**Job Description: Staff Tutor in the School of Life, Health and Chemical Sciences**

**About the role**

For this post the successful candidate will be expected to line manage Associate Lecturers (ALs) and support students across a range of our undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum within the School of Life, Health and Chemical Sciences.

A significant and distinctive part of the Staff Tutor role is to manage a large number of part-time Associate Lecturers (OU tutors) who in turn directly support OU students through the means of correspondence tuition, email, telephone, face-to-face tutorials and online tutorials. Managerial responsibilities include the appointment, induction and staff development of Associate Lecturers, conducting Associate Lecturer appraisals, overseeing their professional development, assuring the quality of their work and addressing any performance issues.

The other significant component of the Staff Tutor role is spent on academic activities such as teaching, research and scholarship. They may also be expected to contribute to the production and presentation of the School’s modules and potentially to other modules across STEM.

The Staff Tutor role also extends to helping the largely non-subject specialist advisory and study support staff in the Student Support Team to understand the needs of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics students, and in conveying the Faculty's curriculum developments and student support strategies to student services colleagues. A Staff Tutor may also be involved in designing and implementing local strategies to widen participation, promote employer engagement, and enhance more broadly the external work of the University.

The post-holder will also be required to provide specialised academic advice and guidance to students (as part of a wider Student Support Team).

The nature of the Staff Tutor role means that they must be able to work well in multifunctional, distributed teams, as well as independently. Many of the duties of a Staff Tutor involve the need to perform administrative tasks, undertake the recruitment of new ALs, devise tutorial programmes, manage AL workload and work closely with colleagues to arrange the allocation of students to tutors. The management and quality assurance aspects of the role require an ability to deal sensitively with a wide range of people. The post holder will also need to apply academic judgment to ensure standards are maintained in delivery of learning and support to students. To deliver this, a sound understanding of the issues and external contexts affecting higher education across the UK is important.

As a distance learning University, our teaching model differs significantly from that at more traditional face-to-face universities - please visit <https://www.open.ac.uk/stem/life-health-chemical-sciences/about-us/our-teaching-model> to find out more.

The post holder will most likely be a designated home worker but there may also be the possibility of some shared office space based at one of our locations in Milton Keynes, Manchester, Cardiff, Edinburgh or Belfast.

**Person Specification**

**Essential**

* A good honours degree (or equivalent) in the field of Life, Health or Chemical sciences
* Demonstrable knowledge of the skills and experience required to support undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and the staff that tutor them
* Some experience of teaching at further or higher education levels in one or more of the disciplines covered in the School
* Some experience of adult learning within an online and/or distance learning environment
* Ability to work collaboratively with others for teaching or research
* An understanding and experience of dealing with issues of access and retention in the context of higher education
* Experience of staff selection and performance management
* Experience of delivering staff development
* Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate ideas clearly, and to offer and receive constructive criticism
* Good team working skills and the ability to work adaptively and responsively; particularly when the team is geographically dispersed
* Ability to prioritise demands when subject to conflicting pressures, and the ability to work flexibly and independently (including some evenings and weekends).
* Knowledge of, and commitment to, equal opportunities principles and practice
* Commitment to the aims, ethos and values of the Open University

**Desirable**

* Post-graduate qualification in a relevant area or a relevant education postgraduate degree
* Higher Education Academy professional accreditation or equivalent qualification
* The ability to write on issues outside of immediate area of expertise but in a related topic, in an informed and coherent manner

**Key responsibilities**

The post holder is expected to:

*1. Administration and Management*

1. lead on the selection and appointment of Associate Lecturers to the School’s modules, including designing the recruitment pack, shortlisting, interviewing and managing Associate Lecturer appointments in line with student numbers and appropriate student-tutor group sizes.
2. carry out Associate Lecturer induction and ongoing development. (The post holder may additionally be responsible for the management of Associate Lecturers working in other areas of the STEM curriculum);
3. manage, supervise and support Associate Lecturers in their role. (This includes: provision of academic advice on the delivery of module content and appropriate online and distance teaching methods; monitoring teaching activities undertaken by Associate Lecturers; organisation of staff development events and the conduct of staff appraisals);
4. be involved in the planning and organisation of online and face-to-face tutorials and day-schools, where appropriate.
5. investigating and responding to TMA appeals and complaints.

*2. Teaching*

1. advise students studying School modules and provide a link between students, their Associate Lecturers, the Student Support Team, the School and the Faculty;
2. work as part of a distributed team with educational advisors and other academic and learner support staff in handling referred queries where specialist knowledge of Faculty modules is required;
3. ensure effective implementation of University policy in relation to Associate Lecturers, students and enquirers;
4. contribute to the assurance and enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching within the School, in line with University standards;
5. contribute to the development, planning and implementation of high quality and successful curriculum at undergraduate and/or postgraduate levels in the School where appropriate;
6. work with Staff Tutors, other academic and academic-related colleagues in the support of School and Faculty objectives
7. work with Module Teams to develop and design tuition programmes

*3. Scholarship, research and enterprise (usually limited to 22 days pro rata per annum)*

1. undertake a self-directed programme of individual or collaborative scholarship or research in a field that will contribute to the School and Faculty strategic objectives;
2. undertake subject research or scholarship in teaching and learning that leads to publications in line with School and Faculty objectives;
3. undertake professional development as an academic educator and researcher.

*4. Outreach and public engagement*

1. contribute to promoting the study of School modules and qualifications, particularly in respect of under-represented groups;
2. contribute to the STEM outreach activities of the Faculty where appropriate;
3. where appropriate, collaborate with professional bodies or learned societies;
4. where appropriate, work with employers, policy makers and other stakeholders.

*5. Other responsibilities*

1. comply with the University’s Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities policies in the performance of their duties;
2. co-operate with the Open University in ensuring as far as necessary, that Statutory Requirements, Codes of Practice, University Policies, and Departmental Health and Safety arrangements are complied with;
3. have a strong commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.

Some travel will also be necessary, for example to our Student Support Team based in Manchester and to our campus in Milton Keynes. Such journeys will be reimbursed according to the University travel and expenses policy, and travel frequency would be around once per month on average, dependent on duties. Some aspects of the role will require working in the evenings and at weekends and as such Staff Tutors are expected to be flexible in their working hours.

## **About the Unit**

**STEM**

**Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics**

The Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is comprised of:

* School of Computing & Communications
* School of Environment, Earth & Ecosystem Sciences
* School of Engineering & Innovation
* School of Life, Health & Chemical Sciences
* School of Mathematics & Statistics
* School of Physical Sciences
* Knowledge Media Institute
* Deanery including teams supporting Curriculum; Research, Enterprise and Scholarship; Laboratory Infrastructure; and Faculty Administration

**“We aspire to be world leaders in inclusive, innovative and high impact STEM teaching and research, equipping learners, employers and society with the capabilities to meet tomorrow’s challenges”**

The Faculty of STEM consists of 2500 staff including 1,300 Associate Lecturers. The Faculty delivers over 185 modules across undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum, supporting nearly 19,000 students (full time equivalents) which is 29% of the OU total.

The Faculty generates more research income (circa £17M) than any other Faculty in the University, supported by a comprehensive laboratory infrastructure.

We are proud of our distinctive values and capabilities underpinning our aspiration:

*We are inclusive:*

* We transform people’s lives, ensuring STEM education is openly accessible to many thousands of students from diverse backgrounds – our students express high satisfaction with their study experience.
* We engage the public in exciting citizen science and engineering, including through free open educational resources, multi-platform broadcasting, outreach to inspire the next generation and with programmes to encourage more women into STEM.

*We are highly innovative:*

* We are at the forefront of innovative developments in teaching practical science and engineering at a distance, through simulated and remote access laboratories and practical experimentation.
* Our high quality teaching and curriculum are informed by world-leading research, strong links with professional bodies and communities of practitioners, as well as by scholarship focused on continuously improving our STEM pedagogy.

*We deliver significant social and economic impact:*

* We provide STEM higher education at a scale and reach unsurpassed in the UK, with a sizeable international reach and further growth potential.
* We inject transferable STEM skills and knowledge direct into the workplace for immediate employee and employer benefit, as students combine study while working.
* The employability value of our courses is underpinned by accreditation from leading STEM Professional Bodies and Learned Societies, as well as partnerships and sponsorship with leading employers.
* Our high quality, applied and academically relevant teaching and research addresses real-world issues, delivering impact for industry and society, including addressing pressing STEM skill-shortages across the UK.

School of Life, Health & Chemical Sciences

The School of Life, Health and Chemical Sciences brings together world-class researchers with expertise in neurobiology, psychology, epidemiology, immunology, genetics, translational medicine and cellular and molecular biology, as well as organic, medicinal, inorganic, computational and materials chemistry. Members of the School were submitted to REF2020 in Unit of Assessment A3 (Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy; 74%, 4\* or 3\* overall), Unit of Assessment B12 (Engineering; 81% 4\* or 3\* overall) and Unit of Assessment B9 (Physics; 91% 4\* or 3\* overall ). Our research activities are organised into the following clusters:

* Cancer
* Cardiovascular
* Chemistry and Materials
* Comparative and integrative biology
* Global Health and Development
* Neuroscience
* Research in STEM education (Scholarship)

The School supports undergraduate curriculum in Health sciences (BSc Health Sciences), Biomedical Sciences (BSc Biomedical Sciences), Biology (BSc Biology) and Chemistry (BSc Chemistry) as well as the biology and chemistry pathways through our Natural Sciences degree (BSc Natural Science). At taught postgraduate level we deliver an MSc in Mental Health. Our students generally study part time and the majority of our curriculum is delivered entirely online.

Follow this link for more details[: http://www.open.ac.uk/science/life-health-chemical-sciences/](http://www.open.ac.uk/science/life-health-chemical-sciences/)

*The Open University is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion which is reflected in our mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas. We aim to foster a diverse and inclusive environment so that all in our OU community can reach their potential. We recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and culture, and that this difference brings great strength. We strive to recruit, retain and develop the careers of a diverse pool of students and staff, and particularly encourage applications from all underrepresented groups. We also aspire to make The Open University a supportive workplace for all through our policies, services and staff networks.*

