International Student Advisor

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Professional and Managerial Group

International Student Advisor

Student Life, Student Affairs

Hiring #: 2018-0508

Please read the Application Instructions [1] before applying

In keeping with Guelph’s institutional commitment to the recruitment, persistence and success of international students, the International Student Advisor (ISA) plays a crucial role in ensuring the successful transition, persistence and retention of international undergraduate and graduate students.

Reporting to the Manager, Office of Intercultural Affairs in Student Life, the ISA is the primary contact for international students from pre-arrival through to graduation, serving as a trusted advisor and advocate. As an accredited Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) or Regulated International Student Immigration Advisor (RISIA), the ISA provides personal and family advising and group information sessions for international students on immigration status and study permit and visa applications (family permit and visa applications, re-entry requirements, co-op work permits, and post graduate work permits); writes professional communications to visa offices, immigration program managers, and CBSA; and intervenes in cases requiring special attention. The ISA will advise faculty and staff on immigration regulations pertaining to student study and employment needs, records, and options or restrictions for individuals who have failed to maintain their status in Canada. They will formulate academic and service policy recommendations to address current and potential issues related to the immigration status of students. Concomitant with this expertise, the incumbent must possess the keen ability to identify at risk students, and to deliver the appropriate advice, intervention strategy or referral. A thorough understanding of transformative advising, the international student experience and the ability to impart the necessary strategies for navigating the university environment and culture are critical to this position. The ISA provides support for international students who are experiencing personal, transition and academic difficulties attributed to cultural loneliness, culture shock, geographic displacement, discrimination, racism, identity issues, housing challenges, family matters, relationships, financial concerns, academic challenges, political turmoil in their home country, religion/faith, and mental health issues. The ISA must have a thorough understanding of and demonstrated experience with standard case management practices, FIPPA regulations and the policies and protocols that govern institutional student client record-keeping. Advising takes place in-person, by telephone, and email pre- and post-arrival to campus. The ISA acts a resource person who educates the campus and broader Guelph community about the international student experience. The ISA provides leadership, engages domestic students, faculty, staff and community members and advises on university-wide practices specifically with regard to immigration and employment for international students and their dependents, as well as, personal, cultural and social transition. The ISA collaborates with relevant campus partners, directs students to resources both on campus and in the City of Guelph, and brings resource persons to campus as required.

The ISA supervises one professional staff member and oversees the design, implementation and assessment of programs, services, interventions and resources that promote the successful transition, persistence and success of international students. The ISA serves on a range of institutional committees and working groups, as required, to share their expertise pertaining to the lived experiences of international students, identity development, intersectionality, and barriers to academic and personal success.

Requirements of this position include: a Master’s degree in Higher Education, International Education or Social Work with graduate experience in theory, advising and research and a minimum of three years relevant professional experience within an international education context, or equivalent combination of education and experience. Accreditation as a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) or Regulated International
Student Immigration Advisor (RISIA) and membership, in good standing, with Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council is mandatory. Certification such as International Educators Training Program “Certificate for International Education Professionals” and/or “Building Intercultural Skills and Approaches for International Education” or equivalent is preferred. The incumbent must possess expertise in student development theory, transition and retention as they pertain to international students, and knowledge of transformative theoretical approaches to advising.

Additional requirements include: Formal training in counselling skills is critical, in particular experience in the assessment of the various manifestations of culture shock and resulting mental health challenges experienced by international students is required. The incumbent must also have superior interviewing skills, including the ability to work with difficult to engage students in an intercultural context, the ability to tease out subtle personal difficulties, and the ability to formulate transformative intervention plans. Familiarity with motivational interviewing, narrative and cognitive-behavioural interventions, brief and solution-focused strategies, and family/ecological systems. The ability to work with highly confidential personal information, and to de-escalate emotionally volatile situations is also critical. In addition, consummate political savvy is required. An understanding of the University of Guelph’s academic programs and student support services is an asset.

Position Number 530-025
Classification P05*
Professional/Managerial Salary Bands [2]

*Tentative evaluation; subject to committee review.

At the University of Guelph, fostering a culture of inclusion [3] is an institutional imperative. The University invites and encourages applications from all qualified individuals, including from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in employment, who may contribute to further diversification of our Institution.

Posting Date: 2018 10 10
Closing Date: 2018 10 24

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