

## Job Description

---

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Job Title:</b>      | International Student Programs Specialist     |
| <b>Department:</b>     | Student Success Office                        |
| <b>Reports To:</b>     | Manager, International Student Experience     |
| <b>Jobs Reporting:</b> | Coordinator, International Student Experience |
| <b>Salary Grade:</b>   | USG 9   |
| <b>Effective Date:</b> | December 2020                                 |

---

### **Primary Purpose**

Reporting to the Manager, International Student Experience the Specialist is responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining integrated programs intended to enhance the experiences of international students at the University. The Specialist is required to be knowledgeable and up to date on the unique needs of international students, including special international populations. The Specialist functions primarily in the areas of transition, student experience and overall student engagement. With input and consultation with the Manager, International Student Experience, the Specialist is responsible for overseeing the implementation and execution of international student programs including day-to-day operations, decision-making and program leadership. The Specialist will also be called upon to work collaboratively and strategically with key stakeholders (including faculty, staff and students) to identify opportunities for cross campus alignment of initiatives that proactively contribute to the success of our international students.

The Specialist will work closely with the Manager, International Student Experience and Coordinators to ensure programs are well integrated, responsive to the needs of international students and are achieving desired outcomes.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Program Administration and Development**

- Leads the design, development and review of international student experience content and programs, based on evidence including data, best-practice, literature, research and the international student voice at Waterloo.
- Maintains current knowledge base about international populations including international populations who are new to Canadian culture, English language-learners, graduate international students and upper-year international students; and uses knowledge and best practice in these areas to inform program development.
- Informs and understands the campus climate through consultation with faculties, campus partners and students. The incumbent uses this knowledge to assist the SSO in continuing to align programs, services and providing direction and guidance in the ongoing review and development of programs and initiatives.
- Establishes effective processes and procedures for the implementation and operation of international student experience programs, ensuring that they are evolving to meet the needs of students, campus and Faculty partners.
- Leverages resources, knowledge and expertise in the SSO to assist in the design of international student experience programs when appropriate and often in partnership with the SSO leadership team and campus partners. The Specialist will serve as a consultant and will inform the

development of programs and initiatives to support international students both within the SSO and across campus.

### **Leadership and Staff Development**

- Provides excellent leadership and direction to International Student Experience Coordinators including setting clear and reasonable expectations, providing on-going feedback, establishing a strong foundation for performance through comprehensive training, onboarding, ongoing development and creating a positive team environment.
- Oversees the day-to-day operations of the International Student Experience Coordinators. The Specialist will be expected to provide additional program support, leadership, and assist in decision making during peak times as programs evolve and grow.
- Develops and coordinates the recruitment, hiring, selection, onboarding, training, performance management, appreciation of and recognition of all direct reports.
- Contributes to and leads regular team meetings.
- Ensures a solid understanding of international student experience strategic goals and priorities towards the implementation of goals that supports attainment of success as it relates to enhancing international student experience programs.

### **Research and Program Evaluation**

- Works closely with the Manager, International Student Experience and the Data and Evaluation Specialist to establish performance indicators, including learning outcomes, program goals, objectives, and measures of success across all international student experience programs.
- The Specialist is responsible for implementing the assessment plan and collecting, recording and maintaining of relevant program data.
- Uses current research to design intentional, proactive and responsive programs that are in line with the needs of our students and faculty/campus partners.
- Reads and interprets statistical information and data relevant to international student experience and international student supports and services to assess program reach, efficiency, relevancy, and for reporting purposes.
- Creates assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of programming and reach. Maintains deep knowledge about the unique needs of Waterloo international students particularly in the areas of transition and sociocultural integration.
- Strong understanding of the international student experience at the University of Waterloo.
- Contributes to reporting documentation specific to international student experience

### **Relationship Management**

- Establishes and maintains relationships with internal campus partners to ensure cohesive and aligned programming, partner on joint projects, and in tackling initiatives that enhance the international student experience. International campus partners may include, but are not limited to Co-operative Education and Experiential Education, Athletics and Recreation, Campus Housing, University Affiliated Colleges, Campus Wellness and the six Faculties
- Identifies and acts on opportunities for increased faculty and campus partner engagement.
- Fosters an open and transparent dialogue and encourages a highly collaborative and collegial relationship with all campus partners and stakeholders including students, staff and faculty.
- Participates in and contributes to regular staff, departmental and Faculty specific meetings as appropriate. Participates in and contributes to various internal and external meetings. It is essential that the Specialist practice diplomatic facilitation and sound judgement while working with stakeholders.
- Responsible for maintaining and sharing of knowledge on pertinent information, including but not limited to university health insurance plans, supplementary health and dental benefits, international

## Job Description



student supports and services, student supports and services, transition programs, and other supports and services that contributes to the success of international students.

*\*All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

### **Required Qualifications**

#### **Education**

- University Bachelor's degree required; Master's or equivalent in related field (e.g. Student Development or student affairs, Intercultural learning, international student development or Higher Education) is an asset.

#### **Experience**

- Direct experience in an educational or student service setting, with experience working with international students and delivering international student supports and services.
- Experience managing/leading a team in student services
- Program/project management experience is an asset.
- Experience developing programs, program assessments and report writing within a post-secondary environment.
- Experience working as part of a team and independently on large scale programs from initiation to execution
- Demonstrated knowledge of best practices in international student supports and services

#### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Exceptional intercultural communication skills, strong oral and written communication skills, solid organizational skills, and sound judgement
- Able to cultivate strong and influential relationships across the university campus. The Specialist will be required to lead their co-workers in delivering outstanding international student experience programs that meet the needs of our students
- Highly knowledgeable and up to date on best practices, literature and research related to international students and their experiences at post-secondary institutions, familiarity with the unique needs of international students, nuances in international populations, challenges that affect their adjustment, integration and barriers to success.
- Superior interpersonal skills including the ability to use tact and diplomacy while interacting with a wide range of internal and external contacts
- Proven ability to take initiative and be both creative and flexible.
- Ability to work collaboratively, build consensus and be sensitive to the needs and interests of various stakeholders, and contribute to the functioning of a diverse team both within the department and across the institution
- Demonstrated ability to use and interpret data to make decisions, and communicate results effectively to various stakeholders
- Strong critical thinking, judgement and decision making skills
- Proven ability to manage multiple demands, stay organized and prioritize effectively
- Intermediate skills in the following programs: MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint

### **Nature and Scope**

- **Contacts:** Internally the Specialist communicates with direct reports, Manager, International Student Experience, New Student Transition team, Immigration Consultants and other partners to ensure all

---

employees are informed and knowledgeable about International Student Experience initiatives. External to the SSO, the Specialist is responsible for ensuring strong working relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders. Key partners include the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association, central campus services and each of the faculties. He/she must lead by example in communicating effectively, building collaboration and ensuring a student focused program and environment. External Contacts: The incumbent will correspond with staff counterparts at partner institutions across Canada.

- **Level of Responsibility:** The Specialist directly supervises a team of 2 full-time staff and manages the day to day operations of their reports. The incumbent is a member of the International Student Experience team.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Specialist will often make decisions in collaboration with others but will also be required to make independent decisions related to the coordination of programs. The Specialist must remain aware of the decisions made by Program Coordinators and will play a supportive role in coaching staff in making decisions at the right level.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within a fast-paced service oriented office environment; extensive period of sitting and concentrate use of visual senses. Requires close attention to detail, thoroughness, and accuracy.
- **Working Environment:** Located in a comfortable indoor area. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of an open concept work space and supervisory position, one where it is occasionally necessary to convey negative or unwelcome information to students or staff. Evening and weekend work is required. Some weekend and evening work will be required throughout the year, especially during July, August and September as well as during Labour Day weekend for event execution purposes.