JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE
Senior Lecturer/Reader

FACULTY & SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT

REPORTS TO
Head of School

SUPERVISES
For Senior Lecturer - to supervise research students and research staff as appropriate
For Reader – to supervise research students and research staff

POST REFERENCE
Not Applicable

GRADE

DATE
March 2006

Birkbeck is a world-class institution, a vibrant centre of academic engagement and excellence and the UK’s leading provider of part-time, research-led evening education for mature students.

There are nearly 19,000 students studying short courses, certificates, diplomas, first degrees, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees. Birkbeck provides Londoners with the unique opportunity to fit study around their busy lives.

Founded in 1823 as the London Mechanics’ Institute, Birkbeck was incorporated in the University of London in 1920.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To design, develop and deliver a range of programmes of teaching to Birkbeck students, in order to enable them to complete their studies successfully, and to determine, develop and carry out relevant independent research projects to extend knowledge of the appropriate subject area.

Some of the duties below will be more appropriate to Readers, although Senior Lecturers may do some of them. These are noted below with an asterisk.

Main Duties of the Jobholder

Teaching and learning

• To design, develop and deliver a range of programmes of study (sometimes for entirely new courses) at various levels.
• To review course content and materials on a regular basis, updating when required.
• To develop and apply innovative and appropriate teaching techniques and materials that create interest, understanding and enthusiasm amongst students.
• To transfer knowledge including practical skills, methods and techniques.
• To ensure that course design and delivery comply with the quality standards and regulations of the university and department.
• To challenge thinking, foster debate and develop the ability of students to engage in critical discourse and rational thinking.
• To supervise student projects, field trips and, where appropriate, placements.
• To set, mark and assess work and examinations and provide feedback to students.
• To ensure that the teaching content and methods of delivery are in accordance with equal opportunities, and respond to issues relating to staff and student needs.

Research

• To determine relevant research objectives and prepare research proposals.
• To identify sources of funding and oversee the process of securing funds. * especially appropriate to Reader.
• To contribute to the development of research strategies.
• To carry out independent research and act as principal investigator and project leader. * especially appropriate to Reader.
• To write or contribute to publications or disseminate research findings using other appropriate media.
• To seek practical application of research findings.
• To act as a referee and contribute to peer assessment.
• To make presentations or exhibitions at national and international conferences and other similar events.
• To update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism.

Communication

• To disseminate conceptual and complex ideas to a wide variety of audiences using appropriate media and methods to promote understanding.
• To prepare and submit proposals and applications to external bodies, e.g. for funding and accreditation purposes. * especially appropriate to Reader

Working Relationships and Contacts

People management and teamworking

• To lead and develop internal networks for example by chairing and participating in College committees.
• To lead and develop external networks for example with external examiners and assessors.
• To develop links with external contacts such as other educational bodies, employers, and professional bodies to foster collaboration.
• Regular contact and liaison with students to teach and provide support.
• To provide academic leadership to those working within programme areas, as course leader or equivalent, co-ordinating the work of others to ensure that courses are delivered effectively, and/or organising the work of a team by agreeing objectives and work plans.
• To act as a line manager, supervising the work of others, for example in research teams, projects, or as PhD supervisor when required.
• To contribute to the development of teams and individuals through the appraisal system and providing advice on personal development.
• To act as a personal mentor to peers and colleagues.
• To lead teams within specific areas of responsibility.
• To ensure that teams within the department work together effectively.
• To act to resolve conflicts within and between teams.

**Student & staff counselling**

• To be responsible for dealing with referred issues for students within own educational programmes.
• To act as personal tutor, giving first line support.
• To provide first line support for colleagues, referring them to sources of further help if required.

**Dimensions**

**Problem solving and impact**

• To resolve problems affecting the delivery of courses within own educational programme, and in accordance with College regulations.
• To make decisions regarding the operational aspects of own educational programme.
• To contribute to decisions, which have an impact on other related programmes.
• To provide advice on strategic issues such as the balance of student recruitment, staff appointments and student and other performance matters.
• To identify opportunities for the strategic development of new courses or appropriate areas of activity, and contribute to the development of such ideas

**Resource management**

• To be responsible for the delivery of own educational programmes.
• To contribute to the overall management of the department in areas such as budget management and business planning.
• To be involved in departmental level strategic planning and contribute to wider strategic planning processes in the College.
• To plan and deliver research, consultancy or similar programmes and ensure that resources are available.
• To contribute to the management of quality, audit and other external assessments.

**Working Environment**

• To balance the competing pressures of teaching, scholarship, research, knowledge transfer, administrative demands and deadlines.
• To take responsibility for conducting risk assessments and reducing hazards (depending on area of work and level of training received).
• To engage in continuous professional development.
• To understand and apply the principles of equality of opportunity in an academic context.

**General Responsibilities**

These are standard to all Birkbeck Job Descriptions
• To adhere to the College’s Equal Opportunities policy in all activities, and to actively promote equality of opportunity wherever possible.
• To be responsible for your own health and safety and that of your colleagues, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and relevant EC directives.
• To work in accordance with the Data Protection Act and to ensure that all new systems are reported to your Data Protection Controller.
• To undertake other such other duties as may be reasonably expected.
• To provide a healthy and comfortable working environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the College, except in specially designated areas.
**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Job Title:** Senior Lecturer/Reader  
**Post No:** Not Applicable

**Faculty and Dept/School:**

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| **Knowledge**  
*This relates to the level and breadth of knowledge required to do the job, e.g. an understanding of a defined system, practice, method or procedure.* | • Wide breadth and depth of specialist knowledge in own specialism to develop teaching and research programmes  
• For Reader - To be an externally recognised authority in the subject area with a national reputation  
• For Senior Lecturer - To be an externally recognised authority in the subject area  
• To possess an in-depth understanding of own specialism to enable the development of new knowledge and understanding within the field  
• Understanding of different teaching and learning methods | |

| **Technical/Work-based Skills**  
*This relates to the skills specific to the job, e.g. language fluency, typing skills, etc* | • An ability to attract funding from the Research Councils and other sources (especially appropriate to Reader)  
• Effective teaching design and delivery  
• Highly effective oral and written communication skills, to convey conceptual and complex ideas and information  
• Computer proficiency in the standard packages (word processing, e-mail and internet use, and spreadsheets) | |
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| **General Skills/Attributes**  | • The ability to provide academic leadership  
• Effective presentation skills  
• Effective interpersonal skills and delivery techniques to interact with, engage and inspire students  
• Commitment to working with and encouraging diversity  
• Organisation and administrative skills                                                                                                                                 |                                                                          |
| **Experience**                 | • Experience of teaching postgraduate and undergraduate students  
• Experience of conducting high quality research in a particular specialism and publishing in recognised journals  
• Experience of conducting administrative duties efficiently and effectively  
• Experience of developing and implementing research objectives, projects and proposals  
• Experience of collaboration with academic colleagues on course, curriculum and research developments                                                                                                                                 | • Experience of carrying out consultancy                                     |
| **Qualifications**             | • PhD (or equivalent) level in an appropriate specialism                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                          |
Job Title: Senior Lecturer/Reader

We confirm that this is a true and accurate reflection of this job

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Master

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Signature  Print Name  Date

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For FNG

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Signature  Print Name  Date

Comments/Notes