

Job Description: HE Access and University Bursaries Lead (Maternity Cover)

Reports to: Head of Destinations

Location: West London (with flexible working available)

Contract: FTC (12 months)

Pattern: Full Time (standard hours 9am – 5.30pm)

Salary: £43,000 to £46,000 (depending on experience)

About the role:

The HE Access and University Bursaries Lead is a crucial role in supporting the achievement of our post-18 destinations goals. Our aim is to ensure every Ark student progresses to a best fit destination – whether a top university or a high-quality alternative pathway such as a degree or higher apprenticeship – as the key to high rates of sustained destinations and future career success.

The largest part of this role is the day-to-day running of the Ark University Bursaries programme, which provides financial support to Ark alumni at university. The HE Access and University Bursaries Lead will manage the full bursary cycle: from information sessions in schools, through applications and interviews, to termly student contracts, verification and payments, and ongoing support for alumni and funders.

Alongside the bursaries, the HE Access and University Bursaries Lead will keep momentum on our wider post-18 destinations work: maintaining our university partnerships and HE access support for sixth forms, and supporting students pursuing alternative pathways.

Key Responsibilities:

HE Bursaries

- Coordinate the termly student contract, verification and payment process, ensuring bursary payments are accurate, timely and properly recorded
- Manage the annual application and interview process, including producing common guidance for interviewers and schools, and lead interviews
- Maintain the bursary student workflow on SharePoint, keeping records accurate, up to date and handled in line with data protection requirements
- Act as the first point of contact for all alumni queries about their bursary payments, resolving issues promptly and escalating where appropriate
- Liaise with schools, funders and alumni to deliver information sessions in schools, raising awareness of the bursary and encouraging strong applications
- Liaise with and present to donors as required, with the support of the development team and senior colleagues when required
- Track the progress and outcomes of bursary recipients to support funder reporting and the ongoing development of the programme

HE Access and Partnerships

- Report on KS5 destinations using the KS5 Destinations Power BI dashboard
- Support network approaches to helping students in KS5 with HE IAG and applications, contributing to our network goal of 77%+ progression to Ark Top Third HEIs
- Maintain relationships with Ark Top Third and Russell Group universities, including Oxbridge and other highly selective institutions, and ensure partner activity continues to add value for our schools

- Coordinate established outreach and engagement opportunities with partner HEIs for Ark students and staff, such as:
 - Visits and taster days
 - Residential summer schools and academic conferences
 - Application support for students: personal statements, admissions tests, interviews (Key Stage 5)
 - Pastoral and transition support for students moving on to university, including student finance
 - Best practice guidance for teachers on university and course choice and writing UCAS references
- Work directly with targeted school sixth forms to address access concerns and support year on year gains in progression to top third HEIs

Alternative Pathways

- Work with colleagues across the destinations team to contribute to the network's apprenticeship support offer, including sharing opportunities and supporting students with applications and assessment centres
- Help schools guide each student towards their best fit destination, whether university or an alternative pathway, based on their strengths, interests and career goals

Other

- Support the collection and analysis of post-18 destinations data to inform school and network priorities
- Contribute proactively to the wider development of Sixth Form and Destinations team strategy
- Contribute to network meetings (central team and schools) when required
- Undertake any reasonable responsibilities and actions as requested in line with the JD

Person Specification: HE Access and University Bursaries Lead (Maternity Cover)

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level

Knowledge & Skills

- Knowledge and experience of the post 18 destinations landscape, including:
 - UCAS and selective HEI admissions processes (including Oxbridge, Medicine and other super-selective HE pathways)
 - Awareness of degree and higher apprenticeships and other alternative pathways
 - Student finance and financial support for university students, such as bursaries and scholarships
 - Gatsby Benchmarks and statutory expectations of CEIAG
- Experience of managing administrative processes, including those involving finances or payments, with a high degree of accuracy
- Experience of managing an application and selection process, including interviewing
- Experience of working with young people, schools and/or alumni
- Experience of working with and influencing a range of stakeholders, including funders or donors, sometimes with conflicting priorities and viewpoints
- Ability to synthesise complex and detailed information into both written and oral presentations for senior stakeholders and donors
- Strong IT skills, including Excel and SharePoint
- Strong track record of being a self-starter, able to get up to speed quickly and keep established work moving

Personal Qualities

- Able to demonstrate a commitment to the mission of improving educational opportunities for underprivileged children
- Highly organised, detail oriented and systematic in delivering against ambitious objectives and deadlines
- Discreet and trustworthy when handling confidential personal and financial information
- A confident, approachable communicator with students, alumni, school staff and donors
- Able to respond positively to setbacks
- Flexible in approach and able to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities
- Confident, proactive and hard-working team player - happy to go above and beyond for their colleagues

Other

- Right to work in the UK
- Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students
- Willingness to undertake training
- This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. In order to meet this responsibility, its academies follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

Ark requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure

may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred. To read more about Ark's safer recruitment process, please click this [link](#).

We aim to build a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone – staff and students – can do their best work and achieve their full potential. We want to reflect and represent diverse perspectives across our organisation because we know that doing so will make us stronger and more effective. To know more about Ark's diversity and inclusion commitments, please click on this [link](#).