



GSA



**Graduate
Students'
Association**
UNIVERSITY OF YORK

**Academic and Welfare
Advisor
Recruitment Pack**

Academic and Welfare Advisor 1.0 fte

(initially to 31 August 2022, with the possibility of extension)

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA):

The University of York's Graduate Student Association (GSA) are looking for candidates excited at the idea of providing crucial advice and support to postgraduates here at the University of York

It's a great time to join the GSA: with the University of York we are working on a new shape for learning and research as we transition out of COVID; supporting the development of their new ten-year plan, and currently working to finalise our own student-led, three year strategy set to launch later this year.

Established in 1965, the GSA is an independent charity and the UK's only dedicated specialist postgraduate union. We represent almost 8,600 postgraduate (Masters and PhD) students at the University of York. Providing strong advocacy and providing a platform to all for our members is at the heart of everything we do.

Over the last year we're proud to have developed and expanded the services we offer, including student voice, our dedicated welfare and advice service, academic support and community building, free sports sessions, plus a comprehensive calendar of events, trips and activities including the UK's largest dedicated postgraduate welcome experience.

Our membership is extremely diverse. Our students are aged 21 to 85 year of age and well over half are from another country. We also have a growing community of distance and part-time learners. Providing a wide range of evolving services and support is a constant challenge, but one the GSA relishes and rises to each year through the leadership of our three elected sabbatical officers.

The successful candidate will be joining our team of 8 staff and 3 student sabbatical officers and a wider network of volunteers with a combination of home and office working, subject to government guidelines, based out of our Vanbrugh office in the heart of Campus West. If you enjoy getting involved, being hands-on as part of a small and dynamic team, and you're

looking for a chance to gain some vital career progression and experience then we'd love to hear from you.

Purpose:

The GSA is a unique specialist students' union, with a dynamic core team of staff and officers. providing a dedicated one-to-one independent advice service to postgraduates on issues linked to appeals, complaints and disciplinary matters.

As we return to campus, there are exciting times ahead for the GSA as we are developing new plans and services within the Union. Part of this vision is to expand the Advice Service to better represent postgraduate students on additional issues. This may include student finance and housing as we work to deliver our vision for providing an increased range of consistent support for our members.

To achieve this goal, we would like to appoint a 1.0 FTE adviser role to support the Advice and Welfare Coordinator in the day to day running of the service.

The GSA is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community. We welcome applications from all individuals and particularly under represented groups.

General Duties:

- To deliver a high-quality professional advice service to postgraduate students at the University of York
- To provide independent, confidential, non-judgmental, and impartial advice and information on academic issues and other matters
- To provide support to postgraduate students who are in dispute with the University
- To advise and support elected officers and other GSA staff on matters where trend in individual casework is indicative of an issue impacting on an increasing number of students
- To assist the Advice and Welfare Coordinator in developing the service, including policy and procedures that support students

The successful post holder will take joint responsibility for:

- Maintaining up to date and comprehensive records
- Assisting in the development of policy and practice as appropriate
- Researching, developing, and delivering information, workshops and other training on relevant subjects
- Identifying opportunities for service development, preventative and early intervention work and assisting with the development of associated resources
- Developing and maintaining effective working relationships, procedures and referral routes with key University and local services

This list is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to carry out other tasks commensurate with the level of the post.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Education /Qualifications	Degree level qualification or equivalent expertise & experience	
	Appropriate advice or support-related qualification eg Social Work/Community Work /Counselling or equivalent professional experience	
Previous experience	An understanding of advice work principles such as impartiality, confidentiality, equality and diversity	Giving advice in a paid or voluntary role for at least 1 year

	Dealing with stressed and distressed clients	Conducting 1:1 appointments with clients
	Keeping accurate and appropriate records including professional experience and understanding of confidentiality and data management requirements	An understanding of the issues facing full and part time undergraduate and postgraduate students in higher education
		Assessment of clients' needs and issues
		Design and delivery of workshops and other training
		Design and delivery of information and advice resources
Skills and Abilities	Able to present information clearly and concisely in writing and verbally	Able to work with both individuals and groups
	Able to establish strong working relationships with a wide range of individuals, both management, service users and external stakeholders	Information gathering and research skills eg acquiring knowledge of University Regulations, relevant procedures and relevant legislation
	Able to deal sensitively with enquiries from a diverse range of individuals, manage potentially difficult or emotional situations calmly and confidently	
	Excellent time management and ability to prioritise effectively	

Personal Attributes	The ability to act on your own initiative, work independently, and find creative solutions when necessary	An interest in Postgraduate issues
	A values-led team player with an empathetic, emotionally intelligent approach	Ability to understand and manage professional relationships
	Resilience, calm and tenacity in sometimes challenging scenarios	
	Pro-active "can-do" attitude and vision	
	Willingness to abide by GSA constitutions and policies and to work within, promote and uphold the student-led and democratic ethos of the GSA	

Closing Date: 23 November 2021

Shortlisting Date: 29 November 2021

Interview Date: 8 or 9 December 2021

Commencement Date: ASAP

Salary: £21,500

Hours of Work: Full time, 37.5 hours per week (7.5 hours per day).

Due to the nature of the role, working hours may exceed this total as business needs fluctuate.

The GSA offers flexible working between the hours of 8am and 6pm, staff must be present for core hours between 10am and 4pm.

The post may involve evening and weekend work.

Place of Work: A combination of remote working and office working at The Graduate Students' Association, University of York, Heslington, York (subject to government guidelines). The post may require some minimal travel within the UK.

Benefits: 30 Days per year holiday & All Public Holidays

Duration of Post: initially to 31 August 2022, subject to a satisfactory three month probation

Reporting to: GSA Advice and Welfare Coordinator

Application forms: should be returned, marked Private and Confidential, to Helen Coombs, via email to recruitment@yorkgsa.org

Contact: For an informal conversation regarding this role, please contact Christopher Carr, Advice and Welfare Coordinator, on c.carr@yorkgsa.org

October 2021

ends