**Objectives 2017/18 Research Assistants**

**PDS - Holly Lack**

Initially, I worked alongside DJ to improve the branding of the work newsletter and received positive feedback from the unit who were pleased with the new design. I feel my enthusiasm for art, and desire to complete tasks to a high standard, allowed me to improve the quality and standard of the template beyond its previous design. To gain entries from senior colleagues, I have ensured I send friendly but consistent emails requesting entries for the upcoming issues. Largely, this has been successful in gaining information from the relevant parties. However, when this has not worked due to seniors being very busy, I have taken the appropriate action and raised this issue. However, I have also shown sensitivity towards those who contribute through being aware of who is on annual or sick leave, and ensuring I don’t pursue them for entries where it is not necessary or appropriate, and could cause undue pressure or workload. In terms of listening to the views of others, I noticed during unit meetings and general office conversation, that well-being support was something people felt passionate about improving within the office. Therefore, I used the newsletter forum to react to this, and added a ‘wellbeing’ section. This has included well-being tips, and signposts the support available in the agency, such as the Well-being hub already available on the Intranet, which some of the unit were not previously aware of. I have also undertaken a creative role in improving the nature of its content in alignment with the unit’s needs. I have also focused on improving the interactive element of the Newsletter to improve people’s feelings of belonging to the unit, expanding who contributes to the content beyond just senior colleagues. Each issue has input from around four colleagues, on work-related topics such as their recent development event experiences, or more light-hearted contributions, such as a recipe suggestion. This examples good working relationships with colleagues as everyone is enthusiastic about getting involved. A good example is the December issue which saw contributions from 8 non-senior colleagues. I also liaised with a performance manager to organise the addition of a performance statistics page . This has been successful, and I have made an effort to ensure it is included in every issue through remaining in communication with the performance manager each month. I have also made an effort to be active in generating content myself, such as writing a piece about my own development visits.

**Newsletter: Collaborating and Partnering**

* Develop positive working relationships with team members/ colleagues and understand their viewpoints and preferences.
* Seek help when needed in order to complete own work effectively.
* Be open to taking on different roles.
* Listen to the views of others and show sensitivity towards others.

Developing a good relationship with other student. This has been really useful as it often highlights research relevant to SCAS which we may have not identified ourselves. I have also acted with initiative to ensure colleagues have easy access to necessary research. Including – liaising with seniors to unlock password protected research. Additionally, after multiple requests from colleagues asking for me to show them how to access research, I produced and disseminated an instruction sheet. This was well received and for many colleagues, this was the first time they had received this training. They felt this would be useful in the future, as it made accessing research articles much more efficient. I also took on the task of organising, updating and revamping a research log. This involved filling gaps in information and checking for irregularities in information by cross referencing existing information. This highlighted a few inconsistencies in information which I was able to correct. This process also displayed making effective decisions, as I has to format the spread sheet in a clear and organised manner. I received good feedback from the senior who said “Thanks for your work, it looks great – I know you have done a lot of work over the last few months to get it into this shape!”.

**Research updates**

**Making Effective Decisions**

* Make and record effective decisions following the appropriate decision making criteria or guidance.
* Asked questions when unsure what to do.
* Investigate and respond to gaps errors and irregularities in information.
* Speak up to clarify decisions and query these constructively.

I have managed news case updates effectively, within an alternating schedule between myself and the other student. Continued communication and flexibility between ourselves maximises the speed of relaying the information, and ensures consistent performance. For example, when the other student was on sick leave, I took on multiple weeks of doing the updates, above those listed on the schedule.

News general updates - taking on feedback from my line manager. I have reduced feedback. Also maintained the schedule through assessing work load capacity with DJ. I am always checking the news during the week for any relevant news stories or policy changes. This shows energy and enthusiasm for ensuring everyone in the unit is really up to date in the on-going discussions surrounding sexual offences and policing.

I have also relayed information to the unit about the CSE Referrals Bureau following my visit. I used my visit an opportunity to gather information about their work and then relayed this through a presentation in a unit meeting. I took responsibility for relaying this information professionally and in an interesting manner, producing a PowerPoint as a visual presentation aid. The presentation was well received and many in the unit said they appreciated learning about a unit of which they otherwise knew little about.

* To relay this information to the appropriate SCAS personnel in a timely fashion.

**Delivering at pace**

* Work in an organised manner using own knowledge and expertise to deliver on time and to standard.
* Take responsibility for the quality of own work and keep manager informed of how the work is progressed.
* Maintain consistent performance.
* Work with energy and pace to get the job done.

To compile the suggestions agenda effectively, I ensure deadlines sent out within reasonable time for everyone to consider and produce their suggestions. Yet I maintain flexibility with this deadline where appropriate. For example, a colleague was off sick on the deadline for submitting suggestions. I emailed them after the deadline letting them know they could still send a suggestion in as I was still compiling the agenda. They did have a suggestion, and were going to wait until the next meeting, but instead this suggestion could be included in the upcoming meeting.

To prevent attendance problems, I always check attendee’s calendars before scheduling the date of the meeting. I also schedule this multiple months in advance, to ensure attendees availability and time to re-schedule should this be needed. I have also supported the change to the suggestions meeting process. The agenda is now circulated to the unit prior to the meeting to allow people to input their views on the suggestions to their role rep. To implement this change effectively, upon sending out the suggestion submission deadline, I reminded everyone about this change and listed who the role reps are. This ensured everyone was aware of this new process and who to approach. I sent the agenda to the chair for review earlier than usual, aware that this needed to be completed in advance so that it could be sent to the unit a week before the meeting. In terms of minutes, DJ and I received positive feedback from senior about the professional standard of our minutes. Additionally, after talking to senior about how the VTC process works, I created an instruction document in the Research Assistant Suggestions Meeting folder with the procedure and codes needed to set this up in the future. This will ensure future students can set up the dial in process, without senior’s assistance, showing an ability to take ownership of improving existing processes.

**To schedule and organise the suggestions meeting on a quarterly basis.**

* To compile and circulate all items prior to the meeting to all relevant parties.
* To take accurate minutes of the meeting and circulate these within agreed timescales.

**Managing a quality service**

* Actively seek information from individuals to understand their needs and expectations.
* Act to prevent problems, reporting issues were necessary.
* Take ownership of issues, focus on providing the right solution and keep individuals and delivery partners up to date with progress.

My research project has involved logging information on various databases. For example, I’ve utilised information from crime reports. I have been granted responsibility for updating case databases used for analysis.

Visit to another partner office for which I received feedback from a senior that I had acted in a professional and respectful way.

**To assist with data entry on both ViCLAS and SID systems.**

To assist in the back record conversion of key question on the ViCLAS database where changes have been made to the database, and resolve data integrity issues when they are identified as directed by the Data Analyst.

To enter ACRO cases on the SID system on in an accurate and timely manner.

**Making Effective Decisions**

* Make and record effective decisions following the appropriate decision making criteria or guidance.
* Asked questions when unsure what to do.
* Investigate and respond to gaps errors and irregularities in information.
* Speak up to clarify decisions and query these constructively.

Managed a large dataset – including data integrity check. I communicated with colleagues to gain there support in filling gaps in my data set.

I have also been involved in the development of a performance statistics product for senior managers. I have utilised my Excel skills to produce graphs of unit performance. These improved upon the original draft through making the product more visually attractive and clearer to read. This has been well received by those higher up the chain and evidences suggesting new and innovative ways to display performance statistics. This has really improved my understanding of the bigger picture beyond my unit. Understand the makeup of the NIC and how performance reporting works up the chain. I have also gained specific insights into the other NIC units, including the work they receive, their output and the impact of their work, through handling their performance statistics.

**To manage and deliver projects within the agreed timetables, to a suitable standard.**

To complete a literature review of the given topic area, to design and implement a methodology and to produce a final product detailing the work completed.

The final report should demonstrate a good understanding of the topic researched, as well as the limitations found and should be produced to a high standard.

**Changing and improving**

* Learn new procedures, seek to exploit new technologies and help colleagues to do the same.
* Co-operate with and be open to the possibilities of change and consider ways to implement and adapt to change in own work role.
* Be positive about change, adapt rapidly to different ways of working and put effort into making them work.
* Be constructive in raising issues with managers about implemented changes and the impact these are having on the service.

**Leading and communicating**

* Put forward their own views in a clear and constructive manner, choosing an appropriate communication method.
* Act in a fair and respectful way in dealing with others.
* Write clearly in plain simple language and check work for spelling and grammar, learning from previous inaccuracies.
* Ask open questions to appreciate others’ point of view.
* Explain things well, focusing on the key points and talking to people using language they understand.

Supported case submissions and met agreed targets, and been flexible in taking on this role unscheduled. Senior - complimentary about the rearranging of my own work and showing of initiative in learning new processes that had been implemented - also noted that my work enabled the team to continue meeting its performance targets for processing cases, despite an influx. I always ensure procedures are followed correctly. Communication in a professional manner, sending emails to police forces re case papers. In terms of collaboration, if I notice the submissions team need my assistance when I am on the rota, I always email them reminding them that I am available to help, should submissions get busy throughout the day. This makes sure the team are aware of their resources and can maximise efficiency accordingly.

**Providing support to the SCAS administrative function.**