



JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of the post: Systems Analyst - Student Information Systems
[Permanent, Full Time]

Department: Information Services

Reporting to: Enterprise Solutions Team Leader

The University

Background

Harper Adams University is the leading UK Higher Education (HE) institution focused on the land-based and food supply-chain sectors with an important national role in these subject areas.

Situated on a single campus in rural and scenic Shropshire, the University, and its surrounding area, provide an excellent working and living environment for staff and students alike, yet the University campus is only one hour from the UK's second city of Birmingham. Around 3,000 HE students attend the University, primarily on sandwich courses, which include a year-long industrial placement. Undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and apprenticeships are offered. The University also welcomes individuals who wish to undertake CPD or similar professional training to support their careers in the agri-food chain and rural industries.

The University was founded by Thomas Harper Adams in 1901 on the original farmland of the Harper Adams Estate. The University estate includes amenity areas, woodland, and a commercial farm of 205 hectares; with rented land, the total area farmed is approximately 640 hectares, spread over several locations with cereals, potatoes, forage maize and grassland carrying a dairy herd, sheep, beef, pig and poultry units.

The Privy Council awarded taught degree awarding powers to Harper Adams in 1996 and research degree awarding powers in 2006. Full University Title was granted by Her Majesty's Privy Council in December 2012. The University changed its legal status to that of a Company Limited by Guarantee in July 2012 and remains one of a small number of Universities which are Registered Charities. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal became the University's first Chancellor in 2013.

Academic Provision

The University offers a wide range of courses including Foundation and Honours degrees, in addition to shorter awards designed to meet the continuing professional development needs of those already in the workplace. The subjects are wide ranging and cover Agriculture, Applied Life Sciences, Animal Science and Health, Business, Countryside, Engineering, Food and Land & Property Management. The University has also focused on developing its postgraduate education and research and there are a growing number of postgraduate students at both diploma, masters and PhD level.

Harper Adams has built up an international reputation for the quality of its courses and has achieved the highest possible ratings in recent Quality Assurance Agency reviews and holds a Gold Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award. There is active encouragement of research and the University took part in the last Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise. 56% of our submitted research was rated either internationally excellent or world leading and 100% was rated of international quality. Our extensive programme of research and education for professionals in the land-based and food chain sectors supports a high profile of business and community reach-out work, short course delivery for businesses and technology

transfer activities supported by strong industry links and partnerships with companies including Saputo Dairy UK (formerly Dairy Crest), CLAAS and Ice Robotics.

Current high-profile projects include the Hands Free Farm – following on from the world-first Hands Free Hectare autonomous farming success; controlled traffic farming and development of laser weeding.

Recognition

Harper Adams is consistently positioned highly in a range of national ratings, performance measures and league tables.

The University has been the highest performing modern university in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide for the last five years

In the QS World Rankings for Agriculture and Forestry published in March 2021, Harper Adams was ranked, for the fourth time, as first in the UK for academic reputation and second in the world for its reputation with employers.”

Harper Adams University is a five-time winner of the Whatuni? Student Choice Award for best job prospects.

The University is ranked 11th in the UK for student satisfaction, based on the results of the National Student Survey 2021, and more UK-based undergraduates from Harper Adams University are in work or further study than from any other university in the country, according to 2021 Graduate Outcomes figures.

Facilities

Harper Adams has extensive, well-equipped facilities and is constantly investing in its campus. Facilities include a range of modern teaching facilities and an extensive library, a variety of IT suites including an engineering design centre, newly extended laboratory facilities, a field laboratory and a livestock project centre, a glasshouse complex, an agricultural engineering unit with a large, covered soil working area and a number of sustainable technology installations. New facilities opened since 2017 include new laboratories, an Agri-Tech Innovation Hub and SMART Dairy Unit. A Veterinary Education Centre is due to open in 2021, in support of existing programmes and the new Harper & Keele Veterinary School. Capital funding to support the development of many of these facilities has been provided through the work of the Development Trust.

The University also provides a range of training and professional development opportunities via its staff development programme.

Catering and Sports Facilities

The University's Students' Union operates a small gym and squash courts that staff may use on the payment of a nominal fee. The University has an open-air swimming pool, bowling green and tennis courts that are available for staff use during the summer period. A variety of University catering outlets provide access to lunch facilities on campus.

For further details about the University, please visit our website:

<http://www.harper-adams.ac.uk>

The Role

The role sits within the Information Services team which provides professional expertise and technical skills in the development, integration and interoperability of new and existing software solutions to manage student data and processes. The post holder is expected to have a good understanding across a broad range of ICT disciplines and will actively contribute to the successful delivery of developments to the Student Information System.

The post holder will be responsible for supporting the lead systems developers in developing the student database, working with the Project Manager and technology teams to build internally developed or commercial off the shelf solutions, provide second line support and implement upgrades.

Autonomy

- Works under general direction within a clear framework of accountability.
- Exercises some responsibility and autonomy.
- Plans own work to meet given objectives and processes.

Influence

- Liaises with team and specialist peers internally and works with suppliers in incident resolution. Participates in external activities related to own specialism.
- Supports lead developers in making decisions which influence the success of projects and team objectives.

Complexity

- Performs a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities, in a variety of contexts. Investigates, defines and resolves complex problems.

Business Skills

- Selects appropriately from applicable standards, methods, tools and applications.
- Demonstrates an analytical and systematic approach to problem solving.
- Communicates fluently orally and in writing, and can present complex technical information to both technical and non-technical audiences.
- Facilitates collaboration between stakeholders who share common objectives.
- Plans, schedules and monitors work to meet time and quality targets and in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures.
- Rapidly absorbs new technical information and applies it effectively.
- Has a good appreciation of the wider field of information systems, their use in relevant employment areas and how they relate to the business activities of the employer or client.
- Maintains an awareness of developing technologies and their application and takes some responsibility for personal development.

Key Responsibilities

Service Management

Takes significant responsibility within own service area to deliver a professional service including:

- Change Management; development, evaluation, approval and effective implementation of changes to the live infrastructure.
- Problem Management; Analyses incidents and problems to show trends and potential problem areas.
- Service Level Monitoring; analysis of data to inform Continual Service Improvement

IT Operations

- Carries out moderately complex operations that include:
- Diagnosis and resolution of issues with user devices, applications, peripherals, and communications & networking equipment.
- Responds to enquiries by users and ICT colleagues and is able to deal effectively with a broad range of problems of moderate complexity, only escalating those which need specialist or management attention.
- Conducts investigations of operational problems, makes proposals for improvement, and implements them when appropriate.

Operational Duties

- Support the senior developers in the prototyping, development, testing and deployment of the SITS student record system in line with agreed service scope and service levels.
- Adhere to quality management processes, e.g. ensuring all developed and supported systems, modules, applications, or other developments are robust, fully tested, documented, of high quality and fit for purpose.
- Develop and maintain professional relationships with key internal stakeholders, including relevant third parties and suppliers.
- Liaise with stakeholders to contribute to the assessment of business, academic and functional requirements
- Maintain version control, configuration and defect management activities for all code developed.
- Implementing test plans for new and amended functions, and documenting the outcomes.
- Undertake unit and systems testing to ensure that on-going releases of code/solutions meet agreed requirements and are fit for purpose.
- Assist (where agreed) the Service Delivery team with resolving day -to -day second and third line support calls and recommend and develop fixes/ alternative solutions where practicable.
- Adopt and promote good practices; standards and compliance to standards with all aspects of system/ software design and integration.
- To undertake any other duties as required by the Enterprise Solutions Team Leader.
- To support the handover of solutions together with the Infrastructure and Service Delivery Teams into the Production environment.
- Provides advice and guidance to all users in the effective use of systems, products and services, investigating problem situations to diagnose underlying causes and helping users to recover or continue operation.
- Investigates issues and other application requests for support and ensures that requests are handled according to agreed procedures and determines appropriate actions to take.
- Reviews and accepts releases, upgrades and fixes available for system and identifies those which merit action. Supports users by demonstrating new features.
- Documents requirements, plans and system changes in accordance with university procedures

Project Management

Takes responsibility for the execution of small-scale projects covering:

- Defines, documents and safely executes small-scale projects, actively participating in all phases of the project. Identifies, assesses and manages risks to the success of the project.
- Working with users, reviews proposed benefits and risks in the new/redesigned processes, confirms the acceptance criteria for these processes, and ensures that they are properly documented in the business justification.
- Estimates costs, timescales and resource requirements for the successful delivery of the project.
- Specifies and develops test scenarios to test that new/redesigned processes deliver improved ways of working for the end user at the same time as delivering efficiencies and planned business benefits.
- Prepares and maintains realistic project plans and tracks all activities against them, providing regular reports to senior management, and users as appropriate

Ensures that own projects are formally closed and, where appropriate, subsequently reviewed, and that lessons learned are captured and actioned. Produces appropriate documentation to support these processes.

Security Administration

- Maintains knowledge and awareness of ICT Security policies & procedures and general data security legislation & regulations; always acting within these.
- Provides advice and handles most enquiries relating to basic information security referring to more senior staff for assistance.
- Operates and administers logical access controls relating to one or more platforms, within defined boundaries, in order to provide continuous and secure access to information services.
- Investigates violation reports and logs for potential security breaches; escalating to the Information Security Manager and ICT management as required.
- For all services and systems within area of responsibility, maintains auditable records and user documentation.

Personal Development

- Develops and maintains knowledge and awareness of specialist technical areas by:
- Reading relevant literature and attending training
- Meeting and maintaining contact with others involved in the technical specialism and through taking an active part in appropriate professional bodies.
- Maintains an awareness of current developments in broad technical areas and takes significant responsibility for own personal development.

Communication & Personal Networks

- Contributes to user groups, or specialist subject groups on topics involving the technical specialism presenting technically complex concepts in a clear, jargon free, accessible manner.
- Communicates well, both orally and in writing, arranging and facilitating meetings and presents issues and solutions both orally and in writing.
- Promotes the service within the University and creates strong personal relationships with the full range of stakeholders.

Key Working Relationships

Internal;

- Information Services Senior Management
- Information Services teams
- University staff (research, academic and administrative)
- Professional service staff

External;

- Key Suppliers and Commercial Partners
- Other institutions
- Sector bodies (UCISA/JISC)
- Relevant professional bodies
- Represents the University at appropriate forums and makes a positive contribution to relevant sector/industry groups.

Additional Information

- There may be a requirement to work varying core hours, or on occasion to work outside normal hours, to ensure that service commitments are met.
- Flexible or Remote working can be available for this post

Personal Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		Educated to degree level or equivalent experience
Experience	<p>Developing and supporting business application environments</p> <p>Proven record of delivering results within a given timescale</p> <p>Experience/Knowledge of scripting and/or programming languages</p>	<p>Developing and supporting integrations between applications</p> <p>Experience of working within projects</p> <p>Understanding of Web Development and mobile first technologies</p> <p>Experience/Knowledge of Version control systems</p> <p>Understanding of second/third line support processes</p> <p>Knowledge of the HE sector</p>
Knowledge/Skills	<p>Knowledge of interface methods and supporting software</p> <p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills</p>	<p>Broad understanding of ICT disciplines</p> <p>Problem analysis and solving skills</p> <p>Knowledge of system development & testing requirements</p> <p>Knowledge of debugging applications</p>
Personal Qualities	<p>Credibility and integrity</p> <p>Positive and open in communication both verbal and written</p> <p>Ability to explain technical concepts to non-technical staff</p> <p>Committed to increasing technical knowledge and information</p> <p>Collaborative, able to build working networks</p> <p>Commitment to service quality whilst adhering to internal procedures</p>	

Conditions of Service

The national recommendations which have arisen from the negotiations between UCEA and the unions recognised at national level, the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES), directly affect the terms and conditions insofar as they have been adopted by the Board of Governors.

Salary The commencing salary will be within the range £27,924 to £30,497 per annum. The point of entry will be dependent upon relevant qualifications and experience. Salaries are paid monthly, in arrears, by credit transfer on the 28th day of the month.

Contract Term This is a full time post. The employment may be terminated during the course of the contract by either party giving one months' notice in writing.

Hours of Work The routine working week is 37 hours over Monday to Friday, inclusive. There may be a requirement for overtime working from time to time and time off in lieu may be allowed for agreed hours worked in excess of 37 per week.

Holidays The annual holiday entitlement is 22 working days, plus statutory bank holidays. In addition to this there are 8 University closure days during the full annual leave year. Annual holiday entitlement rises to 25 working days on completion of 5 years' service. The holiday year runs from 1 August to 31 July and in the holiday year in which the employment commences or terminates the holiday entitlement will accrue on a pro-rata basis for each complete week of service. The timing of holidays is subject to the agreement of the Line Manager.

All annual holiday entitlement (including bank holidays and University closure days) is pro-rata for part-time employees. Further details will be confirmed on appointment.

Sick Leave During periods of certified sickness, the post-holder will be eligible to receive sick pay in accordance with the University Sick Pay Policy. The payment of sick pay is subject to compliance with the University rules for the notification and verification of sickness absence, details of which will be provided to the successful applicant upon commencement of employment.

Pension The post-holder will be entitled to join the Harper Adams Group Pension Scheme and details will be provided to the successful applicant upon commencement of employment.

Exclusivity of Service You are required to devote your full-time attention and abilities to your duties during working hours and to act in the best interests of the University at all times. Accordingly, you must not, without written consent of the University, undertake employment or engagement including external consultancy, which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the University.

It follows that, regardless of whether you are employed on a full-time or part-time contract, you are required to notify your line manager of any employment or engagement which you intend to undertake whilst in the employment of the University (including any such employment or engagement which commenced before your employment under this contract). Your line manager will then notify you within 10 working days whether such employment or engagement is prohibited.

Criminal Convictions The post involves the opportunity for access to children and young persons under the age of 18. For this reason, the University is entitled to consider any criminal convictions, cautions or impending case(s) that it considers to be relevant to this post.

The post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This

means that applicants are not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are “spent” under the provisions of the Act.

Applicants must therefore complete the part of the application form declaring any criminal convictions and cautions from any court or police authority. The successful applicant will have to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service Check before an appointment can be made.

References

Candidates should ensure that they provide full details of the name and postal address of their referees. Please include e-mail addresses and telephone numbers wherever possible.

Referees should include your present, or most recent, employer.

Application Procedure:

All applications should be completed and submitted using the Harper Adams e-Recruitment programme at <http://jobs.harper-adams.ac.uk>

To be submitted no later than midnight on 30 June 2022