University of Roehampton London



Job Description

Job title: Senior Payroll and Pensions Specialist

Reports to: Head of Payroll and Pensions

Service: Human Resources

Main purpose of the job:

The Senior Payroll & Pensions Specialist will support the Head of Payroll & Pensions in delivering an accurate and compliant payroll and pensions service across the University.
The postholder will act as the team's senior technical specialist, taking ownership of key payroll and pension administration activities and providing technical support to the Payroll & Pensions Officers. The role requires someone with strong hands-on payroll experience and, importantly, substantial experience administering higher-education pension schemes, particularly TPS, USS and LGPS/LPFA.

Main duties and responsibilities:

1. Support the Head of Payroll & Pensions with the end-to-end processing and checking of the University's six payrolls, including the main monthly payroll and hourly paid populations.
2. Carry out detailed pre-payroll and post-payroll checks, investigating discrepancies before payroll sign-off.
3. Take day-to-day ownership of pension administration across TPS, USS, LGPS/LPFA and Royal London Defined Contribution, escalating significant issues to the Head of Payroll & Pensions.
4. Prepare, upload and reconcile monthly pension schedules and returns, ensuring submissions are completed accurately and within scheme deadlines.
5. Complete TPS Monthly Data Collection (MDC) requirements and investigate validation errors or contribution discrepancies.
6. Process USS pension changes, including starters, leavers, opt-ins, opt-outs, contribution changes, AVCs and other scheme instructions.
7. Manage LGPS/LPFA administration, including starters, leavers, contribution changes and information required by the fund.
8. Complete retirement documentation and pension retirement forms across the relevant schemes and liaise with employees and pension providers through the retirement process.
9. Perform monthly reconciliation of pension deductions against payroll records, pension schedules and payments.
10. Investigate payroll balancing differences and provide supporting analysis to the Head of Payroll & Pensions and Finance.
11. Process and review complex payroll transactions including retrospective changes, back pay, overpayments, underpayments, leavers, PILON, holiday pay and contractual changes.
12. Review and process HMRC tax code notifications and investigate PAYE/NI discrepancies where required.

13. Support RTI processes, including FPS/EPS checks and the investigation of HMRC reporting discrepancies.
14. Provide technical support to the two Payroll & Pensions Officers and review more complex cases before escalation to the Head of Payroll & Pensions.
15. Act as an escalation point for complex employee payroll and pension queries.
16. Liaise directly with USS, TPS, LPFA/LGPS, Royal London and HMRC to investigate and resolve operational issues.
17. Work closely with HR to ensure starters, leavers, contractual changes, absences and other employee changes are correctly reflected in iTrent.
18. Prepare payroll and pension information required for internal/external audit and respond to audit queries.
19. Maintain clear payroll and pension procedures, controls and process documentation.
20. Identify historic backlogs, discrepancies and control weaknesses and work with the Head of Payroll & Pensions to bring records up to date.
21. Provide senior operational cover for the Head of Payroll & Pensions during periods of annual leave or absence, ensuring routine payroll and pension activities continue to deadlines.
22. To undertake any other requirements commensurate with the seniority of the post/as required by the head of department

Person Specification

The Person Specification focuses on the knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications required to undertake the role effectively. Please ensure that your application demonstrates how you meet the essential criteria.

Requirements	E/D	Criteria
Education and Qualifications	Essential	• Relevant payroll, pensions, finance or business qualification, or equivalent knowledge/experience gained through practical experience.
Knowledge and skills	Essential	• MHR iTrent experience is essential. • Strong hands-on UK payroll experience within a complex, multi-payroll environment. • Demonstrable hands-on experience administering Teachers' Pensions (TPS). • Practical experience of USS and/or LGPS/LPFA pension administration. • Strong understanding of PAYE, NI, RTI and UK statutory payroll requirements. • Strong payroll reconciliation and analytical skills. • Advanced or strong intermediate Excel skills. • Ability to independently investigate payroll/pension discrepancies and take them through to resolution.
Work experience	Essential	• Previous experience within a university/higher education or comparable public-sector environment. • Significant experience in a Senior Payroll Officer, Payroll Specialist, Payroll & Pensions Specialist or equivalent role. • Experience completing retirement forms and managing pension retirement cases. • Experience preparing and reconciling monthly pension submissions/schedules.

		• Experience dealing with complex retrospective payroll corrections, overpayments and underpayments.
Communication skills	Essential	• Strong communication skills and confidence dealing directly with employees, HR, Finance and pension providers.

Additional Information

- The appointment is offered on a Fixed term and Full-time basis immediately, subject to references
- The appointment is usually made at the bottom of the range. Where a candidate's current total remuneration already exceeds the bottom point, consideration will be given to the level of skills, experience and profile that the candidate is bringing to the role. The total remuneration of other staff doing the same or similar work within the department who have similar skills, experience and profile should also be taken into account.
- The University operates service-led hybrid working arrangements which may allow for 3 days in the office and 2 days working from home although peak times might require flexibility and any hybrid arrangement will be determined by the service and in agreement with the line manager.
- This appointment will not require a DBS check
- The annual leave entitlement is 30 days p.a., additionally there are 3 – 4 days for the University's operational efficiency initiatives at Christmas
- Your normal hours of work will be between 35-40 hours per week, plus a lunch break of one hour each day, with a full professional commitment expected entailing working flexibly beyond core hours if required
- The University of Roehampton is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Set in a beautiful 54 acre parkland campus, the University has an attractive range of benefits and you can find out more about them here.
- In addition Professional Services/Support staff on grades up to RU7, may access the Local Government Pension Scheme; and on grades RU7 and above may access The University's Defined Contribution Retirement Savings Group Personal Pension Plan, provided by Royal London.

Job description prepared by: Chief People Officer
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