

Practical Support Assistant (General/Library/Laboratory/Sighted-Guide) Role Descriptions and Person Specification



Hours: Various – a range of positions are available, the number of hours depends on student need, but some positions require flexibility to support during the day time, evenings and weekends, during term-time and occasionally vacations.

About the roles:

You will be working with the University's Disability Advisory Service (DAS) to provide what is termed non-medical help (NMH). Providing practical and mobility support to assist a student with a physical or sensory impairment in moving between and around key study venues. This could include carrying books and equipment, helping to manipulate a wheelchair, acting as a sighted guide for a visually impaired student or supporting a student with practical aspects of their course, e.g. in the laboratory. (Depending on the requirements of the role, Laboratory Assistants may be required to undertake additional Health and Safety training or induction sessions prior to commencement of the post).

Job description

Duties and responsibilities for ALL roles

- Be mindful of the importance of the support role that you are engaged in by working in a professional, helpful and flexible manner, maintaining confidentiality at all times.
- Liaise with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) on an ongoing basis, in order to monitor support, give adequate notice if you are unable to provide support and ensure notification of any changes to your availability for work or contact details.
- Complete the Canvas NMH Staff Induction course *before* your first assignment. Engage in relevant training appropriate to the role and attend team meetings where relevant.
- Maintain accurate records of support and ensure student verification of support hours.
- Adhere to all local health and safety guidance within the library, laboratory or venue that you are working in.
- Understand and be flexible to the needs of students with disabilities in a higher education environment and the boundaries that need to be observed.

Additional duties and responsibilities for EACH role

Duties will vary depending on the individual requirements of a student and the nature of their course, but might commonly include:

Library Support Assistant

- Visit libraries on a student's behalf and at their direction in order to source references, books, journals or other study related materials and resources.
- Provide delivery of materials to the student's college or other accommodation, in an agreed format and within a specified timescale.
- Scan and copy materials on a student's behalf and email or otherwise deliver.
- Accompany a student on request to the library to locate, carry, copy or scan materials as needed.
- Carry books and equipment
- Help to manipulate a wheelchair if required.

Workshop/Laboratory Assistant

- Support with undertaking practical aspects of research projects.
- Support with setting up/dismantling equipment.
- Data entry/inputting of information for analysis.
- Assistance with transporting equipment and resources.
- Assistance with recording data or taking notes in a lab (if required).

Sighted Guide

- Assist the student with one-to-one mobility support,
- Help the student to navigate between and within key study venues.
- Listen to and learn from the student and the NMH Worker Canvas Induction course about how to provide the best and most appropriate sighted guiding.
- Be aware of the best route and of any particular barriers or challenges along the route.

Person Specification

Essential – depending upon each role

1. Evidence of education to degree level (or equivalent).
2. Well organised, reliable, punctual and respect professional boundaries at all times.
3. Ability to communicate clearly, professionally and sensitively, both orally and in writing, with individuals at all levels within the University.
4. Must be able to maintain accurate records, stored appropriately, paying close attention to confidentiality agreements.

5. Must show a positive attitude towards equality and access for people with disabilities.
6. Ability to work proactively using own initiative, working independently and to deadlines.
7. Have a sound understanding of the nature of study at the University of Oxford.
8. A willingness to undertake training relevant to the role as required.
9. Good working knowledge of Bodleian libraries and experience of accessing libraries within a university setting.
10. Good IT skills and access to a computer (sometimes resources will need to be scanned, reformatted and emailed).
11. Ability to use copying and scanning technology to meet student need.
12. For Workshop/Laboratory and Sighted Guide roles, attendance at some specific training may be required before commencement of the role.
13. For Workshop/Laboratory Roles an additional Occupational Health check will be carried out by TSS.

Desirable

1. Qualifications or evidence of training or experience relevant to working with disabled students.
2. Personal study experience at the University of Oxford or 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 are flexible and based upon student need. All Practical Support Assistants are contacted when work is available and have the option to confirm availability or not.

All successful candidates must complete disability awareness training and induction. (NMH Induction Training Canvas Course)

Successful candidates will be registered with the University's Temporary Staffing Service (TSS) and will then be eligible for selection for assignments as they become available. We cannot guarantee a fixed amount of work. All roles are part-time. Candidates will be employed on a temporary basis through TSS and will be required to work within TSS and University guidelines and in line with relevant policies and procedures at all times, including a commitment to submit accurate records and time sheets promptly.

To apply visit the [Student support opportunities web page](#) to complete an application form which should be returned with a CV by email to nmh@admin.ox.ac.uk.