

Job Description

Job Title:	Manager, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards Programs
Department:	Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
Reports To:	Associate Director, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards
Jobs Reporting:	N/A
Salary Grade:	USG 10
Effective Date:	July 2018

Primary Purpose

The Manager, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards Programs is responsible for the administration of internal and external scholarship competitions and award programs requiring department, Faculty and/or University evaluation and adjudication. S/he is the liaison with external agencies, manages the submission of scholarship decisions or applications on behalf of the University to these agencies as appropriate, and provides award results to departments, Faculties and senior administration. The incumbent is responsible for the management of needs-based award programs, including advising applicants and determining award values. The manager works closely with, and provides support to the Associate Director, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards and to the Co-ordinator Graduate Financial Aid & Awards and provides academic service support to current and prospective graduate students. S/he is a resource to department staff and faculty members concerning eligibility criteria for award programs and on the implementation and interpretation of internal and external application program regulations, instructions and guidelines. The manager works closely with the Associate Vice-President and Assistant Vice-Presidents Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs on all matters related to funding decisions, award program development and academic decisions. In the absence of the Associate Director, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards, the manager consults with the Director, Graduate Academic Services on all matters related to personnel, and operational procedures. The incumbent also works with members of the Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) systems team and Information Systems & Technology (IST) in reviewing current award processes and explores electronic methods of efficiencies to enhance the student, staff and faculty experience. Other tasks may be assigned as required throughout the year, including training department co-ordinators, participation in convocation ceremonies, etc.

Key Accountabilities

Management of Internal and External Graduate Award and Scholarship Competitions

- Responsible for the administration of internal and external awards and scholarships including the dissemination and advertising of funding regulations and application instructions to current and prospective students, department staff, faculty members and senior administration.
- Responsible for advising students, staff and faculty on eligibility requirements of awards.
- Responsible for the interpretation and evaluation of domestic and foreign transcripts using complex and varying grading systems, conversion guides and unique rules for award competitions to determine eligibility of applicants and to support decisions.
- Responsible for the review and submission of applications to appropriate internal committees and external agencies for adjudication as appropriate.
- Responsible for understanding the needs of graduate students and working with academic and support units to investigate and propose new initiatives and be innovative in the creation of new award opportunities to propel Waterloo as a leader amongst our peer institutions.
- Responsible for the monitoring and assessment of existing award programs to determine if adjustments to regulations are required.

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- Responsible for liaising with external agency contacts concerning clarification of regulations, providing feedback, and the submission of results/applications as appropriate for further adjudication and reporting.
- Responsible for communication of results to appropriate stakeholders.
- Responsible for updates and provision of statistics to senior administration in order to support future planning and decision-making.

Management of Needs-Based Award Applications

- Responsible for decisions of all needs-based awards, including all bursary programs, emergency loans, donor funded awards and the international experience and mobility awards, using professional judgement and pre-determined evaluation processes, which include the interpretation of budget information, and supporting documentation provided in the application.
- Responsible for advising students on budgets, financial matters and on application eligibility and processes and coordinates, where appropriate, with other support units (e.g., Faculty, Department, Student Financial Services, Counselling Services, AccessAbility Services, etc) for the best possible outcome for the student.
- Responsible for the monitoring and assessment of existing award programs to determine if adjustments to regulations are required.
- Responsible for working with academic and support units to provide solutions to emergency situations (e.g., countries in a state of emergency or political uprising)
- Responsible for working with other offices to improve application processes for needs-based awards and emergency loans.
- Responsible for updates and provision of statistics to senior administration in order to support future planning and decision-making.

Transcript Evaluation and Process Management

- Responsible for updating the conversion guide for Canadian universities used for award competitions.
- Responsible for updating procedures used for evaluating transcripts for scholarship competitions.
- Responsible for ensuring that the automated system for transcript average calculations is monitored and updated annually to accommodate for new rules, and the addition of, or changes to, requirement designations in order to maximize success ratios that will reduce the number of manual calculations required.
- Responsible to supervise and train contract staff needed to assist in ordering, uploading and averaging transcripts for scholarship competitions.

Scholarship Competition Planning

- Expected to remain current on application processes and award regulations for external award competitions and to collaborate with colleagues from other institutions to allow for business process sharing and professional development.
- Responsible for working with academic and support units to plan and host scholarship information sessions/workshops, and to provide promotional materials to prepare prospective applicants for major scholarship competitions.
- Responsible for the implementation and launching of major scholarship competitions which includes creating internal administrative processes and timelines based on the interpretation of rules and guidelines, updating websites, and setting institutional selection committee meetings.

Required Qualifications

Education

- University bachelor's degree

Experience

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- 5+ years in university environment.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the university and graduate studies environment is strongly preferred.
- Experience managing graduate scholarships is preferred and is a strong asset.
- Ability to work both independently and in a collaborative, team-based environment is required.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Knowledge of university policies and graduate studies regulations and practices related to graduate financial aid and award programs is strongly preferred.
- Intermediate to advanced skills with Microsoft Office is required – Outlook, Excel, Word, SharePoint.
- Knowledge of and experience with Finance account and posting attributes is preferred (Unit4).
- Knowledge of and experience with financial aid in PeopleSoft Campus Solutions (Quest) is required.
- Knowledge and experience with document retrieval in Hyland OnBase Document Management is preferred.
- Knowledge of and experience with the interpretation of transcripts and various grading scales is required.
- Accuracy, attention to detail and strong problem-solving abilities are essential, as is the aptitude for and experience with conducting research and analyzing data.
- Strong work ethic and ability to accomplish tasks independently in a timely manner is required; this position is very much deadline driven and adherence to timelines and deadlines is imperative.
- Ability to multi-task with competing and changing priorities and manage large programs with significant workload and responsibilities is required.
- Experience and ability with interpreting policies and regulations is required.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills are essential; participating/presenting in workshops or information sessions is required.
- Proven interpersonal skills and willingness to participate in and collaborate with others in academic and administrative units is required.
- The incumbent must demonstrate a professional demeanour when interacting with students, staff and faculty on confidential and sensitive matters.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** The Manager, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards Programs interacts directly with all members of the GSPA awards team; Associate Vice-President and Assistant Vice-Presidents, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs; Faculty Associate Deans, Graduate Studies; the Advisory Committee on Graduate Scholarships & Awards; and other members of other functional areas of GSPA including Admissions, Records, Systems, Communications; students; faculty members; other staff in support units across campus, including but not limited to Counselling Services, AccessAbility Services, Student Awards & Financial Aid, and Student Financial Services. The incumbent participates as a staff resource in scholarship committee selection meetings and at Graduate Operations Committee meetings as appropriate. S/he acts as a resource and provides direction within GSPA and to department/Faculty administrators. Using a patient and collaborative approach, the incumbent must communicate awards procedures and administrative instructions to students, staff and faculty members in order to achieve a high level of accuracy and understanding. The manager is a liaison with external agencies for the award programs under her/his management.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The Manager, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards Programs works closely with and offers support to the Associate Director, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards and acts as a mentor to the Co-ordinator, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards position and contract staff as appropriate. She/he is also responsible for providing advice to the Associate Vice-President and Assistant Vice-Presidents, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs and to the Faculty Associate Deans, Graduate Studies for planning and decision-making. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring that set guidelines and eligibility criteria are met in the review, adjudication and assessment of internal and external award programs. Guidance and mentorship of major federal scholarship stakeholders is

essential to maximize Waterloo's success rate that assists in increasing our enrolment numbers to meet strategic targets. S/he determines the optimal course of action to solve problems and makes recommendations to other stakeholders.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Manager, Graduate Financial Aid & Awards Programs works closely with the Associate Vice-President and Assistant Vice-Presidents Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs in determining award allocations to departments/Faculties as appropriate and the implementation and impact of any significant changes to administrative procedures for award programs. The incumbent makes decisions on eligibility matters in compliance with advertised criteria and award regulations and makes the final decision concerning award values for needs-based awards based on a financial need assessment. The incumbent continually makes decisions about the most effective methods of operationalizing initiatives for which s/he is responsible.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Demands typical of an administrative position within an office environment – extensive sitting and concentrated attentive use of one or more senses while doing computer work; dealing with interruptions. Concentrated attention to detail is required in an office environment with competing and changing priorities. The incumbent must be able to manage concurrent assignments and prioritize workloads in order to meet deadlines. Adherence to timelines and deadlines is imperative as is attention to detail and ability to problem solve.
- **Working Environment:** Travel: minimal. Psychological Risks: The incumbent must be sensitive to the often extreme and prolonged stresses due to volume, deadlines, demands and interruptions (e.g., phone calls, e-mails, student assistance at the front counter and unplanned but urgent support request throughout the day). This role involves interactions with people who may be upset or aggressive (e.g., students who have escalated an issue, staff or faculty upset with a decision). Working Hours: regular working hours; overtime during peak periods may be required.