

Role Profile

Role title:	Senior Advisor
Salary:	£31,211- £34,440
Full/Part Time:	Full-Time
Contract term:	Permanent
Accountable to:	Head of Advice / Associate Director for Student Engagement
Accountable for:	No direct reports
Hours:	35 Hours per Week
Location:	Usually located at the main Students' Union Building / with an option to work some hours remotely. There is normally a requirement for office-based working at least 3 days per week to ensure service needs are met. Up to 5 days a week office working may be required during busy periods, to cover short staffing, or dependent on business need. Occasional duties being delivered across the University campus or in the community.
Eligibility:	Open to applicants with relevant skills and experience who are eligible to work in the UK from the start of employment.
Benefits:	We offer a great range of benefits. You can see them here .

Our Organisation

We are Manchester Students' Union, the biggest SU in the country, supporting over 40,000 students throughout their time at university. We help to make student life the best it can be by supporting students to campaign for change, creating opportunities to meet new people, providing employment opportunities, providing advice and support and being a safe place on campus.

We are a values-centred organisation that employs around 90 permanent, full-time members of staff. We recruit a wide range of roles throughout the year within all our departments from our Commercial team operating Manchester Academy Venues, 13 Media, Bar 532 & Kitchen and Corridor Coffee to our Student Activities, Student Engagement, Marketing and Communications, Finance, HR and Facilities teams. Our team of around 400 part-time, studying staff are instrumental in providing to support to all departments as well as leading major projects like Student Angels. When you join UMSU, you'll be immersed in an environment that empowers staff to make great things happen and we're always on the lookout for innovative, passionate, and proactive people to join us.

Our staff team is led by our senior leadership team who are instrumental in driving our strategy at UMSU. It's made up of our CEO, COO, 3 Directors and 2 Associate Directors. We are governed by our trustees and Exec Officers, you can find out more about that [here](#). All our permanent, full-time roles are graded (Grade A-E) which means that there is a clear path to your development and progression whilst at UMSU.

Our Organisational Values

Our values are really important to us and shape the work that we do every day. As part of our recruitment process, we want you to demonstrate how your experiences, behaviours and skills align with our values.

Our values are

- We put students at the heart of what we do
- We provide a 'great experience' service
- We believe in improvement and progression
- We are a community
- We are open and transparent
- We are inclusive

You can find more detailed explanations of our values on [our website](#).

Role Overview

The Students' Union Advice Service offers independent, confidential advice to students on a wide variety of issues. The Service is a core part of the support offer from the Union to ensure over 40,000 students at the University of Manchester have access to high quality advice when they need it. Students feeling well supported is one of our key strategic themes and this role will directly contribute to achieving this.

We advise over 3000 students every year and as a Senior Advisor, you'll be there to ensure we are providing a great experience service through empowering students to know their rights, responsibilities, and support options and to take action to resolve the problems they are facing. You'll independently manage a complex and varied caseload. You'll be an expert listener and able to demonstrate empathy and offer practical and emotional support. You'll be able to navigate complex issues and analyse and understand legislation, regulations, policies and procedures and translate this to helping students understand their options. You'll be skilled in managing boundaries and expectations and able to handle enquiries efficiently, sticking to time in appointments, ensuring that we can adhere to set service standards against a context of high demand.

Currently the Service is going through a transformation, which you can read more about in the Advice Service Overview. The Senior Advisor role will play a crucial part in delivering this transformation alongside maintaining advice provision. We believe in improvement and progression, and we want our Service to be the best it can be for students. This role will help us achieve this through proactively contributing to the management of the service and taking responsibility for improving it.

Contribution to the management of the service also looks like taking initiative, problem solving and making decisions on day-to-day operational issues and duty management of the service, as well as making wider improvements to service policy, processes, and systems. As the transformation plan progresses, you'll become part of a team of Senior Advisors all working together on this. You'll support each other daily with operational decisions, monitoring demand and capacity, prioritising casework, approach to specific cases and safeguarding.

The role should champion a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration, and innovation. This means bringing new ideas, carrying out independent research and leading on changing aspects of the service for the better. Influencing and bringing about positive change for students is also a key aspect of this role, with this area of work particularly growing later into the transformation plan. As we progress through the transformation plan, there may also be an opportunity to carry out line management.

Another area in which you'll contribute to the strategic theme that students feel well supported is by maintaining and building strong relationships with our stakeholders. These include colleagues and services within the Union and our Officer team, the University and externally. Strong relationships will mean we have effective signposting and referral pathways, opportunities for new collaborative work and networks to influence wider positive change for students. Success here will ensure the Advice Service is part of a community and students have access to this as well.

Key Result Areas

Responsible for	Contributor to
You'll independently manage your casework, responding to e-mail enquiries and offering appointments with students. You'll reply to e-mails to within a 2-5 working days, ensuring a proactive approach to urgent, complex and older enquiries and aim to reduce response times across the academic year.	Gathering data and insight on student issues and their experience of the service. You'll use data and insight to embed new ways of working so that we're always improving the service. We'll also use data and insight to influence stakeholders and create positive change for students so that they feel well supported.
You'll ensure that you're providing consistently high-quality advice, adhering to service policy and procedure as demonstrated through the results of our monthly quality assurance process. You'll consistently work to improve and progress the service and provide a great experience service for students.	You'll contribute to the improvement and progression of the service by regularly reviewing and updating internal (e-mail templates) and external facing resources (website).
You'll develop a senior level of technical expertise across the advice service . Building an excellent working knowledge and taking a proactive approach to continuing professional development ensuring improvement and progression of the service.	You'll build and maintain relationships within the Students' Union, with the University and externally, to create effective signposting and referral pathways, seek new collaborative work and opportunities and use these networks to influence wider positive change for students.
On set days, you'll be responsible for the day-to-day management of the service, acting as a duty manager, triaging the Advice mailbox for urgent cases and coordinating the team's response to enquiries and being a lead contact for casework consultancy.	You'll put students at the heart of our service by developing strong relationships with our officers, bringing their ideas into our work and finding ways to collaborate to bring about positive change for students.
You'll support the operational management of the Advice Service, taking on projects that improve service policy, process, systems and operation, including an annual review of the office manual. You'll ensure we are always striving to constantly be developing our service.	As an Advice team, we all actively role model the Union's expected behaviours and embed these across service operation, particularly reviewing working practices through an accessible first lens, including diverse voices into decision making and actively seeking ways to ensure the service is inclusive for all.
As appropriate and required within the role, you'll provide line management and contribute to monitoring quality of advice using industry standard methods such as Independent File Reviews.	You'll contribute to the stepped approach to student support and wellbeing being embedded within the Service.

Organisational Stewardship & Leadership Responsibilities

- You'll contribute to departmental planning processes and hold teams accountable for performance against key goals and indicators
- You'll understand key risks for area of work and ensure risk assessments are conducted against relevant activities
- You'll assist and support staff in assisting in key students' union events & activities throughout the year including Welcome week, elections and supporting the officers in delivering their plans
- You'll lead teams acting as an exemplar of the Union behaviours ensuring all staff are given appropriate support in line with the Union management framework and teams are consistently held accountable for delivering against expected performance standards (both role performance and behaviours)
- You'll ensure that teams activities are delivered in line with budget envelope and ensure any risks to financial targets are highlighted. Contribute to the forecasting & budgeting exercises in line with the organisational framework
- You'll hold good working knowledge of policy and procedure as it relates to the team's function, ensure that the team is knowledgeable in the policy and procedure that affects them and provide guidance to staff on application of the policy framework
- You'll proactively contribute to maintaining the communal spaces and ensuring whole team share responsibility for managing team stores and keeping areas clean and tidy

Person Specification

Criteria	Assessed at:			
	Application Form	Interview	Interview Task	All
Education				
We accept candidates from any educational background.				
Skills				
Communication – can analyse and understand complex information and communicate this in a clear and simplified way, tailoring to the recipient.	✓			
Growth mindset – proactive approach to continuing professional development, willingness to constantly improve, engage in training, ask questions, being curious, looks for ways to improve processes.		✓		
Networking – great at building new positive working relationships as well as retaining current ones with internal and external stakeholders.		✓		
Organisation – great at planning ahead, prioritising workload, completing admin		✓		

duties like emailing, and answering the phone.				
Experience/Knowledge				
Advice Experience - experience of giving advice and/or undertaking casework in an advice giving or similar environment in paid or voluntary settings.				✓
Expert knowledge - detailed, current knowledge in at least 1 area where you've given advice previously. Examples include: academic advice, housing, student finance, money advice, general student life advice and support (training will be given in areas where there is little or no experience or knowledge).		✓		
Crisis management and safeguarding – has knowledge and experience of safeguarding and supporting individuals in crisis or who are additionally vulnerable and can apply these principles in practice to safeguard service users.	✓			
Risk management – great at assessing risk, able to consider how to mitigate risks independently, confident in making decisions based on risk assessments.			✓	
Personal Attributes				
Independent / problem solver – great at working with autonomy, using initiative, thinking outside the box and not afraid to try new ideas.			✓	
Communication – displays radical candour through giving and receiving feedback, uses data and knowledge to provide rationale for decision making, conveys information to different audiences effectively.		✓		
Accountable – takes ownership over own areas of work, able to own mistakes and resolve accordingly, confident to hold others to account.		✓		
Adaptive – great at managing change, flexible to differing team members needs/ways of working, confident at managing/taking on busy periods.			✓	
Values & Behaviours				

Align with the SU's values and behaviours both personally and professionally	✓			✓
Insight driven – always looking for ways to collect data from a range of sources to measure the impact of your work on the student community or to inform your work	✓			
Customer Service – provides a high standard of customer service, creating a welcoming space for all, continually seeks ways to improve services	✓			

Our Recruitment Process

The way that we recruit is designed to be fair, transparent, and inclusive as well as being an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. You should expect to receive great communication and a warm, welcoming experience.

Every member of staff is recruited the same way, by submitting an application form and attending an interview. We use a recruitment platform called StaffSavvy where you'll submit your application and book interviews, if successful.

Our process allows you to show us your authentic self, gives you a platform to display your skills and knowledge in relaxed and welcoming setting. We'll never put you under any necessary pressure on you, ask you trick questions or interrogate you in an interview and we'll support you all the way through our process.

You can find more information about our recruitment process on [our website](#).