Head of Academic Systems (Administrator II)

Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs (Registrar)

Three Year Fixed Term Contract

Introduction

Dublin City University (www.dcu.ie) is a young, dynamic and ambitious university with a distinctive mission to transform lives and societies through education, research and innovation. It is research intensive, globally engaged and distinguished by both the quality and impact of its graduates, and its focus on the translation of knowledge into societal and economic benefit. DCU prepares its students well for success in life and in the workplace, by providing a high-quality education appropriate to solving grand global challenges of the 21st century. Excellence in its education and research activities has led to DCU's consistent presence in the rankings of the world's top young universities.

Overview of the department

Reporting to the Academic Secretary, the Academic Systems unit supports the Vice President Academic Affairs (Registrar) in exercising strategic ownership and oversight of core IT applications that are integral to the academic business of the University. Working closely with colleagues in Information Systems and Services (the University's central IT department) and relevant business areas across the University, the unit provides tier 2 end-user and application support in respect of the specific applications for which the unit has responsibility. In doing so it complements and enhances existing applications and process expertise, giving particular consideration to business needs, the optimisation of applications and related process improvement.

In the context of its five-year strategic plan, *Talent, Discovery and Transformation 2017-2022*, DCU is currently in the process of implementing a cloud based Student Information System (SIS) to support our objectives as a globally engaged university. The SIS Programme has a key role to play in the achievement of the University strategic goals, leveraging the affordances of digital technology and systems integration to enhance the experience of both students and staff, and facilitate operational excellence. The Academic Systems unit will assume responsibility for the solution is currently being implemented and is actively contributing, together with other key stakeholders, to the SIS Programme, which is a significant change programme for the University.

Role Profile

Leading a team of Business Analysts, the Head of Academic Systems will assume overall responsibility for the management and enhancement of core University IT applications that lie within the Vice President

Academic Affairs (Registrar)'s remit, viz., the student information system and the timetabling and room booking system. The Head of Unit will play a key role in driving and implementing change within the University in terms of how these systems are utilised to enable significantly enhanced service delivery within a wide range of business units across the University. They will be accountable for the line management and professional development of staff associated with the unit, and for the on-going development and operation of the unit within an overall framework of continuous improvement. The Head of Unit will be expected to acquire in-depth knowledge of the core applications and related business processes that the unit supports. In addition, the Head of Unit, will play an integral role in the building of systems capability, in particular in the development of a cohort of business based systems experts / subject matter experts, and the optimisation of systems use within business areas.

Duties and responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities attaching to the post include but are not limited to:

- Managing the development and on-going operation of the unit within an overall framework of continuous improvement that is in keeping with the vision for the unit and is integral to the realisation of existing and emerging University strategic objectives

- Driving and facilitating change throughout the University relating to academic systems and related processes and end user/application support models

- Developing an in-depth comprehension of business needs to enable the Unit to act as a point of translation and understanding between business units and technical infrastructure providers in order to influence significant change

- The line management and continuous professional development of the staff that make up the unit, ensuring that their technical expertise, skills sets and competencies, as well as their knowledge of relevant business processes, remain current and capable of maximising the impact of the unit and the applications for which it is responsible

- Ensuring optimum utilisation of the applications for which the unit is accountable in order to effectively meet University strategic objectives and operational needs, working proactively with all relevant business units to this end

- Overseeing the management and on-going refinement of the unit's end-user and application support model in a manner that is consistent with industry standards, for the applications that are supported by the Unit, working closely with vendors, ISS and relevant business areas in this regard

- Designing and/or contributing to the design and configuration of applications, including the gathering and documentation of business requirements, the development and approval of specifications, the development of test scripts, and co-ordinating the provision of training;

- Managing the specification and implementation of business solution changes and upgrades, and associated process improvements, in conjunction with relevant business units

- Overall management of current and future vendor relationships and related licensing, including the management of associated budgets

- Ensuring the successful delivery of the units' projects, and leading specific University-wide project teams and/or groups as required

- Proactively identifying substantive opportunities for greater business integration, business process automation, innovation and increased efficiency and related process improvement, developing proposals (including relevant costing, impact modelling etc.) for referral, as appropriate, to Senior Management, and managing subsequent implementation

- Co-ordinating an annual programme of training and development for users of the applications under the remit of the unit, in conjunction with relevant vendors and business areas
- Providing high level advice to senior colleagues, informing Senior Management decision-making and taking systems-related decisions that will have University-wide impact
- Ensuring that the unit's operation is informed by industry and sectoral developments, emerging technical developments and trends, evolving practice and best practice
- Representing the Unit and/or University in relevant external fora, as directed by the Academic Secretary
- Deputising for the Academic Secretary in relation to systems and/or unit related matters, as appropriate
- Any other duty which may be assigned from time to time by the Academic Secretary.

The role may change in line with unit / University requirements and developments. The successful candidate will be expected to show flexibility in line with any changes which may occur.

Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Candidates must have a Primary Degree or equivalent (NFQ Level 7) in an appropriate area and preferably a postgraduate qualification in Information Technology, Computer Science or other relevant field
- A minimum of ten years' relevant experience, with a minimum of 5 years' experience at a management level within higher education (ideally), the public sector, or other complex business environments
- Experience leading organisation-wide project teams, the membership of which is drawn from a variety of business, technical and other areas, and a proven track record of project delivery to deadline and within budget
- Proven experience and implementation of Change Management best practice and methodologies
- Substantial experience in the specification, procurement, and implementation of IT applications, with an emphasis on meeting business objectives and enabling process improvement
- Demonstrated experience spanning process review and improvement, project management and management of tier 2 end-user and application support teams
- Direct experience of line-managing, developing and motivating a team to deliver professional service level requirements
- An in-depth appreciation of information technologies, in particular, the following: relational databases, internet technologies, software development lifecycle, tools and technologies, systems integration techniques and of enterprise architecture
- Possess the ability to convey information in a clear and concise manner to IT and business stakeholders at all levels during the project lifecycle to gain commitment and minimise the level of resistance to change

Desirable

Recognised qualification or certification in:
- ITIL or equivalent ITSM Framework
- Process improvement methodologies (e.g. Lean, Six Sigma etc.)
- Project management (e.g. PMI, Prince 2 etc.).

In addition, the successful applicant will:
- Be capable of exercising judgement and making decisions on a wide range of systems and related process matters
- Possess the leadership capability, influencing and relationship building skills necessary to drive projects to successful conclusion
- Have excellent organisational and management skills
- Possess excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to effectively convey technical content to a non-technical audience
- Have the ability and willingness to work flexibly.

Mandatory Training

The successful candidate will be required to undertake the following mandatory compliance training: Orientation, GDPR, and Compliance. Other training may need to be undertaken when required.