



OPPORTUNITY

Where change
gets real.



Reference: 0573-24

Grade: 8

Salary: £ 37,999 to £ 45,163 per annum, depending on experience

Contract Type: Permanent

Basis: Full time

Job description

Employability is central to our university mission, and always has been. Our employability offer and performance is an important part of the University value proposition and is a key student recruitment and attraction tool. It is also intrinsically connected to the student experience, our alumni offer and Education Strategy as well as research and knowledge exchange. More widely it is part of the commitment Aston makes via our Aston 2030 strategy to ensure students and graduates are ready for work and life.

Job Purpose

This role will manage and oversee a range of evolving employability projects and work experience initiatives in the Careers and Placements department. Reporting to the Head of Placements, you will manage the Employability Projects Team, made up of;

- The Flexible Placements Team
- The Student Projects Office (SPO)
- The Student Ambassadors Scheme.

You will manage a team of Lead Coordinators, Placement Coordinators and Placement Students, ensuring your teams provide a suite of support and opportunities to students.

To succeed in this role, you will be an excellent communicator with project management skills and be comfortable working in a fast-paced and changing environment. You will also be passionate about supporting diverse groups of students, many of whom will have limited work experience and may be unfamiliar with the expectations of a professional working environment.

Main duties and Responsibilities

- ▶ Line-manage the Employability Projects Team, creating a climate that not only achieves the objectives, but also fosters team working and collaboration. You will lead on the recruitment, induction, training and coaching of new and current team members.
- ▶ Create a positive high-performance culture and the delivery of a high quality virtual and face-to-face service.
- ▶ Coordinate service delivery and performance across the Employability Projects Team. Led by your direct reports within the team, ensure key business targets and KPIs are met, including supporting a high volume of students to achieve minimum required placement activity whilst delivering an outstanding student experience.
- ▶ Coach the Lead Coordinators and Coordinators to be confident with identifying and supporting students who face personal challenges or barriers to securing a placement.
- ▶ Be confident in using data, making data informed decisions on service provision and utilising university systems such as SITS and MAP.
- ▶ Analyse, evaluate and report on the Employability Projects Team's effectiveness and performance.
- ▶ Build relationships with internal and external stakeholders in relation to employability projects and the 2030 strategy.
- ▶ Take a creative approach to design and implement innovative placement and work experience models.
- ▶ Be a point of escalation for students, Student Project Officers and Student Ambassadors who have a 'cause for concern'.
- ▶ Develop the Student Projects Office to ensure it provides an excellent project management service to stakeholders whilst delivering an outstanding placement experience for Aston University students.
- ▶ Develop strategies to support the promotion of work experience and volunteering activities to students, working closely with the Student and Employer Engagement teams and external stakeholders.
- ▶ Represent the wider Placements Team at relevant committee meetings, exam boards, external placement events or other groups.
- ▶ Ensure that all compliance with relevant Data Protection, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and other relevant employment related legislation.

Additional responsibilities

- ▶ Engage in continuous personal and professional development in line with the demands of the role, including undertaking relevant training and development activities to develop themselves and support the development of others.
- ▶ Ensure and promote the personal health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- ▶ Carry out duties in a way which promotes fairness in all matters and which engenders trust.
- ▶ Promote equality of opportunity and support diversity and inclusion as well as working to support the University's environmental sustainability agenda and practices.

Current Employability Projects Overview

The Flexible Placements Team

- ▶ The Flexible Placement Team actively caseloads students who have not secured a placement in their Placement Year. The team supports unplaced and 1st placed students from July of Placement Preparation to September of On-Placement (14 month cycle), actively case-loading them throughout the Placement Year. The team will support students into various employability projects, including SPO. If a student is completing a Portfolio Placement the team act as their line manager / supervisor and will engage with the Placement Tutor as a placement provider.

The Student Projects Office

- ▶ The Student Projects Office (SPO) is a project management function staffed by Aston University placement students. The SPO's aim is to help the University evolve by undertaking projects that directly enhance the student experience. The projects give the placement students an opportunity to make a real difference to their university. A new cohort of placement students is recruited each term and they work on a diverse range of projects across all areas of the institution. The project officers gain a rare insight into university operations and the experience enables them to develop their employability skills in a professional environment. They gain a fulfilling educational experience, whilst developing the confidence and the skills to be well equipped to succeed in work and life.

The Student Ambassador Scheme

- ▶ The Student Ambassador Scheme provides paid casual work opportunities for students, supporting activities and events such as University open days, campus tours, conferences, school visits to campus and mentoring programmes for local pupils. Opportunities are designed to enable students to work flexibly around their studies, whilst developing invaluable employability skills such as teamworking, time management and communication skills.

Person specification

	Essential	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to Degree level or equivalent, or experience in a similar level and type of role. 	Application form.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience of managing the performance of individuals and complex teams; with particular emphasis on motivating staff to set and achieve high performance standards. • Experience of supervising the delivery of excellent customer service to diverse stakeholders. • Experience of previously planning, prioritising and organising the resources of self and others. • Experience of linking organisational objectives with planning to create an integrated strategy and sense of purpose. • Experience of managing projects from initiation to completion. • Experience of training delivery, design, and delivery of presentations. • Experience of using data to inform decision making. 	Application form and assessment day.
Aptitude and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to coach and develop others to success. • Demonstrates positive leadership and management qualities. • Ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines and achieve targets. • Able to analyse problems and use judgment to identify and provide pragmatic and workable solutions. • Ability to think creatively with a proactive approach in generating insightful ideas and carrying them forward. 	Application form and assessment day.

	Essential	Method of assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A flexible and collaborative approach with the ability to manage unpredictability. • Ability to identify and interpret trends or patterns using management information and recommend action that helps shape future strategy. • Ability to influence and negotiate with internal and external stakeholders to help achieve strategic objectives. • Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills. • Excellent IT skills: MS Office suite. • Awareness of student diversity, expectations of students, and understanding of the need to manage these. • Demonstrates an interest in keeping skills up to date. 	

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further qualification relating to any aspect of the role. 	Application form.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in higher education or employability. • Experience of / familiarity with a different culture. Intercultural awareness. • Experience of working with senior staff at a strategic level. 	Application form, assessment day and Interview.

University Values

All staff are expected to demonstrate/promote the University's values and expectations, which are an integral part of our strategy and underpin the culture of the university. In addition, our leaders are expected to be accountable, help to execute strategic visions of the University and share and set clear expectations that inspire those around them.

Values + Behaviours

				
Innovation	Collaboration	Ambition	Inclusion	Integrity
We strive for excellence within ourselves and others, providing solutions to new and existing challenges.	We work best when we are collaborative, working together to contribute to the Aston community.	We strive together for improvement and innovation looking ahead to see the bigger picture.	We treat everyone in our community equally and how they would like to be treated.	We are open, honest and fair. We take ownership of the way we work and how we treat each other.

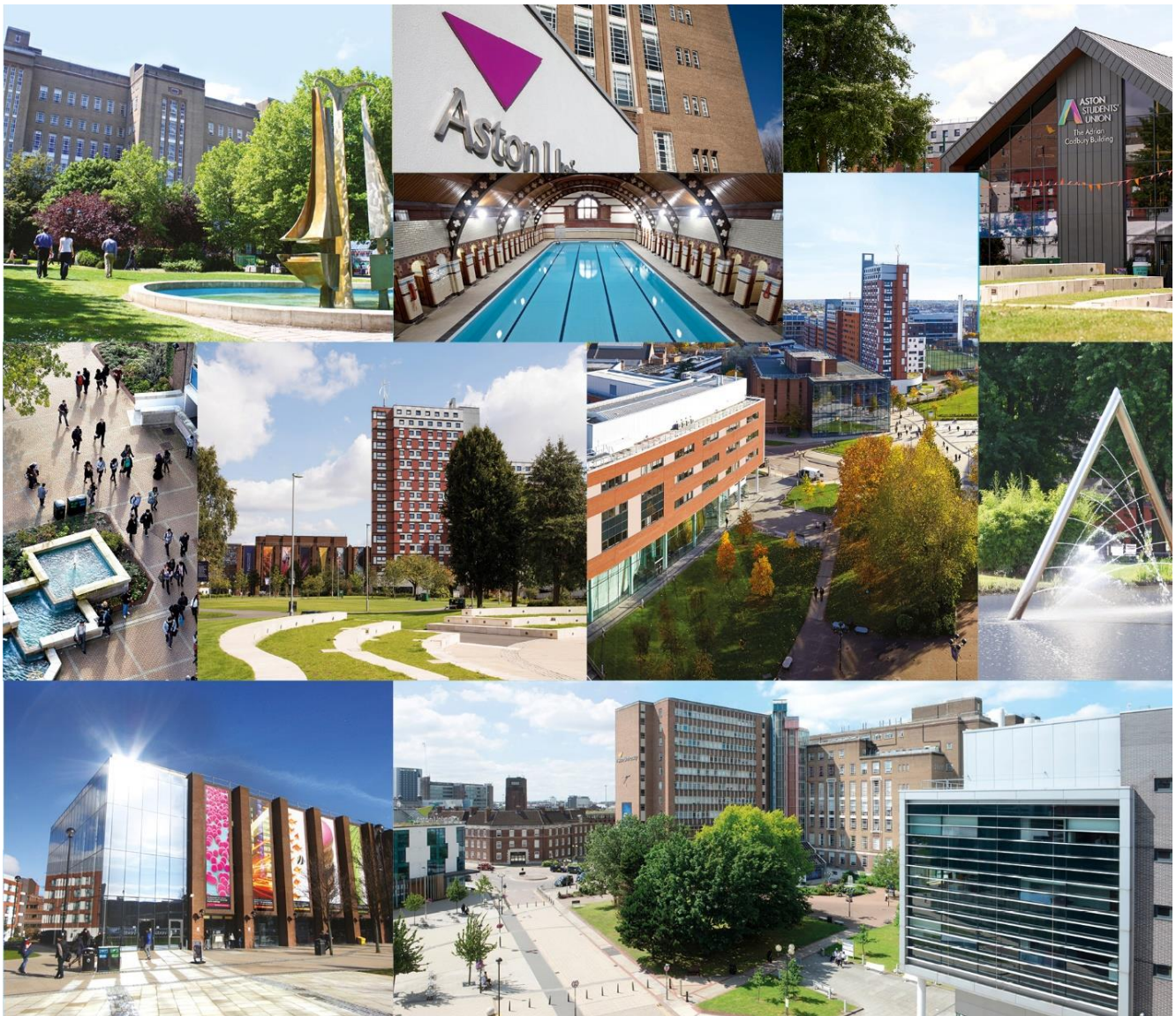
How to apply

You can apply for this role online via our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs>.

Applications should be submitted by 23:59pm on the advertised closing date.
All applicants must complete an application form, along with your CV.

Any CV sent direct to the Recruitment Team and Recruiting Manager will not be accepted.

If you require a manual application form then please contact the Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk.



Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:

Name: Peter Lakeland

Job Title: Head of Placements

Email: P.J.Lakeland@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:

Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

Visit our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr> for full details of our salary scales and benefits
Aston University staff enjoy

Salary scales: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/payroll-and-pensions/salary-scales/index>

Benefits: [Benefits and Rewards | Aston University](#)

Working in Birmingham: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/birmingham>

Employment of Ex-Offenders: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the positions they applying for is listed an exception under the act.

Eligibility to work in the UK: You should ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements, including meeting the [English language standards](#). If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful. Please see UKVI guidance for further information on eligibility, knowledge of English requirements and approved test centres <https://www.gov.uk/tier-2-general>

With the end of free movement for EU/EEA/Swiss nationals from 1 January 2021, the UK's new immigration system applies to all non-UK/Irish nationals who require a visa.

Where an individual is subject to UK immigration control, they will require a visa to work in the UK.

The following individuals do not need a visa for the UK, but do still have to prove their right to work before employment can commence:

- **British Citizens or Irish Nationals**
- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals with Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme**
- **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK**

The main routes available for those who need a visa to work in the UK are **Skilled Worker**, **Global Talent** and the **Graduate Route**.

You can find further information about each of these visa routes on our [candidate immigration page](#).

If you will conduct research in your role, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application. Please see below for further details.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS): If you will conduct research in your role and you apply for a Skilled Worker or Temporary Worker GAE visa, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application.

This process can take at least 6 weeks to process, and Aston will consider this when confirming your expected start date. Processing times will increase between April and September and can longer to complete.

There is no fast-track option available. ATAS certificates will be processed in order of receipt.

You can find more information about ATAS on our [candidate immigration page](#).

Before you start and Right to Work

90-day entry vignette

If you have applied for your visa outside of the UK, you will receive a vignette in your passport which is usually valid for 90 days. Please make sure to travel to the UK within the 'valid from' and 'valid to' dates on this visa. If you entered the UK before or after these dates, you would not 'activate' the visa and you would need to leave and re-enter the country.

You will also receive a decision letter confirming details about your immigration permission and where to collect your Biometric Residence Permit.

Cost of Living - Estate and Letting Agents

There are numerous Estate and Letting Agents in and around Birmingham that can help you find suitable accommodation. The [Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme](#) provides a list of professional agencies and landlords who have applied with them for accreditation. Whilst accreditation is not a guarantee of quality, it provides some reassurance about the standard of the service they provide.

You can also use property search websites such as [Rightmove](#) or [Zoopla](#).

Equal Opportunities: Aston University promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure, through our admissions policies for students, and our staff recruitment and selection processes that we encourage applications from all groups represented in the wider community at a local, national and international level.

The University will endeavour not to discriminate unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, against student or potential students, staff or potential staff. This commitment applies to all functions of the University and to any stage of an individual's career.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is included within the application form. Data you provide on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be included in a general database, for statistical monitoring purposes, enabling the University to monitor the effectiveness of its Policy, Codes of Practice and Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in Employment. Individuals will not be identified by name.

Data Protection: Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) ("GDPR"). The University's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, including the Job Applicant Privacy Notice can be found at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/data-protection>. Your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with the University which will be stored in manual and/or electronic files. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies.

Full details of our terms and conditions of service and associated policies and procedures are available online at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/policies>

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