



Student Services, Additional Learning Support and Disability Services (ALS)

REVIEW OF ALS SERVICE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

Consultation Document June 2015

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1. Introduction

This consultation document sets out the current structure, rationale for change and proposals for the future structure of ALS. It sets out the process and timescales for consultation with staff in ALS, with Trade Unions, and with staff across BU. It also sets out impact on roles, proposed processes and indicative timescales for implementation of the changes put forward.

If the proposals are accepted and implemented, an assessment of the impacts of the revised structure will be undertaken in twelve months from the point when implementation is complete.

2. Context

This consultation document provides details about the proposals for the last phase of the review of ALS, which began in 2010 and is now in the final year of a five year change process. The review covers alignment to BU2018, the student experience, the ability to meet BU's legal obligations for student support and reasonable adjustments as required under the Equality Act 2010, and the financial sustainability of the service in line with BU's strategic objectives.

The benefits realised since 2010 include:

1. An enhanced student experience with a reduction in the number of individual teams that the student needs to engage with, resulting in speedier access to support
2. Increased collaborative working between those who support BU students with disabilities, specific learning differences, medical conditions and mental health issues both within the ALS service itself and between ALS and Faculties/Professional Services
3. Increased transparency of reasonable adjustments around academic and employment learning and assessment
4. A more responsive service which considers academic feedback, in particular substantive feedback received on note taking processes and placement support
5. An increased focus on an outstanding personalised student experience having developed initiatives that demonstrate best practice in student-centred learning support
6. Development of additional guidance and support for staff within Faculties, and for external stakeholders such as employers and placement providers
7. Involvement by ALS staff in the PGCert programme and the BU Inclusivity Working Group exploring ways of making teaching and assessment more inclusive across the University, thus removing the need for some reasonable adjustments for students.
8. A focussed attention over time to excellent customer service culminating in the achievement of the Matrix Award in January 2015 as part of the wider Student Services.

However, it must also be recognised that despite the changes already made to the service, BU's student demographic and the external landscape is continually changing so further internal changes are needed to address these. Specifically there are a number of issues that the proposals in this consultation aim to address including the increasingly complex needs that students are presenting with and which need specialist support, BU's strategy to develop independent learners equipped for the world of work, and the expectation that technology will replace some one to one support in areas such as note-taking for students with a mild-impact SpLD. Also of relevance to the proposals is a need to embed a sustainable staff management and administration structure to ensure accountability, support the efficient and effective working of the department, and to underpin all aspects of the support provided.

Ways of enhancing the student experience whilst addressing entitlements and responsibilities have become embedded in daily activity. Colleagues in ALS work positively and there is an overall mind-set that welcomes innovation in supporting students, with a tangible willingness to adapt and

change any process in response to internal or external changes. It is important that the support of ALS staff is maintained and it is understood that their contribution is valued regardless of a need to refocus the service.

3. Rationale for Change

3.1 Meeting changing student needs

The growth in complex student support requirements is acknowledged across the sector. Since 2010 at BU there has been a 37% increase in students accessing the ALS service (see Table 1 and Figure 1). Most notably the biggest growth in support needs is for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (up by 206%) and Mental Health (up by 325%). BU is also seeing a significant increase (42%) of students who have complex multiple co-occurring diagnoses. The traditional support offered by disability services for physical support, note taking and one to one tutoring is no longer sufficient for the current student population and many universities have already introduced the role of specialist mentoring support¹. This role typically works with students in a more intensive manner and supports them in all aspects of their university life.

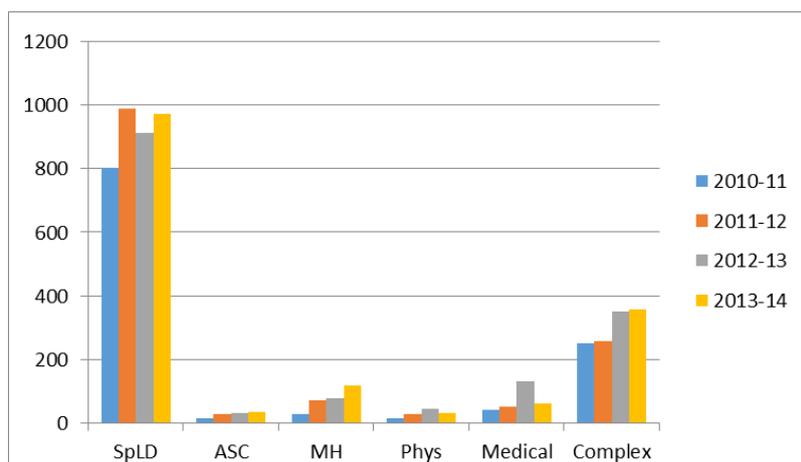
Strategies for support have developed over the last few years and are on-going including animal assisted learning (BU is the first UK university to do this), visual resources for learning, a student placement handbook, placement guidelines for staff and employers, QAA-commended web pages, an ALS Blog, an ALS Community on myBU, You Tube videos, a closed Facebook page for vulnerable students, and a social group for students with ASC. These strategies need embedding with further refinements.

Table 1 –Student Figures 2010-2014

Condition	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	%change (2010-2014)
Specific Learning Differences (SpLDs)	801	989	912	972	21%
Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)	15	29	31	46	206%
Mental Health	28	72	77	119	325%
Sensory/Physically impaired	16	29	44	33	106%
Medical	42	53	130	62	47%
Complex Multi Diagnoses	251	256	351	356	42%
Totals	1153	1428	1545	1588	37%

¹ eg Edinburgh, Oxford, Hertfordshire, UCL, Durham, Oxford Brookes, Bangor, Dundee, Reading, Southampton,

Figure 1 – Student Figures 2010-2014



(Figures for 2014-15 are on-going but so far indicate an increase.)

3.2 Developing a Student Centred approach

Although ALS offers Matrix accredited outstanding professional information, advice and guidance, the primary focus of the service is one to one academic and employability skills support. The tutors and LSAs have been gradually developing a strategy of working in tutor-directed teams to support students on a caseload basis rather than providing support that can sometimes be disjointed. The focus is on developing *proactive* metacognitive skills' transfer rather than providing *reactive* support. This team approach needs to be further enhanced with roles clearly defining the required duties and skills in this respect.

Information, advice and guidance processes have been developing more efficiently to integrate with Front Line Services, Estates, Residential Services, Marketing and Communications, and to make effective use of social media. These processes need to become embedded and further development is needed.

3.3 Developing Independent Learners

Since 2010, improvements to the core structures of the service and its processes have led to benefits for BU's disabled students that enable and empower them to become independent learners, employable in graduate level jobs as outlined in the BU 2018 Vision. Bespoke one to one learning support for acquiring academic and employability skills through metacognitive transference is currently available for the 11.5% of BU students who have declared and evidenced a disability. This percentage is predicted to rise to 13% by 2018 based on current trends.

ALS aims to empower students through an enabling active learning framework, delivered within a partnership model with Faculties, the Library, Careers and Employability, Residential Services, SEWS, Academic Services (exams and Partner Institutions) and other stakeholders eg placement supervisors and mentors.

Despite a number of changes to date there is still a need to make improvements, particularly around the note taking provision. Students should be supported to engage in an active learning experience by making their own notes or using technology. The Events Scheduling review², carried out in February 2014 as part of the Student Journey Project, noted "*at present the responsibility for checking any changes [to the timetable] is with ALS and cascaded to students, however, ALS noted*

² At <http://intranetsp.bournemouth.ac.uk/policy/Events%20Scheduling%20Review%20-%20Findings%20and%20Recommendations%20February%202014.pdf>

their commitment to enabling independent student working and that it could be possible for the responsibility to be moved to students.... therefore removing the need for ALS to do this work”... And “indeed ALS thought the relationship between the student and their LSA could benefit by having more regular contact and one way of supporting this would be for the student to be responsible for checking changes to their timetable and liaising directly with the LSA.”

This review made a recommendation that *“ALS considers a change to their existing processes and the students become responsible for identifying any changes to their timetables which they communicate directly to their LSAs”*

For students who cannot take their own notes because of a complex disability, the current note taking provision will remain but it will need to be considerably improved.

3.4 Increased use of Technology

Technology is driving changes in behaviours across all sectors including higher education and BU’s approach needs to recognise and embrace the opportunities that assistive technology and social media provide in supporting students with their learning. 96% of students own a laptop or net book (Endsleigh, August 2013) and traditional modes of teaching are on the decline. The right technical skills will be important to stay current, and in some cases, ahead in the sector.

In terms of reasonable adjustments, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has expressly confirmed that it expects HEIs to use assistive technology widely for student support, particularly as it can promote independent learning. Students receive software packages through the DSA but a significant number do not use it because they simply don’t know how to do so to support their learning. The proposed changes in the ALS structure will address this anomaly as there will be a focus on using assistive technology software to complement the more traditional Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) teaching.

Through the weekly internal ALS development and training sessions, staff have had the opportunity to become proficient in using assistive technology in order to support students more effectively, and teach them where necessary, to use specific software packages that enhance their learning. Collaboration with IT services has ensured that specific learning software is planned to be inclusively available on all students’ profiles. This is expected to be in the IT Delivery Plan for 2015-16.

Changes to DSA funding are clear in the expectation that HEIs will provide inclusive assessment strategies including the use of lecture capture and other technologies where students are unable to attend lectures, and for accessing notes in advance. *“HEIs are expected to consider how they deliver information to students and whether strategies can be put in place to reduce the need for support workers and encourage greater independence and autonomy for their students”*³ Where students previously were funded for note-taking, the government expectation is that technology (eg digital recorders, lecture capture) will replace one to one support except for students with complex conditions or high-impact SpLDs.

3.5 Management and Administration

The current structure places staff management, including recruitment and appraisal, solely within the remit of the Manager and Deputy Manager. With a department of over 50 staff (headcount not FTE) this is unsustainable. The current structure does not promote inter-disciplinary working between those supporting an individual student, nor does it allow time for quality checks such as peer observations. This was identified as an area for improvement in the recent Student Services

³ Rt Hon David Willetts, 7 April 2014 Written statement to Parliament Higher education: student support: changes to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/higher-education-student-support-changes-to-disabled-students-allowances-dsa>

Matrix Assessment Report⁴ which stated *“Another area identified during the Assessment and already recognised by SSS, is the introduction of a more formalised and consistent observation process for delivery staff across SSS, as a quality measure to inform good practice and any areas for development linked to the staff appraisal process. Peer observations are being considered as a way forward in this.”*

Many processes and procedures now in use within ALS has been reviewed, changed or developed since 2011. There are now Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for every role; these SOPs reduce risk in cases of staff absence and are quality assured and monitored for appraisals, staff development and service management activities. However, further development is required to refine the SOPs to accommodate process changes that will arise from these proposals as well as capturing any external changes ensuring that the services provided are robust and consistent.

It is also recognised that our current administration systems could be enhanced in a number of ways. Currently tutors are spending time updating IT systems (myALN), utilising time which could be used for engaging with students. Invoicing for DSA involves a substantial number of checks and balances and a process review has recently been carried out in an attempt to make better use of administrators’ time. There is a departmental imperative that administrative processes will continually be reviewed to ensure that only necessary administration is being undertaken by the service in the most effective manner and by the person/team best placed to do this.

3.6 Engaging with academic colleagues to enhance ALS support

Communications with the Faculties have been professionalised and it is now established that ALS works with academics in the support of disabled students; however this partnership working needs to be developed further. Detailed handbooks on Disability Impacts and Reasonable Adjustments, DSA Implications and other supportive documents have been written for the Faculties and they are available for the academics to download from the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures (ARPPs). Staff awareness training on disability impacts, reasonable (and unreasonable) adjustments and the neuropsychology of SpLDs is available either through Organisational Development (OD) or bespoke sessions to suit each Faculty.

3.7 Financial Sustainability

To ensure a financially viable service there is a need to ensure that ALS services are adapting to the support needs of BU students and that BU is providing the support expected by the Government through its DSA funding. This requires a reduction in the note taking support for mild-impact SpLDs, which will cease to be funded as a stand-alone activity with the expectation that technology will be used in the future. DSA funding for note taking will continue to be available for students with complex disabilities, co-occurring conditions and high-impact SpLDs. It will also continue to be available for tuition and mentoring support, the latter being clearly defined as mental health, autistic spectrum conditions or study skills. ALS needs to ensure that management and administration are effective, sanctioning a detailed understanding of costs in this area with the ability to reclaim the funding in a timely fashion in line with the financial strategic enablers of BU 2018⁵

Although not a primary driver for the review, it is recognised that staff costs must be managed effectively and consideration has been given to the impact on overall staff numbers and budget impact resulting from these proposals. The proposed changes set out in this document would result in a number of posts no longer being required, and new posts at a different grade being introduced. The overall impact is a reduction in 1.5 FTE across the service and a saving of c£45,000.

⁴ Assessment Report for Bournemouth University Student Support Services On behalf of EMQC, Jan 2015 at <I:\Student Support Services\Private\Matrix 2014\Matrix Success\005# 23 02 15 Bournemouth Final Report.pdf>

⁵ F1: Use resources efficiently to secure the vision and key strategic priorities, F2: to ensure financial sustainability

3.8 Summary of Proposal Aims and Expected Benefits

In developing the proposals for change set out in this document, the following factors have been taken into consideration as a baseline:

- Ensuring that the service is designed to meet increasingly complex student needs
- Developing students as independent learners and empowering them to take responsibility for their own support arrangements
- Addressing the requirements under the Equality Act relating to the political demands of HEIs in terms of inclusivity
- ALS support in synergy with the Faculties' active learning frameworks and improved collaboration with Faculties
- One point of contact with each team for both students and staff, dependent on the query
- Ensuring the best use of technology is made both for student support and for the administration of the department
- Retaining existing staff knowledge, skills and experience with opportunities for further development and maximising staff expertise
- Retaining the considerable commitment amongst ALS staff to BU and to ALS itself
- Addressing changes in service provision identified by the Events Scheduling Review, assumptions made by government and internal process reviews
- Addressing the weaknesses in the current management structure and lack of succession planning
- Future service resilience
- Efficiency savings and cost reductions of 1.5 FTE and c£45,000
- Development of the behaviours needed to embed service excellence further

4. Links to BU 2018

The proposals outlined in this consultation link to

C1: Delivering an outstanding and personalised student experience (*3.1 Meeting changing student needs and 3.2 Developing a student centred approach*)

S3: Offer exceptional levels of relevant real world learning opportunities and placements (*3.3 Developing independent learners*)

S4: Deliver inspirational teaching using the latest technology in world-class facilities (*3.4 Increased use of technology*)

I1: Prepare students for flexible futures with skills to meet changing demands of work (*3.3 Developing Independent Learners*)

I3: Create highly sought after employable graduates known for their intellectual rigour, critical thinking, professionalism and resilience (*3.3 Developing independent learners*)

It also addresses the requirement to meet the strategic enablers of people, environment and finance.

5. Staff Engagement

Meetings with sections of ALS staff are held on a regular basis, often weekly. ALS has been informed of the Student Journey Project at appropriate intervals from both the Head of Student Services and ALS management whenever communications have been issued corporately. One member of staff has been directly involved in the Events Scheduling review. During 2013, ALS was invited to meet with SJP staff to participate in the earlier stages of information gathering. ALS also has a weekly Whole Picture email sent out by management that contains updates and important information for staff.

Following the Ministerial announcement on 7 April 2014, a full ALS staff meeting was called to explain the proposed cuts to DSA funding. The content of this presentation was, and continues to be, available to all members of staff. Subsequently, at regular staff meetings mention has been made of the progress in the DSA funding changes as they directly affect the daily business of ALS.

During March and April 2015, specific ALS engagement sessions were held to gain staff input on the current overall landscape and staff were asked to comment and make suggestions on the support provided to students, the funding challenges and how ALS could be structured to provide the most effective and efficient student experience. The presentation and questions and comments raised have been made available to all staff with further opportunity for comment either via email to the ALS Manager and HR Manager or the opportunity for a one to one with the ALS Manager. Staff suggestions and comments have been taken into consideration in these proposals. See Appendix C for ALS Staff Feedback from Engagement Sessions.

Most recently (12 – 21 May 2015) a series of process improvement workshops was held with representatives from each of the current teams within ALS. These workshops identified a number of process improvements which would be facilitated by the proposals in this document.

ALS staff are invited to a meeting with Christine Scholes (ALS Manager) and Clare Clayton (Human Resources Manager) on 8th June to hear about the proposals. ALS staff are also invited to attend any of the Open Meetings scheduled for 11th June, 16th June and 24th June to feedback their thoughts and ask any questions to Christine Scholes, Clare Clayton and Mandi Barron (Head of Student Services). UCU and Unison representatives have also been invited to these meetings. All BU staff are invited to feedback on the consultation proposals which can be found on the I Drive at <I:\Student Support Services\Public\ALS Consultation>

6. Current Structure

6.1 Current Posts

ALS currently comprises 28.41 FTE, with a salary cost of £844,298 for the 2015/16 budget. The current departmental structure is listed in the Table below and in Appendix A. The current structure is based around a number of staff teams providing different services, both student-facing and back-office, all of whom reporting to the ALS Manager and Deputy Manager. This has led to over-stretched management and a lack of coordination and accountabilities in some areas.

Current Post Job Title	Current FTE	Grade
ALS Manager	1.0	N8
ALS Deputy Manager	1.0	N6
ALS Tutor (Assessor)	1.2	N6
ALS Tutor	9.65	N5
ALS Technical Co-ordinator	1.0	N4
ALS Administrator	1.0	N4
ALS Student Advisor	3.5	N3
Administration Assistant	1.0	N2
ALS Advisory Support Assistant	0.56	N2
Learning Support Assistants	8.5	N2
Total	28.41	

6.2 Staff not in the Establishment

It should also be noted that student support changes on an annual basis depending on the number of students with particular disabilities and conditions who enrol at the university each year. To

manage this fluctuating demand the service employs a number of staff on a Part-Time Hourly Paid basis. The funding for this staff pool is generally reimbursable from the Disabled Students' Allowances. There are no plans to change this approach.

7. Proposed Changes

ALS is currently structured with four distinct teams comprising Student Advisers, Tutors, Technical Co-ordinator and LSAs, and Administration. For reasons set out in this document this structure does not best meet the needs of the student, or indeed the Faculties in supporting their students. The proposed new student journey through ALS is mapped out in Appendix 2 and identifies how new multidisciplinary teams will work together, ensuring student-centred support. The new specialist teams will be supported by an enhanced management structure that will incorporate responsibility for all aspects of the service. More information about each of these changes is provided below.

7.1 Summary of significant changes to existing roles in the current ALS team

7.1.1 Proposed revised role of ALS Deputy Manager

It is proposed that the role of Deputy Manager is renamed as Operations Manager bringing together responsibility for all administration within the department including moving some administrative tasks currently carried out by specialist teams under this remit. This post will also be responsible for producing the enhanced management information required to ensure the whole department is working effectively, to oversee and manage all financial processes and department budgets including being accountable for timely invoicing to reclaim external funding for support.

7.1.2 Proposed revised role of ALS Tutor

It is proposed that ALS Specialist Tutors assume some management responsibilities including allocating, managing and appraising the mentors and note takers supporting students, and facilitating a tutor-led interdisciplinary team approach. To expedite this it is proposed that some administrative tasks currently carried out by this role will move to the Student Coordinator and Administration Assistant roles. Specialist Tutors will continue to deliver one to one tuition as well as enhance the partnership with Faculties. It is proposed that the ALS Tutor job description is revised to reflect these changes.

7.1.3 Proposed revised role of ALS Student Advisers

The role of Student Adviser has changed significantly since it was introduced in 2011. Originally anticipated as dealing mainly with general enquiries, it has been necessary for staff in this role to take on broader duties to respond to changes in the service. It is proposed that this role could add further value to the service by taking on other tasks currently being carried out by Tutors, thus freeing up the time of the latter to be more student facing. It is therefore proposed that the job description for Student Advisor is revised to reflect this.

7.1.4 Proposal for the ALS Technical Coordinator role

As outlined in Section 3, the Events Scheduling Review recommended that students should become responsible for liaising directly with any note taking support. It is proposed that this recommendation is accepted and this, coupled with the proposed move to a tutor-led multidisciplinary team focussed around the student, would diminish the requirement for the Technical Coordinator role. It is therefore proposed that this role be made redundant.

7.1.5 Proposal for the ALS Administrator role

The purpose and responsibilities of the Administrator role are no longer viable as they have changed since the current job description (dated 2011) was introduced in 2011. The role is accountable to

the Head of Operations, which is a post that does not exist anymore since Student and Academic Services (SAS) changed to Student Services (SS) and Academic Services (AS) in September 2013. The job description as it is currently configured does not meet the needs of the service as many of the duties and responsibilities are no longer required including the line management responsibilities. Liaison with Student Administration for exams has developed into a more complex process than hitherto envisaged. The process now involves not only information exchange on student adjustments but also a daily presence throughout all exam periods, both on and off campus, to proactively manage student adjustments and Faculty expectations for last minute arrangements. Moreover, matters relating to some administrative duties such as the pthp contracts have been attended to by SS Admin since 2013 along with general administrative tasks. Due to the diminished duties in the job description, it is proposed that this role be made redundant.

7.1.6 Proposal for ALS Advisory Support Assistant role

This role was originally intended to support the ALS Advisors and ALS Tutors providing administrative and customer-focussed assistance regarding student activity. Over time it has become apparent that the service requires a role which is more focussed on administrative tasks supporting not only advisers and tutors but also ALS Management and ALS Admin. With the proposals to reconfigure the ALS administration overall, this role as originally intended and defined on the job description no longer meets the needs of the service. It is therefore proposed that this role be made redundant.

7.1.7 Proposal for the Learning Support Assistant (LSA) Role

The main aim of this role is to provide note taking as well as some study skills and coaching. LSAs also carry out practical assistance for students who have mobility issues, and exam reading and scribing as appropriate.

The proposal is that ALS focuses on empowering students through an enabling active learning framework, delivered via a partnership model within BU. The proposal also details the need to make improvements around the provision of notes, assisting students to utilise technology and take responsibility for arranging their own learning support.

Given the diminished duties and the post being no longer required to undertake work of a particular kind, it is proposed that this role be made redundant.

7.2 Summary of proposed new posts

7.2.1 Proposal for the creation of a new post of Mentor

The proposed new structure proposes three definitive specialist mentoring roles. Although some Learning Support Assistants are currently offering mentoring support, this needs to be formalised to meet the changing needs of students as outlined above and to recognise the importance of this work. It is proposed that three different mentoring roles are introduced into the service, the number of each being dependent on the student population at any one time.

- Specialist Mental Health Mentors: the number of students presenting with mental health difficulties has been steadily rising. BU has an above sector average of students in this category
- Specialist Mentors supporting students with autistic spectrum conditions (ASC): in line with the political changes (particularly the Children and Families Act 2014), the role is identified as specialist and ASC students are described as vulnerable. Members of staff have been offered the opportunity to acquire skills in this area over the past year due to the increasing need. Not only has BU an increasing number of ASC students who require specialist support but also academic staff are requesting support in understanding the impact of ASC on the students' learning and assessment.

- Study Skills Mentors: working with students who have complex disabilities, sensory/physical impairments and severe medical conditions.

For the purposes of this consultation it is estimated that for 2015/16 there should be 2 FTE Mental Health Mentors, 2 FTE ASC Mentors and 2 FTE Study Skills Mentors.

7.2.2 Proposal for the creation of a new post of Note Taker

The creation of the Specialist Mentor role proposed in 7.2.1 would embed all mentoring activities into specialist posts. As noted in Section 3, the need for note-taking will significantly reduce over the next 12–18 months. However, note-taking will still be required by students who are currently in receipt of this type of support until they finish their courses; and also, any new students who cannot physically take their own notes, students with complex communication difficulties, and students with severe-impact SpLDs will continue to require note taking support. It is therefore proposed that a specific role of Note Taker (2FTE) is created.

7.2.3 Proposal for the creation of a new post of Administration Assistant

ALS has relied upon significant PTHP administration support to cope with the growth in student numbers and the increasing complexity in DSA processing. It is proposed that an additional 1.5 FTE Administration Assistant post is created on a substantive basis to cope with this demand.

8. Proposed Posts

The proposed service structure is listed in the Table below and in Appendix A Current and Proposed Structures

Proposed Job Title	Current FTE	Grade
ALS and Disability Services Manager	1.0	N8
ALS Operations Manager	1.0	N6
ALS Tutor-Assessor	1.2	N6
ALS Specialist Tutor	9.65	N6
ALS Mentor	6.0	N4
ALS Student Coordinator	3.5	N4
ALS Administration Assistant	2.56	N2
ALS Notetaker	2.0	N2
Total	26.91	

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for each role is provided at [I:\Student Support Services\Collaborative\ALS Consultation\Job Descriptions](#)

9. Impact

Under the proposals a number of current posts will no longer be required, a number of new posts will be created and some current posts will have their duties updated. This includes the following:

New Posts

- ALS Mentor
- ALS Note-taker
- ALS Administration Assistant

Revised Posts

- ALS Manager
- ALS Operations Manager
- ALS Specialist Tutor
- ALS Student Coordinator

No longer required:

- ALS Administrator
- ALS Technical Coordinator
- ALS Learning Support Assistants

The impact of each post and proposed actions are listed below

Current Post Job Title	Current FTE	Grade	Proposed New Post	Proposed FTE	Grade
ALS Manager	1.0	N8	ALS and Disability Services Manager Job description revised and updated	1	N8
ALS Deputy Manager	1.0	N6	ALS Operations Manager Job role revised and updated - As duties of the current role and proposed role closely match and it seems there are no individuals at risk who would have prior consideration for this role, exceptionally it is proposed that the current role holder will be slotted into this post.	1	N6
ALS Tutor Assessor	1.2	N6	ALS Tutor Assessor No Change	1.2	N6
ALS Tutor	9.65	N5	ALS Specialist Tutor Job role updated - As duties of the current role and proposed role	9.65	N6

			<p>closely match and it seems there are no individuals at risk who would have prior consideration for this role, exceptionally it is proposed that the current role holder will be slotted into this post.</p>		
ALS Technical Coordinator	1.0	N4	<p>Post no longer required Current post holder potentially at risk of redundancy</p>		
ALS Administrator	1.0	N4	<p>Post no longer required Current post holder potentially at risk of redundancy</p>		
ALS Student Advisor	3.5	N3	<p>ALS Student Coordinator - As there is a significant match between the duties of the current role and proposed role exceptionally it is proposed that the current role holders will be slotted into this post.</p>	3.5	N4
ALS Administration Assistant	1.0	N2	<p>ALS Administration Assistant Job role updated</p>	1.00	N2
ALS Advisory Support Assistant	0.56	N2	<p>This post is no longer required. Current post holder potentially at risk of redundancy.</p>		
Learning Support Assistants	8.5	N2	<p>These posts are no longer required. Current post holders potentially at risk of redundancy.</p>		
Total	28.41			17.35	

New posts under this Proposal	Proposed FTE	Proposed Grade
ALS Specialist Mentor	6 FTE	N4
ALS Note Taker	2 FTE	N2
ALS Administration Assistant	1.56 FTE	N2
	9.56	

Staff not in the Establishment

There are no plans to change the current approach and funding for PTHP one-to-one support staff will remain in the budget as in previous years.

10. Proposed Process for Implementation

Comments and suggestions on any part of these proposals are very welcome and should be sent to alsconsultation@bournemouth.ac.uk any time but not later than 4pm on 7 July 2015 when the consultation will close.

These proposals will be circulated to all ALS staff and at [I:\Student Support Services\Public\ALS Consultation\Consultation documents](#). Frequently asked questions are available at [I:\Student Support Services\Public\ALS Consultation\FAQs](#) and the Equality Impact Assessment is at [I:\Student Support Services\Public\ALS Consultation\Equality Impact Assessment](#).

Copies of all job descriptions are available to ALS staff at [I:\Student Support Services\Collaborative\ALS Consultation\Job Descriptions](#)

Individuals who hold posts that are directly affected by these proposals will be invited to a meeting with the ALS Manager, Head of Student Services and a representative from Human Resources to discuss the proposals. Individuals have the right to be accompanied at these meetings by a work colleague or recognised member of a Trade Union.

BU will undertake to ensure that prior consideration is given for suitable alternative employment within the organisation. The slotting in and prior consideration process can be found at Appendix D.

11. Voluntary Severance

In accordance with the University's Code of Practice-Redundancy, it is the aim wherever possible to avoid compulsory redundancies and, where avoidance is not possible, to take reasonable steps to mitigate the effect as far as is practically possible. Staff affected by these proposals are invited on a without commitment basis and without prejudice, to the final outcome of the consultation to express interest in voluntary severance.

When considering applications for voluntary severance the main criteria will be:

- The need to sustain staffing resource and skill levels to support existing and proposed posts and structure
- Financial implications

Should any member of staff identified as potentially at risk wish to explore voluntary severance on a confidential basis, please contact Clare Clayton, HR Manager cclayton@bournemouth.ac.uk

12. Proposed Consultation Timeline**June 2015**

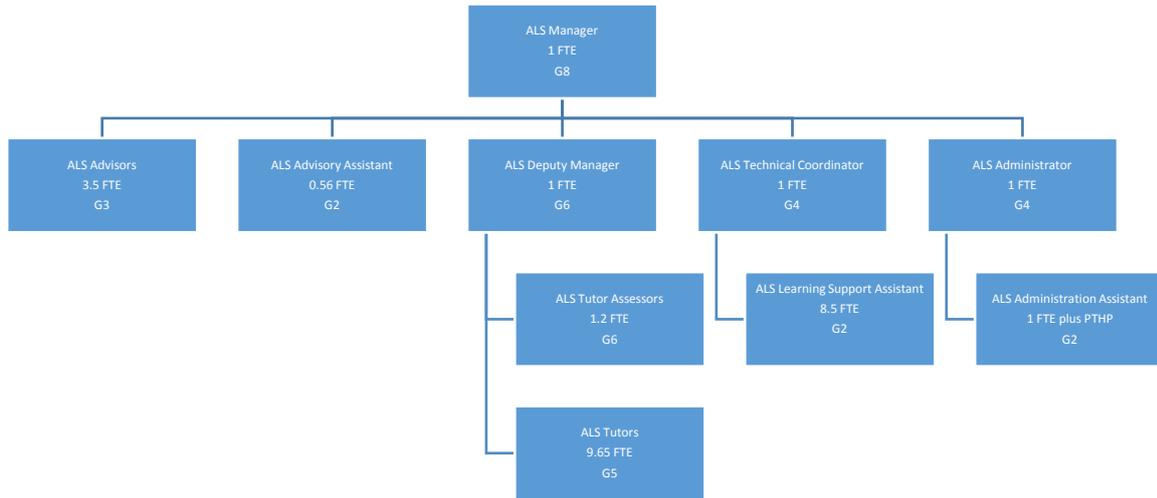
It is expected that changes will be implemented in time for the 2015-16 academic year.

Stage	Effective Date	Deadline/End Date	Activity
1	8 June 2015		Proposals to ALS staff to include all Appendices. Trades Union representative consultation. Open Meetings
2	11 June, 16 June and 24 June 2015		Open Meetings with Head of Student Services, ALS Manager and Human Resources Manager
3		7 July 2015	Consultation closes 4pm 7 July 2015
4	8 July 2015	14 July 2015	Review of Feedback by Mandi Barron and Christine Scholes
5	15 July 2015	17 July 2015	Subject to the outcome of the consultation process and having made any amendments as appropriate as a result of comments and suggestions, the revised/final proposal to be submitted to Jim Andrews, Chief Operating Officer
6	20 July 2015		Final decision announced. Feedback summary to be circulated to all ALS staff and Trades Union representative
7	W/C 20 July 2015	24 July 2015	Confirmation of Post letters sent to staff who slot into the roles along with a copy of their new Job Description
8	W/C 20 July 2015	24 July 2015	At Risk letters sent to staff affected that will include details of the new posts and the application process
9	W/C 3 August 2015		Prior consideration recruitment and selection process for those at risk
10	August 2015		Outcome of the appointment process announced as and when posts are appointed
11	August 2015		In the event that staff are not appointed to posts identified within the new ALS structure, nor is suitable alternative employment available, the Head of Student Services will propose redundancies to the Chief Operating Officer. Staff affected will be given the opportunity to make representations in accordance with the Code of Practice-Redundancy
12	August 2015		Redundancy notices to be issued to unsuccessful candidates and those who did not apply for the new posts. The notices will include notifications of the right of appeal and details of redeployment
13	August 2015		Where appropriate, any unfilled posts in the appended staff structure will be advertised externally
14	September 2015		The new ALS structure to be implemented

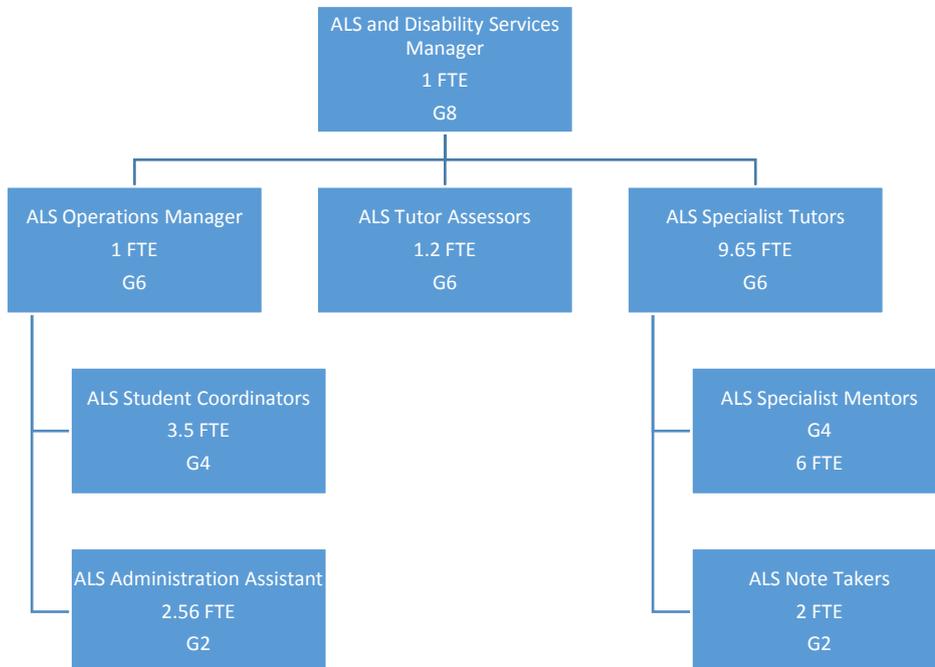
APPENDIX A

Current and Proposed Staffing Structure

Current Structure **Total 28.41 FTEs**



Proposed Structure: **Total 26.91 FTE**



APPENDIX B

The Student Journey through ALS

Prospective or Current Student



Students with specific learning differences (SpLDs) eg dyslexia, dyspraxia; Autistic Spectrum conditions; medical conditions; mental health difficulties; sensory or physical impairments; or any condition that has a substantial adverse effect on a student's ability to carry out normal, day-to-day activities that has lasted for 12 months and is likely to last for 12 months or more; temporary injuries and pregnant students requiring exam adjustments.

Specific Guidance from Student Co-ordinators 01202 965663 or call in offices DLG17 or S214.

Exam queries, DSA checking and assessment booking, SpLD Screening and initial assessments, liaison for car parking permits and specific accommodation requirements, Psychologists diagnostic appointments, disability evidence checks, First Appointment with Specialist Tutor, temporary injuries, late exam adjustments

Information and Advice from the BU website (Futures and Student Portal), ESD/askBU, alsBlog, prospectuses, Open Days, Library, direct from Student Co-ordinators 01202 965663, als@bournemouth.ac.uk, or call in DLG17 at Talbot or S214 at Lansdowne

One to one appointment with a **Specialist Tutor** to put an individual programme (ILP) in place with set goals and targets for achievement. Each Tutor will lead a team of **Specialist Mentors** and **NTs** and each member of the team will support students according to the impacts of their learning difference or disability on learning and assessment. Each team will ensure students are empowered and enabled to achieve their goals through an active learning framework, scaffolding and metacognitive processes

Advice Note sent to Faculties on the impact of students' conditions on learning and assessment with recommendations for reasonable adjustments, placement support and exam adjustments

Collaborative working with Faculties and relevant partners and HE agencies: Library, Careers & Employability, SUBU, Grow@BU, Academic Services, Residential Services, SportBU, SEWS Estates, external agencies, Assessment Centres, Student Loans Company etc.

Action Plan for Placement arranged and Employer Guidelines sent to Workplace mentors or employers

APPENDIX C

ALS Feedback from Engagement Sessions held in March and April

Questions from ALS Pre-Consultation Engagement Sessions

Thank you to everyone who attended one of the four engagement sessions which focussed on the support provided to students, the funding challenges we have to face and how ALS could be structured to provide the most effective and efficient student experience. We had some useful and interesting debates and many helpful suggestions.

In some cases responses were given to the questions asked and comments made during the engagement sessions and in other cases via return email as they came in. All points captured from the engagement sessions will be reflected upon and addressed either prior to, or during the consultation period.

- Is a direct relationship between student and note-taker practical?
Yes it is. It is also an expectation arising from both BIS and BU's requirement for more student independence and responsibility for their learning.
- Should we be making changes until we have a final picture of the DSA changes for students with dyslexia, mild or otherwise?
There is a time element to facilitating changes so proactively preparing and managing expectations is good practice in forward planning.
- How do we define mild?
In the context of the Ministerial statement (please refer to Appendix A in the Consultation Paper), 'mild' refers to the *impact* of dyslexia on a student's learning. The sub context refers to HEIs employing inclusive practices so that students with mild dyslexia can manage their learning without the need for specialist support.
- Would it make sense to delay changes until final announcements are made?
There is a specified timescale to facilitate the changes laid down by BIS so delay is not good management of expectations. The final announcements won't really make any substantial differences to the overall context.
- Can we have some clarification of 'double funding' i.e. digital recorder or note-taker?
'Double funding' refers to funding for a NMH note taker and funding for assistive technology ie a digital recorder. It is now no longer possible to carry on doing this for SpLDs. It is expected that digital recorders will be used by SpLD students. Sensory/physically/medically impaired students will be able to continue with both, depending on the severity of their condition.
- Are students going to be able to engage to organise their own support for lectures?
Students in the main are, and should be, able to engage but some will require support to enable them to learn how to do this effectively. New students' expectations will be easier to manage than current students who have invariably learnt the current procedures and will have to unlearn them in order to learn the new ones.

- What is the timescale between process starting and new roles in place?
There will be a detailed timescale included in the consultation document.
- Have efficiencies been made at management level?
It is recognised that the current way ALS is managed in terms of structure and numbers of managers could be more efficient. The line management structure will be reflected on and proposals will be put forward.
- Will there be a rationalisation of zero hour contracts?
We do not have any zero hour contracts. We have part-time hourly paid contracts that may continue to be required to address student need, which can fluctuate throughout the year. We cannot predict the levels of support required so there will continue to be a need for flexibility within the service.
- Why do we not use the expertise in this group to move forward?
The expertise of all staff has been considered.
- Can we specialise in areas of disability?
ALS already has staff who specialise in particular areas of disability skills and knowledge and the expectation is that this will develop further.
- How can we be more effective at engaging with students?
Effective engagement with students starts with communication strategies. The critical starting point is building up a spirit of trust and once this has been achieved, students will engage. These strategies have been, and will continue to be, deployed.
- How do we ensure consistent support from volunteers?
Consistent support from volunteers depends on the nature of how volunteers are sought. ALS will be negotiating with SUBU and staff around BU to determine how we can make this work.
- Can we have more exposure to schools/faculties?
Liaising with staff in Faculties has been a constant modus operandi for a few years now and is an embedded part of collaborative working. If by exposure, the meaning is more about disability awareness, then a programme of staff training opportunities is established with Organisational Development for academics and other staff to attend.
- Can we offer workshops to faculties/schools to deliver culture change?
Yes, workshops are offered and papers have been written for UET and ULT that outline the impact of BIS changes (see Appendix A).
- Can we contact course leaders directly?
Depending on the nature of the concern, yes, this is possible. Tutors already contact course leaders so it may be appropriate to liaise within ALS before contacting anyone to avoid duplication.

- Can we share the ILP with Course Leaders to address non-attendance?
Yes. It is good practice to share documentation around student support so that the course leader has the full picture and can address concerns accordingly.
- What is being done to encourage students to take more responsibility for their own learning?
Strategies being used by the tutors in the ALS active learning framework, and the metacognitive techniques employed, play a definitive part in encouraging students to develop self-responsibility.
- Shouldn't the LSAs be engaging with students already asking them what they want?
Yes, they should.
- Students now use mobile phones for recording so how long before digital recorders are phased out?
It's too early to say but they will be around for the foreseeable future.
- Do we know if the note taking will be just cut off or be phased off?
There is an expectation that it will be phased out for mild-impact SpLDs. It will continue for students with complex difficulties, severe-impact SpLDs and disabilities that prevent students from taking their own notes.
- 'Positive Minds' can be used to support mental health difficulties
Yes, it could. There are a number of strategies that could be used. There are pockets of interest in mental health around the university and it is the intention to link in with them for further ideas and collaborative working.
- Can we tap into PAL Leaders more?
This can certainly be looked into.
- Should we go back to the schools to determine if some students are fit for studying at HE?
If by this the meaning is about fitness to study, then yes, by all means liaise with the Faculty. The decision on further action lies with the Faculty so as much information that can possibly be shared is important.
- Do the schools interview students before recruitment to see if they can manage at HE?
Some students are interviewed, some are not. Recruitment practices vary across the Faculties.
- Could we train academics to identify issues early and refer to ALS?
This is already in practice. However, the training is self-selected so this is a continuing work in progress.
- We should be encouraging students to question what to do more
Questioning is the basis of the active learning framework and metacognitive processes.

- Can we screen all students for SpLDs in Inductions?
This concept has been discussed many times and is still an on-going discussion mainly because there are implications to mass screening in terms of meeting demand. It has not been ruled out but it is too early to say if this will happen.
- Could there be automatic triggers to refer to ALS if students get below certain marks?
ALS will be looking at opportunities for this within the SITS system.
- When will SITS be in place?
It's too early to say but conversations are continuing and as soon as more information becomes available, this will be disseminated.
- In-house support for assistive technology...can we do more of this?
Yes. There are plans for further staff development in assistive technology.
- Need site licences for Audio Note Taker, Dragon, Mindview
This requirement is in the Student Services IT Delivery Plan for 2015-16.
- We understand the current LSA role will go and be replaced by mentors. Will hours be the same or be reduced?
This is something that needs to be looked at.
- Will this be from September?
The current intention is that any proposed recruitment should be finished and posts filled by September in readiness for the new academic year. However, it is possible that timescales may change.
- Surely this will mean a reduction in the Department? Even those who support high needs students at the moment still rely on note taking to make up their hours.
Posts and hours will be demand-led so it depends on how many students will require support in the specific areas.
- One way we could work is to engage directly with students and go to lectures they have difficulties with, otherwise work through their digital recordings, make sure they are making the most use of recorders and coach them in note taking skills. Will this support be funded?
Yes it will if the student fulfils the DSA criteria. The support will still be given to non-DSA funded students if their disability warrants it.
- How many mentors will there be?
This is something that needs to be reflected on and will be part of any proposals.
- How does the funding work? What will the budget be?
Students entitled to DSA or the NHS DSA receive an allocation by the DSA Needs Assessor. More information on how they do this can be found on the Student Loans Company web

site, the ALS i-drive and the NHS DSA web pages. The DSA budget is based on predictions and trends for each successive year.

- Will there be a person responsible for co-ordinating the teams?
There will be a proposed structure chart that forms part of the consultation document.
- Do we have to have mentoring experience to apply for a mentor role?
The criteria for any proposed posts will be outlined in the Job Descriptions and Person Specifications as part of the consultation document.
- It is difficult to run note taking and mentoring in parallel. Will we always need some staff to carry out note taking for those fewer students that receive it?
Student demand will reflect the numbers of staff that will be required.
- Should we have some sort of Student Engagement Contract? Otherwise we have many students not engaging and perhaps after a certain number of sessions missed the support is withdrawn? Is this fair if poor organisation is an impact of their condition?
Yes, it is proposed that ALS will introduce a Student Engagement Contract. The 15-16 DSA Guidance confirms that financial support may be suspended where there are two or more missed sessions per term. Attendance and punctuality are employability skills so must be developed if students are to succeed in the workplace.
- Are you going to split the proposed hours over all the staff or reduce the number of jobs?
This is something that will be reflected on and will form part of the consultation document.
- Will there be an opportunity for voluntary redundancy?
This is something that will be reflected on and may form part of the consultation document.
- Who will allocate the work?
There will be a proposed structure chart that forms part of the consultation document..
- If the post is upgraded, will a teaching qualification be required?
A teaching qualification will only be required if the role includes teaching.
- Are both PTHP and established contracts in the proposed structure?
Yes, established posts and a proposal for some PTHP staff will be part of the overall proposed ALS structure.
- Many of the suggested changes of this review are in response to proposed changes in funding coming down from the government. As this new legislation is still unclear and not finalised it is premature of us to be making drastic changes to departmental structure and policies, especially with a general election set to potentially alter things further. We're making changes knowing that we may need to make further changes in a year or so. Any period of change is hugely stressful and demotivating to staff, especially if dragged out over such a long period. It would be better to postpone this review until the decisions at the governmental level are finalised.

As with all organisations, it is important and appropriate to proactively understand and prepare for the future. Although some elements are unknown, there have been clear high level indications of how the funding changes will be implemented and how the changing expectations of students will be supported. It is important to anticipate the future and managing expectations is good practice in forward planning. There has been clarification from BIS; it is only a few minor points that are outstanding but these will not affect the overall proposed changes.

- Due to lack of staff availability, we aren't managing to cover all note taking sessions every week at present. With mentoring on the increase, even if note taking decreases further, we will potentially need more LSAs, not less.

These comments are noted and this is being looked into.

- Expecting students with disabilities to use a voice recorder instead of note taking is overlooking the great difficulty this presents for those students. Anyone who has tried to decipher a voice recording from a noisy lecture will know how difficult and long-winded it is to do. To attempt this with one or more learning differences is even harder. This greatly disadvantages students with disabilities who then have to spend far longer trying to make sense of the recordings they get compared to the time an "average" student might need. For the students' sake, I would rather see an improvement to the way that note taking is done rather than it being reduced or replaced.

This is a complex situation which requires thought, however, this will be looked into in terms of the ways note making can be carried out (as a follow-up to the previous sessions on this). There needs to be a balance between providing students with the assistance they need and the requirement for the University to enable students to take greater responsibility for their learning.

- It is not really fair that the LSAs will be on holiday during the consultation period. This will make it that much harder for them to engage and feed into the process. The deadlines should be put back to allow better feedback.

Although the timescales are tight, it is important to enable discussions as soon as possible. It is intended that the consultation starts on 1 June and there will be opportunities for one to one and open meetings as early as possible after this date.

APPENDIX D

Slotting in and Prior Consideration Process

1. Introduction

As a result of the proposal presented for consultation, a number of posts are potentially at risk of redundancy. These have been identified within the table listing all current and proposed future posts within the structure. Within the proposal are also a number of new posts, job descriptions and grades are included. There are also a number of roles which it is proposed require a slight re-focussing of the role in order to ensure a flexible workforce is created which fits the needs of ALS into the future. When conducting the slotting in and prior consideration process, where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made for individuals who are subject to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act.

It should be noted that the principles apply to substantive roles as opposed to roles that staff may be currently acting up, or seconded into.

The following process will apply.

2. General Principles

Job descriptions have been updated to reflect the requirements of the roles in accordance with BU2018 and the needs of the service. Where the duties of the current roles closely match those of the new roles, it is proposed that post holders be slotted in. These have been highlighted in the table.

Subject to final approval, and depending upon the nature of the final proposals, staff will (as appropriate) be notified that they are either formally at risk from redundancy or slotted into a new role. At the same time, the new job opportunities (where there is no slotting) created by the proposal will proceed to recruitment on a prior consideration basis.

3. What is slotting?

This means that there is a close match (that is the clear majority of the existing role aligns with the duties in the new role) and the post is normally at the same grade. In these cases post holders (who will have been previously notified) will be automatically 'slotted in' to a specified role.

4. When will slotting occur?

Slotting will only occur after the final proposals have been decided and the timing of will be agreed on an individual basis but taking account of the proposed recruitment process that may affect the slotted post.

5. What is Prior consideration?

Where a member(s) of staff is at risk from redundancy, suitable vacancies (posts at the same grade or one grade below) will be made known to them. If the staff member(s) meets (or appears very close to meeting) the essential criteria of the person specification then they will be given prior consideration for interview and a decision made on their application(s) first. Specifically this will refer to the vacant posts in ALS but equally applies to any other vacancies which may exist across the University.

You will be invited to express interest in vacant posts normally at the same grade or one grade below your existing substantive post on a prior consideration basis. If your knowledge, skills and

attributes appear to meet the essential criteria of the person specification then you will be invited to interview.

6. How will prior consideration work?

There will be two tiers of prior consideration; the details of Tier 1 as they apply individually to you are attached. As a general principle the following will apply;

Prior Consideration for ALS vacancies:

- You have been notified that you are formally at risk from redundancy
- You are not proposed to be slotted into an alternative role
- Vacant posts at the same grade or one grade below are made available to you
- Exceptionally where significant elements (but not a clear majority) of your current role (now proposed redundant) are proposed in a new vacancy at one grade higher

7. Can a member of staff formally at risk from redundancy get prior consideration for a post at a higher grade?

As a normal principle the answer is no. However if there are significant elements of the staff's current role (now formally at risk of redundancy) in a proposed new vacancy then the University will allow for a member of staff to either be slotted in or have prior consideration for interview at a post at one grade higher. Staff proposed to be affected by this exception are notified in their individual attachment to this document.

8. Can staff who are proposed to be slotted apply for vacancies?

If you are to be slotted into a role at the same grade as your current role then you may not apply (on a prior consideration basis) to any vacancies. This is because redundancy does not apply.

9. Can staff be considered for vacancies on a prior consideration basis to posts at more than one grade below their current post?

The University would not normally recognise posts at two grades or more below a member of staff's current grade as suitable alternative employment for them. However should the member of staff wish to express a preference then this may be possible and will be subject to the normal rules of prior consideration (i.e. meeting the essential criteria of the person specification). Staff will need to notify HR of any post at two grades or more below their current post that they wish to be considered for to ensure that they are notified appropriately.

10. What are the Possible Timescales for the Recruitment?

- a) Applications will be based on the standard University application form with a covering letter. For those individuals applying for more than one post it is recommended that a single application form be provided but separate covering letters for each post which fit with the person specification and other information pertinent to the post.
- b) Short listing of applications will be conducted by the Panel based on the criteria set out in the person specification

Notes

- 1) Any person engaged on a fixed term contract will be included in this process.
- 2) Any new posts will be filled by competitive recruitment in the usual way. Current staff are, of course, able to apply for these posts.