

Academic Lead in Student Experience

Introduction

The Medical Sciences Division is committed to excellence in undergraduate and postgraduate education, with a global perspective and impact. We recognise that our students represent a highly diverse population for whom there may be significant challenges, ranging from differences in prior opportunity and background, to the impact of mental health and disability, and availability of funding. The Division and wider collegiate University have made significant progress in advancing the student experience, including widening participation and access, ensuring excellence in welfare and pastoral care, support for student health and disability, and more widely work to prevent students getting into difficulty and supporting them if this occurs. However, we recognise that in the current rapidly evolving educational and wider global landscape, pressures on the student experience continue to grow. There is an exciting opportunity to shape this through the new position of **Academic Lead in Student Experience**, as part of the Divisional Academic Leadership team in Education. You would provide academic leadership to seek to optimise a positive experience for students in the Medical Sciences Division, including strategy, guidelines and policy, to ensure we build on existing best practice across the Division and wider University, and the HE sector more broadly, and are optimally positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges in this area.

You will have the opportunity to review current practice in relation to the undergraduate and graduate student experience and how this is evaluated, with a particular focus on on-course support and the student in difficulty. You will help to develop best practice guidelines, identify approaches to prevent issues arising or intervene early, maximise relevant staff training and help develop innovative methods of support for students, and for staff involved with case work. A particular area of focus will relate to student mental health and disability, working with academic and professional services colleagues in Departments, the Division and wider collegiate University, given ongoing initiatives in this area. Similarly, there will be the opportunity, as part of the Divisional Academic Leadership team, to contribute to identifying and establishing Financial Assistance funding for students on-course, and contributing to outreach, and widening access and participation initiatives at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

The **Academic Lead in Student Experience** will be a key part of a small academic leadership team reporting to the Associate Head (Education), supporting the Medical Sciences Division's ambitions to deliver excellence in education. The postholder will contribute to relevant committees and other institutional initiatives as required, including representing the Division at an institutional level.

The Academic Lead will be supported by the professional services staff in the Education Section of the Medical Sciences Divisional Office, including Jane Dale, Head of Education Policy and Planning; Clare Sheppard, Senior Educational Policy Officer; Chris Higham, Assistant Registrar (Graduate School); Lauren Wild, Graduate School Officer; Richard Groves, the Graduate Access and Widening Participation Manager, and the Disability Inclusion Officer (awaiting appointment). The Academic Lead will also be expected to work closely with the Associate Head of Division for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, as well as other key stakeholders in the division and the wider University, such as Student Welfare and Support Services, Research Culture Facilitators, and college Senior Tutors and Tutors for Graduates

You should have significant relevant experience in education-focused roles, with a particular emphasis on ensuring excellence in student experience, and a clear willingness to support this across the

disciplinary breadth of the Medical Sciences Division, as well as the enthusiasm to meet the current opportunities and challenges of doing so.

This appointment is open only to internal applicants holding an existing contract of employment with the University of Oxford for the duration of the appointment. All applicants will need the support of their Head of Department to take on this role which is expected to be undertaken alongside existing duties. The time commitment is expected to be 5 hours per week on average, with variation over the year. A Responsibility Allowance is payable (equivalent to [Schedule V](#) – currently £9,090). The appointment will be made for two years in the first instance, with a review after one year.

Key duties and responsibilities

1. Provide appropriate academic leadership for the development of on-course student support, Financial Assistance funding, and optimising student experience within MSD, advancing best practice guidelines and strategy in this area as it relates to undergraduate and graduate education, and doing so in collaboration with colleagues across Departments, the Division and University.
2. Identify risks and opportunities in this area through effective horizon scanning
3. Provide leadership in casework review and process to more effectively support students and manage casework, including identifying opportunities for best practice, gathered fields, supporting staff, and prevention, working closely with other academic leads, including the Director of the Medical Sciences Graduate School
4. Participate, where appropriate, in relevant Divisional student casework panels
5. Represent the Medical Science Division's interests in student support and experience at an institutional level by contributing to relevant committees and other institutional initiatives as required, as well as acting as the co-ordination point for other MSD representatives on relevant bodies. This will include, subject to need, being the Division's representative to the Joint Student Mental Health Committee, Student Life Subcommittee of Education Committee, and relevant working groups (for example relating to fitness to study, appeals and mitigating circumstances).
6. Support development of wider Divisional strategy in education, working as part of the academic leadership team, and through membership of MSD's Educational Policy and Standards Committee, and EDI Committee
7. Act as Chair of the Graduate School Financial Assistance Panel, which reviews student applications for support
8. Provide leadership in student consultation on relevant issues, for example through student fora (Graduate Joint Consultative Committee; Undergraduate Student Forum)
9. Deputise as needed for the Associate Head (Education)

Selection Criteria

Essential

1. An academic position in a Department in the University of Oxford Medical Sciences Division with an established profile in education
2. Significant experience in education with relevant qualifications
3. A track record of excellence and innovation in education including experience of academic leadership advancing student experience and support
4. Experience of effective committee participation (including chairing) and ability to command the respect of colleagues, build consensus and resolve conflicts
5. Experience of working with Oxford colleges
6. A collegiate approach to developing policies and resolving problems
7. Demonstrable effectiveness in working with professional services colleagues

8. Ability to balance responsibilities and a clear plan for delivering on the responsibilities of this role alongside others.

Desirable

1. Evidence of scholarly contributions and/or competitively awarded funding in this field
2. Experience of developing and implementing strategies to achieve long-term goals

To apply for this role please send a covering letter setting out your reasons for applying and what you would bring to the role (maximum 3 pages) and CV by email to divoff.jobs@medsci.ox.ac.uk by 12 noon on Friday 24th April 2026.

If you have any questions about the role, you are welcome to contact Julian Knight, Associate Head of Division for Education (julian.knight@well.ox.ac.uk), or Jane Dale, Head of Education Policy and Planning (jane.dale@medsci.ox.ac.uk)