Job description and selection criteria

Job title: Head of Access

Grade & Salary: £39,992

Reporting to: The President

Line Management: To provide line management to the Access Officer

Introduction

The University

The University of Oxford is a complex and stimulating organisation, which enjoys an international reputation as a world-class centre of excellence in research and teaching. It employs over 11,000 staff and has a student population of over 22,000, of whom roughly half are undergraduates.

Trinity College

Trinity College is one of 38 self-governing and independent colleges at Oxford. The Colleges give both academic staff and students the benefits of belonging to a smaller, interdisciplinary community as well as to a large, internationally-renowned institution. The collegiate system fosters a strong sense of community, bringing together leading academics and students across subjects, and from different cultures and countries.

The College, founded in 1555, occupies a fine position in the centre of the City. It currently admits approximately 85 undergraduates and 50 graduate students each year, with a balance between Arts and Science disciplines, and there are approximately 400 students in residence at any one time. The College prides itself on combining the highest academic standards with a particularly friendly sense of community.

Further information about the College is available at http://www.trinity.ox.ac.uk

Purpose of role

Access and outreach activity is a strategically important area of the College's work. The aim of Trinity’s access activity is to ensure that talented students from groups that are currently under-represented within the College and University community can be inspired, supported and facilitated to make successful applications to study at Oxford, and to ensure that the
College offers a welcoming and inclusive experience to students of all backgrounds. The Head of Access will work with colleagues throughout the College and across the University; with schools and specialist NGOs in the field of widening participation and widening access; and with parents, carers and advisers.

Activities include school and college visits, higher education fairs, student conferences, open days, residential visits by prospective applicants, and a wide variety of teacher events.

**Job description**

**Overview of the role**

Following a review of the current structure and operation of Trinity's access activity, the College has identified a need for additional resources to be focused on the leadership and delivery of access and outreach activity, widening access to Oxford, and widening participation in higher education. We are seeking to make this appointment with a view to expanding and enhancing the effectiveness of the College's work in this field.

Our vision and aspiration is for Trinity to be recognised as a modern College that welcomes a diverse and widely representative community, in which international, UK state- and independent-school students all have a place and students of all backgrounds feel equally valued, supported and able to flourish. In the past few years Trinity has attracted a lower percentage of UK state-school students compared to independent school students than the majority of other Oxford Colleges and a similarly low proportion of acceptances by Trinity for UK candidates flagged using POLAR and ACORN data (socio-economic background indicators based on a student’s home postcode).

We are committed to significantly increasing the pace of change. Our work in attracting more high-achieving applicants from state schools, and in particular from under-represented groups, is a key priority for the College in the coming five year period, and this will be reflected also in our priorities for fundraising.

The post-holder will be expected to take a lead, reporting to the President and with the additional support of a designated Access Committee and a full-time Access Officer, in developing the strategic direction and the operational management of access, outreach and evaluation activity. S/he will develop approaches to encourage and facilitate cross-College working as well as activity to develop collaborative working on outreach activity across the wider collegiate University. An effective working relationship with the Senior Tutor (who has overall responsibility for student admissions) and with the wider Academic Fellowship will be essential.

The Head of Access will contribute to the strategic planning of each outreach programme ensuring that the College’s aims are achieved as a result of these activities. S/he will make sure that all programmes are appropriately targeted and have ambitious yet realistic objectives and are recorded effectively so each that programme can be regularly evaluated.

**Disciplinary and Child Protection policies**

The post-holder will be responsible for safeguarding participants during school visits and summer schools. Taking into account College guidelines on child protection, s/he will ensure adequate systems are in place before, during and after school visits, to ensure the safety of all young people. Throughout any operational programme period the Head of Access will have immediate responsibility to respond to behavioural and child protection related issues.
About Widening Participation

This area of outreach is targeted at state school students aged 13-16 (Year 8 to Year 11) in Oxfordshire and County Durham (which are Trinity’s current specialist link regions for its outreach activity), to encourage awareness of the learning journey and the steps on it; inspire intellectual and personal curiosity and enrich and enhance students’ self-esteem, aspirations and hopes for the future.

About Widening Access

This area of outreach is targeted at engaging with potential applicants to Oxford through a range of activities including the University-wide UNIQ Summer School. UNIQ is a programme of free residential visits in July and August for Year 12 students currently studying at UK state schools. Students apply for a specific course that aims to give them a realistic view of Oxford student life. UNIQ participants live in an Oxford college for one week in July or August. They attend lectures and seminars in their chosen subject, and workshops about applying to Oxford. Participants can also take part in a variety of social activities each evening. Trinity hosts students on other similar programmes which target discrete under-represented groups: these include the Brilliant Club, Into Oxford, and overnight residential for students from County Durham.

Responsibilities/duties

1. To formulate, lead and evaluate Trinity’s strategy and programmes in the field of access and widening participation;

2. To be responsible for developing a coordinated strategy with regard to undergraduate outreach activity in conjunction with relevant College departments and staff (e.g. Academic and Admissions, Communications, Alumni and Development). Where appropriate, to introduce new ways of working towards delivering outcomes;

3. To provide input to the strategic planning process, and to provide support for the development of policies and funding proposals for undergraduate widening access and outreach activity;

4. To develop effective strategies for evaluating outreach activity; analyse and evaluate outreach data provided by the collegiate University;

5. To provide strategic leadership to deliver well evaluated and effective outreach activity, efficient operational management and use of resources.

6. To line manage the Access Officer and oversee student ambassadors and to support them in targeting, monitoring and evaluating their programmes, developing their skills, and providing oversight of budget management;

7. To represent the views and interests of outreach and access at internal meetings and on committees; to represent Trinity across the University on matters relating to outreach; and to represent Trinity at external meetings and events at a local and national level;
8. To foster effective relationships with relevant external stakeholder groups, including but not limited to: governmental and non-governmental bodies; schools and colleges; partner organisations;

9. To work with relevant senior staff across the collegiate University, and with academic and administrative departments in Trinity, to ensure effective coordination, integration and communication of Trinity's outreach activity and policy;

This post will involve some evening and weekend work, including some national travel.

**Person Specification (selection criteria)**

We are looking for a high-calibre person with proven experience in programme management, preferably within the field of outreach and residential work. The ideal candidate will have a thorough understanding of the issues around widening access. They will have experience of developing policies and procedures to ensure the smooth delivery of large-scale events, including meeting both project deadlines and budgets, and have excellent oral and written communication skills. They will also be able to work accurately under pressure, deal effectively with conflicting priorities as well as having highly developed problem-solving skills.

**Essential**

1. A high level of understanding and knowledge of access and progression routes to higher education and experience in designing and delivering access and recruitment programmes.

2. Experience in managing resources and projects, and success in supporting and developing individuals and teams to deliver required outcomes;

3. Experience in strategic planning and policy development (preferably in the area of outreach or admissions);

4. Ability to work both independently and in partnership with the academic community, and to take a highly-proactive approach in engaging with academic and administrative colleagues on outreach activities and policy;

5. Ability to win the confidence and credibility of all of the programme’s stake-holders (including parents, teachers, students, academic colleagues and Trinity’s Governing Body, domestic staff and external contractors);

6. Superior report-writing skills (e.g. briefings, producing reports and publications) with the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of professionals and internal and external stakeholders;

7. Excellent communication skills (oral, written, formal and informal presentation) and interpersonal skills, and the ability to convey complex information and issues to a wide range of audiences in a persuasive manner;

8. A creative approach to problem-solving, and a proven record of innovation;
9. Willingness to work evenings and weekends as required.

10. Experience in using standard IT packages (Microsoft Office), the maintenance and use of databases, and the ability to analyse data;

11. Possession of a first degree or equivalent experience.

Desirable

1. Experience of the management of a summer school or equivalent residential programme which was targeted at the 9-18 age group;

2. Experience of dealing with the pastoral, social and welfare needs of young people and maintaining discipline;

3. Knowledge or experience of a university environment;

4. Experience of line managing salaried and voluntary staff;

5. Experience working with the 13-18 age group and commitment to education and to the needs of gifted and talented young people;

6. An ability to develop excellent professional working relationships with a wide range of colleagues including tactful and effective influencing skills;

Appointment to this post will be subject to a successful Enhanced DBS check.

Application Process

A CV and covering letter highlighting the applicant’s relevant experience and qualities should be emailed to:

 president.pa@trinity.ox.ac.uk

Closing date for applications: 1700 on Tuesday 12 June 2018