

Study Assistant (for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder) Job Description and Person Specification



Pay: £15 p/hr

Hours: Various – a range of positions are available, amount of hours dependent on student's needs, but some positions require flexibility to support during the day time, evenings and weekends, during term time and occasionally vacations.

Responsible to: Senior Disability Officer - Disability Advisory Service

About the role:

A Study Assistant provides assistance to students diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The role is to provide support for students within the spectrum to interact successfully in their collegiate, departmental, library and social environments. Many students with ASD can experience difficulties and anxieties with aspects of organisation, social interaction, prioritising workload and understanding ambiguous terminology or instructions. Transition Periods and changes to routine can be especially difficult to cope with and is therefore common for people to receive increased levels of support during Fresher's Week, although some will also require ongoing support throughout the year.

Job Description - Main duties and responsibilities

- Provide regular contact for a student to monitor and address any developing anxiety-causing situations as they arise, helping to avoid escalation.
- Liaise with the student to help them to work in an appropriate way. This might include support with planning and organising time and workload or prompting students regarding appointments or activities which require attention.
- Provide support during Fresher's week and other key periods of transition. This might include accompanying the student between key study venues during their initial weeks in Oxford, supporting students with navigation or attending Fresher's Fairs and/or to source information on the student's behalf if the busy environment might be overwhelming for them.
- Address any issues that may arise (this may be in person or, in some instances, might involve just checking in by phone or email).
- Encourage student to regularly interact with college peers.
- Maintain open and regular communication with the student's Disability Adviser and AS Mentor as appropriate.
- Communicate with college or departmental staff if necessary, paying close attention to confidentiality requirements.
- Gradually reduce and withdraw support as student becomes increasingly integrated whilst keeping lines of communication open.
- To engage in relevant training appropriate to the role and attend occasional supervision/ team meetings where relevant.
- Maintain accurate records of support and ensure student verification of contact hours

Person Specification:

Essential

1. Evidence of education to degree level (or equivalent).
2. Well organized, punctual and reliable.
3. Ability to communicate clearly, professionally and sensitively, both verbally and in writing. Must be able to maintain accurate records, stored appropriately, paying close attention to confidentiality agreements.
4. Demonstrable general disability and ASD awareness (further relevant training is available through the Disability Advisory Service). Must show a positive attitude towards equality and access for people with disabilities.
5. Have a sound understanding of the nature of study at the University of Oxford.
6. Ability to work proactively using own initiative, working independently and towards deadlines.
7. Willingness to adopt a flexible approach to working in a manner that is tailored to people's individual needs.

Desirable

1. Personal study experience at the University of Oxford.
2. Qualifications or evidence of training relevant to working with students with ASD and general disability.
3. Experience of provision of student support in Higher Education or other social or educational support settings.

Employment Terms and conditions

The number of hours and days worked by Study Assistants are flexible and based upon student need. Due to the need for consistency of provision, Study Assistants will be requested to work with one or more specific students on an ongoing basis.

Successful candidates will be employed on a temporary basis through the University's Temporary Staffing Service (TSS) and employees will be required to work within TSS and University guidelines and in line with relevant policies and procedures at all times. All candidates must complete disability awareness training and induction in working with students with ASD at Oxford.

To apply visit the [Student support opportunities web page](#) or email

nmh@admin.ox.ac.uk. We recruit throughout the year.

Other support roles available include:

- Notetakers – to take notes on a student’s behalf and produce an accurate record of the content of lectures, seminars, and discussions in the student’s preferred style and format.
- Library Support Assistants - to support students with sourcing, copying and scanning materials)
- Practical Support Assistants (General/ Laboratory/ Sighted Guide) - this can include a variety of support functions, depending on students’ needs. Examples include providing practical and mobility support, such as helping to manipulate a wheelchair, assisting a student with carrying study materials or items of equipment or acting as a sighted guide for a visually impaired student.
- Examination Support Workers – including Readers, Scribes, Prompters