how long we keep your data for and your rights regarding your data. This Privacy Notice can be found on our website at this address: https://www.hertford.ox.ac.uk/privacy.

Hertford College is an Equal Opportunities Employer