BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Admissions Officer
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 5: £28,759 - £33,966 (with a discretionary range to £37,099) per annum, dependent on experience
Hours	Full time (36.5 hours per week)
Contract type	Fixed-term for 3 years
Reporting to	Senior Admissions Officer
Vacancy reference	173189
Additional information	The closing date for applications is 12 noon (UK time) on Monday 1st July 2024 Interviews are likely to be held during week commencing 15 July 2024

The role

Are you interested in recruiting, selecting and converting outstanding students from all around the world for the Blavatnik School of Government degree programmes? Are you passionate about supporting people who are seeking to study with us to make positive differences in the world through public policy? And are you an exceptional communicator with highly developed organisational and IT abilities? If so, we have an exciting opening in the Admissions team and we want to hear from you.

Each year, the School recruits students from over 50 different countries to study for our Master of Public Policy, our MSc in Public Policy Research, and our DPhil in Public Policy. Our students, from all around the world, are smart, committed to public service, and are existing or emergent leaders in their fields.

The Admissions Officer role is critical for ensuring that applicants have a positive experience when applying to the School degree programmes, regardless of the outcome of their application; and for ensuring that all successful candidates are supported in the months ahead of arriving at the School.

The postholder must display excellent customer service skills, sound judgement, robustness in interpreting and relaying policies to candidates, alongside tact and diplomacy. They must also liaise effectively with colleagues across the School and the wider University. Many of the tasks will be time sensitive and the Admissions Officer must have the skills to take responsibility and manage short-notice deadlines in a role where interruptions are likely to be frequent and unpredictable. Adaptability, strong IT skills, excellent attention to detail, and outstanding communication skills are also essential for this post.

The Admissions Officer will be line managed by the School's Senior Admissions Officer and will be part of the Admissions team, which is headed by the Director of Admissions.

This job description reflects the anticipated core activities of the role. It is expected that the postholder will also engage in other duties within the School, as required.

Responsibilities

The annual admissions cycle incorporates three specific areas of activities: student recruitment, student selection, and student conversion. The Admissions Officer will work closely with the Senior Admissions Officer to support the administrative functions relating to all three areas.

General tasks

- Act as the main point of contact for a range of stakeholders, including applicants, offer holders, academic assessors, faculty and colleges, knowing when to escalate enquiries to the Senior Admissions Officer or colleagues in the Programmes team. Provide in person meetings, q&a sessions and tours of the School to prospective applicants and offer holders where requested.
- Responsible for maintaining the Admissions webpages on the School website updated, in collaboration with the Communications team.
- Contribute to the outreach and marketing planning for student recruitment, including participating in online or in-person promotional events such as prospective applicant webinars and q&as, in collaboration with the wider Admissions team and Communications team.
- Contribute to reviewing admissions tasks and timeframes with the Senior Admissions Officer and Director of Admissions on a regular basis to ensure the workload of the team is on track.
- Ensure appropriate spreadsheets and IT systems are accurate, up-to-date and maintained with appropriate consideration of information security and data protection requirements.
- Oversee the maintenance and development of all required IT systems, databases and spreadsheet, reviewing systems used yearly, and working with the ICT team to implement changes where necessary.

- Contribute to an annual review of data generated by the admissions process and respond to data requests during the admissions cycle.
- Support the recruitment and training of temporary staff for the peak admissions period where required.
- Develop an understanding of University processes and policies in relation to: admissions; right to work and visas; expenses; data use and security; and be a source of expertise on these within the team and wider School.

Assessment process

- Oversee the assessment process, which includes:
  - Tracking, saving, reviewing, and preparing for assessment all applications submitted through central University;
  - Monitoring applications' progress through various assessment stages, such as uploading files on IT systems, assigning files to assessors and tracking assessor progress to ensure deadlines are met, and notifying Admissions Committees when assessment is completed.
- Lead on administrative tasks related to the academic assessment process of each application including plagiarism and English language tests verification, organising interviews and coordinating internal meetings for the Admissions Committee planning and decision meetings.

Conversion process

- Oversee the conversion process, which includes:
  - Supporting the Admissions Committee in making all application outcome decisions by providing necessary administrative and logistical requirements;
  - Determining and verifying the offer conditions required for successful applicants (in line with the Admissions Committee's shortlisting and the University's Graduate Admissions guidance);
  - Recording student outcomes on the University central systems;
  - Producing certificate of offer letters, communicating outcomes and providing supplementary information;
  - Arranging post-offer conversion calls between offer holders and faculty members;
  - Monitoring the progression of offer holders from conditional to unconditional by ensuring offer conditions are met, ensuring University and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) requirements are met at all times, recording progress on the University's central systems, and issuing unconditional offer letters and student contracts.
- Administer all Student Visa processes, in line with relevant regulations and seeking advice from the University's Student Immigration Team where appropriate.
- Coordinate and lead events for offer holders to aid conversion.
- Oversee a range of offer holder communications, including preparation and distribution of newsletters with vital information, general and personalised regular chasers and reminders of offer deadlines, and liaising with the Programmes team if course preparation communications are required prior to the start of the programme.

- Contribute to the scholarship and funding processes, including scheduling scholarship interviews, generating student funding letters, and writing funding paragraphs regarding offer holders for potential scholarship opportunities, in collaboration with the Senior Admissions Officer.
- Where required (for a small number of specific scholarship recipients), book flights in and out of the UK using the University travel booking system, keeping track of budget available and spending.
- Update student records on the University student administration system accurately and assist with the translation of data from this system to the School's contact management systems.
- Gather, collate and share with appropriate teams pre-arrival information and data on incoming cohorts, and draft pre-arrival communications for students (pre-arrival newsletters, pre-arrival guides).
- Coordinate and liaise handover with the Programmes team, providing essential and up to date information on incoming cohorts to allow them to prepare induction and teaching plans.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Relevant work experience, ideally in a student focused or customer service environment.
- Demonstrable ability to employ tact, discretion, and initiative in dealing with a diverse range of people, including students, academic staff and other members of the collegiate University.
- Excellent communication skills in both written and spoken English.
- A systematic, thorough, and well-organised approach to work, able to follow set procedures and keep to schedules and deadline.
- Ability to work on own initiative, using judgement in identifying and solving problems, but knowing when to seek advice.
- A flexible can-do approach, self-motivation, and resilience with evidence of the ability to adapt to the changing needs and priorities in the team and across the School.
- Demonstrable experience of good team working skills.
- High levels of accuracy and attention to detail when inputting data and providing information, with the ability to manage complex data.
- Good numeracy skills, including confidence in dealing with financial data
- Strong IT skills, including experience in the use of the Microsoft Suite, Outlook, Word and particularly Excel.
- A good knowledge of more advanced Excel spreadsheet techniques, including Vlookups, Excel formulae and Pivot Tables (or the ability to learn).
- An ability and willingness to learn, including the ability to learn new IT systems and use them with confidence.
- Experience and understanding of requirements when working with confidential and sensitive data.

- An understanding of aspects of Higher Education such as the different types of Higher Education qualifications and the format of an academic year.

Pre-employment screening

Standard checks

If you are offered the post, the offer will be subject to standard pre-employment checks. You will be asked to provide: proof of your right-to-work in the UK; proof of your identity; and (if we haven't done so already) we will contact the referees you have nominated. If you have previously worked for the University we will also verify key information such as your dates of employment and reason for leaving your previous role with the department/unit where you worked. You will also be asked to complete a health declaration so that you can tell us about any health conditions or disabilities for which you may need us to make appropriate adjustments.

Please read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures at: https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks.

About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, and in recent years we have spun out 15-20 new companies every year. We are also recognised as leaders in support for social enterprise.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

The Blavatnik School of Government

Our vision is of a world better led, a world better served and a world better governed. We are a global school committed to improving the quality of government and public policymaking worldwide, through three routes: teaching current and future leaders; applied research; and engagement with government and practitioners.

The School was founded in 2010 and our founding dean is Professor Ngaire Woods. We admitted the first 38 Master of Public Policy (MPP) students in 2012 and we currently accept around 140 MPP students and around eight doctoral students a year. We also accept a small group of students for our MSc in Public Policy Research.

The Blavatnik School of Government holds a bronze Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. You can find more information on the Blavatnik School of Government's website.

How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available on our Jobs website https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply.

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

As part of your application, you will be asked to provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will be asked to upload a CV and a supporting statement. The supporting statement must explain how you meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants)

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename.

All applications must be received by **midday** UK time on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

Information for priority candidates

A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment because they have been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing department(s).

If you are a priority candidate, please ensure that you attach your redeployment letter to your application (or email it to the contact address on the advert if the application form used for the vacancy does not allow attachments).

If you need help

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at: https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-faqs

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the HR team directly on recruit@bsg.ox.ac.uk

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our online recruitment portal to confirm receipt of your application. **Please check your spam/junk mail** if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to the University as part of the job application process will be processed in accordance with the GDPR and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the University's Privacy Notice for Job Applicants at: https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for very senior research posts at **grade RSIV/D35 and clinical equivalents E62 and E82** of 30 September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.

For **existing** employees on these grades, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at other grades have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. No applicant or member of staff shall be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, travel discounts including salary sacrifice schemes for bicycles and electric cars and other discounts. Staff can access a huge range of personal and professional development opportunities. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme which is available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for University staff. It offers social, sporting, and hospitality facilities. Staff can also use the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool. See www.club.ox.ac.uk and https://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/.

Information for staff new to Oxford

If you are relocating to Oxfordshire from overseas or elsewhere in the UK, the University's Welcome Service includes practical information about settling in the area, including advice on relocation, accommodation, and local schools. See https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/

There is also a visa loan scheme to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependants. See https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme

Family-friendly benefits

With one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector, and a range of flexible working options, Oxford aims to be a family-friendly employer. We have excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as places at many other private nurseries. See https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/

We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities for dependants of all types. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care

Supporting disability and health-related issues (including menopause)

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including those experiencing negative effects of menopause. Information about the University's Staff Disability Advisor, is at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support. For information about how we support those going through menopause see https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/menopause-guidance

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including for research staff, BME staff, LGBTQ+ staff, disabled staff network and those going through menopause. Find out more at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is run by volunteers that aims to assist the partners of new staff settle into Oxford, and provides them with an opportunity to meet people and make connections in the local area. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.