



THEORISE

**Applicant Information  
Pack**

## **Welcome to Theorise**

Theorise Ltd is an award-winning Edinburgh-based provider of specialist academic support services for students in further and higher education across Scotland.

We work with colleges, universities and funding bodies throughout the United Kingdom to provide high-quality Non-Medical Personal Help (NMPH) support tailored to individual student needs.

Our support staff play a vital role in helping students develop confidence, independence and the skills required to succeed within their studies.

Theorise has been recognised as Scotland's Recruitment Company of the Year and Scotland's Best Student Academic Support Provider across multiple consecutive years. We are proud of the reputation we have developed for providing high-quality support, excellent continuity of service and a professional yet approachable working environment for our support staff.

We understand that effective support is built upon strong relationships, professionalism, communication and consistency. We therefore place significant importance on recruiting high-quality individuals who are passionate about supporting students and making a meaningful difference within education.

As part of our commitment to both students and support staff, we aim to provide:

- Sector-leading rates of pay.
- Flexible working opportunities.
- Online and face-to-face support options.
- Ongoing support and guidance from our management team.
- Opportunities for continued professional development.
- A supportive and professional working environment.
- Strong continuity of student support.
- Clear communication and accessible systems.

Theorise is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. All successful applicants will be expected to share this commitment and work in accordance with Theorise safeguarding procedures and professional standards.

Support staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries with students at all times and act in a professional, respectful and appropriate manner throughout all interactions.

This Applicant Information Pack has been designed to provide an overview of Theorise, the support roles we recruit for and the expectations associated with working within specialist student support services.

Additional role-specific guidance, policies, safeguarding information and support resources are available through the Theorise portal for successful applicants and active support staff.

We appreciate your interest in joining Theorise and look forward to potentially working with you.

### **Engagement Basis and Working Arrangements**

Support staff engaged by Theorise typically work on a flexible basis depending upon student demand, location, availability and support requirements.

Assignments may vary throughout the academic year, and support is allocated based upon a range of factors including student needs, timetable compatibility, geographical location and staff suitability.

Depending upon the nature of the role and preferences of applicants, individuals may be engaged by Theorise under either:

- A Contract for Services arrangement (PAYE); or
- A Self-Employed Consultancy Agreement.

Further details regarding the applicable arrangement, terms and expectations will be provided during the recruitment and onboarding process.

Support hours are not guaranteed and may fluctuate depending upon student engagement, funding approval, timetable changes, academic calendars and institutional requirements.

Theorise aims to maintain strong continuity of support wherever possible and values professionalism, reliability and effective communication from all support staff.

Successful applicants will also be expected to:

- Maintain professional standards and boundaries.

- Work within the remit of their allocated role.
- Comply with relevant policies and procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality and data protection standards.
- Communicate appropriately regarding availability, cancellations and concerns.

Additional guidance, policies and role-specific resources are available through the Theorise portal for active support staff.

### **Establishing Support Sessions and Working Arrangements**

Theorise support staff are expected to establish professional, respectful and effective working relationships with students from the outset of support.

Depending upon the nature of the support role, arrangements for support sessions may vary between flexible appointment-based support and timetabled support linked directly to a student's classes or academic commitments.

Support staff should ensure students clearly understand:

- The nature and remit of the support being provided.
- Appropriate professional boundaries.
- Expectations regarding communication and availability.
- Arrangements for cancellations or timetable changes.
- How support sessions or support hours will operate.

### **Flexible Appointment-Based Support**

Study Skills Tutors, Autism Mentors and Mental Health Mentors will normally arrange appointments directly with students on a flexible basis around academic requirements, assignment deadlines, placements, examinations and student availability.

These initial discussions should normally establish:

- Frequency and pattern of sessions.
- Preferred methods of communication.
- Meeting arrangements and locations.
- Areas of support the student wishes to focus upon.
- Expectations regarding preparation and independent work between sessions.
- Any relevant deadlines, timetables or support priorities.

Where appropriate, support staff may request copies of timetables, assignment deadlines or relevant learning information to assist with planning effective support.

Support staff should maintain clear and professional communication with students throughout the support relationship and encourage students to raise any concerns or difficulties at an early stage.

### **Timetabled Support**

Support Workers, Personal Assistants and Note-Takers will more commonly provide support on a timetabled basis linked directly to scheduled lectures, seminars, workshops or other academic activities.

Students are expected to provide:

- Accurate timetables.
- Room locations.
- Notification of timetable changes or cancellations.
- Information regarding any changes to attendance where possible.

Although these roles are often timetable-based, some flexibility may occasionally be required depending upon the student's needs, changes to academic schedules or specific support arrangements.

### **Proof-Reading Support**

Proof-Readers will normally communicate directly with students via e-mail rather than through arranged support meetings.

Assignments, documents and feedback are generally exchanged electronically between the student and Proof-Reader using agreed timescales and methods of communication.

Proof-Readers should:

- Clearly communicate expected turnaround times.
- Maintain professional communication at all times.
- Ensure work is returned securely to the student.
- Maintain confidentiality and appropriate data protection standards when handling student work.

Proof-Readers are not normally expected to arrange regular meetings with students unless specifically agreed or required.

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## Autism Mentor Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to deliver specialist autism spectrum disorder (ASD) mentoring sessions and interventions for students within specific professional guidelines and internal policies, to promote independence and enable students to fully reach their potential and maximise their academic student experience. Mentors will utilise a full understanding of their autism experience and contribute to assisting the student with coursework, communication with peers or lecturers, time management, organisation and any other areas either the student requests or Mentor identifies.

Autism Mentors will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. It is the responsibility of both Mentor and student to liaise with one another to arrange appropriate times to carry out this support on an ongoing basis.

### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To provide individual one-to-one support to empower students by assisting their academic progression through a range of techniques and assistance, focussing on promoting strategies to assist the student in their management of organisation and communications and any other areas of support that the mentor sees fit or the student requests.
2. To deliver the specialist sessions to students in line with accredited standards, and internal policies and procedures. The support recommended will vary on the needs of each student, in accordance with Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and their Needs Assessment Report (NAR).
3. To have up to date knowledge of the Equality Act 2010 and DSA to assess students need for the provision of reasonable adjustments on ongoing support.
4. To liaise and coordinate support in conjunction with medical services, internal providers of mental health services and academic and student support services as appropriate.
5. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to arrange suitable times and dates to meet students and ensure they are all treated equally and fairly.
6. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
7. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote positive/mentor student relationships.
8. To keep up to date on mental health and wellbeing issues and developments in the mental health field, in higher education and in equality and disability legislation.
9. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
10. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

### **What is the role of an Autism Mentor**

Autism Mentoring is specialised one-to-one support which aims to:

- Enable students to independently manage the impact of their autism and navigate university or college life more effectively
- Assist students to identify barriers to reaching their full academic potential (e.g. difficulties with time management, communication, or sensory issues)
- Support students to develop practical strategies to manage and overcome these barriers
- Students may present with a wide range of challenges, including sensory sensitivities, difficulty coping with change, anxiety around transitions, executive function difficulties, or social communication challenges

### **What we expect of Autism Mentors**

The focus of autism mentoring should be based upon assisting students in overcoming difficulties associated with autistic spectrum disorder and minimising the impact of this upon their studies.

Autism Mentors are expected to:

- Discuss and explore what support the student may find helpful in relation to addressing any barriers or difficulties they face that directly impact on their ability to study effectively.
- Clarify role boundaries with the student about what support they can and cannot provide.
- Plan and agree how the approved support will be used to achieve identified goals.
- Where regular weekly support has been recommended, the Mentor should agree a schedule of meetings with the student at the initial meeting.

Note: It would then be up to the student to request any future changes (e.g. a decrease in the frequency of the sessions) and to discuss this with their Mentor.

- Mentors should also note that where students have been recommended regular weekly support by an Adviser or through an assessment process, it is important that this is maintained until it is clear the support is enabling the student to settle into study more effectively.
- Sessions may focus specifically on: Motivation and goal setting, strategies for effective time management, organisational skills, study and exam preparation skills, stress or anxiety management, social interaction including e-mail communication etc.

### **What we expect of students using an Autism Mentor**

- Students are expected to keep agreed appointments unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as unforeseen illness or emergency) or to give at least 24 hours' notice of cancellation where feasible.
- Students are expected to engage with any agreed suggested actions.
- Students should seek advice from their Disability & Inclusion Adviser at an early point if any concerns or queries arise, including a request for additional hours.

## Mental Health Mentor Full Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to deliver specialist mental health mentoring sessions and interventions for students within specific professional guidelines and internal policies, to promote independence and enable students to fully reach their potential and maximise their academic student experience. Mentors will utilise a full understanding of the specialist mental health field in contributing to the work activities of Student Support Services for our client. Mental Health Mentors will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. It is the responsibility of both the Tutor and student to liaise with one another to arrange appropriate times to carry out this support on an ongoing basis.

### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To provide individual interventions to empower students to manage their mental health in relation to their academic progression, promoting strategies for independent learning, living and self-management.
2. To deliver the specialist sessions to students in line with accredited standards, and internal policies and procedures. The support recommended will vary on the needs of each student, in accordance with Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and their Needs Assessment Report (NAR).
3. To have up to date knowledge of the Equality Act 2010 and DSA to assess students need for the provision of reasonable adjustments on ongoing support.
4. To liaise and coordinate support in conjunction with medical services, internal providers of mental health services and academic and student support services as appropriate.
5. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to arrange suitable times and dates to meet students and ensure they are all treated equally and fairly.
6. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
7. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote positive/mentor student relationships.
8. To keep up to date on mental health and wellbeing issues and developments in the mental health field, in higher education and in equality and disability legislation.
9. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
10. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

## **Supporting students with Mental Health Mentoring**

### **The role of a Mental Health Mentor**

The aim of Mental Health Mentoring is to provide support that enables a student to more independently manage their mental health condition and reduce the potential impact of the condition on their studies. Mentors can assist students in identifying barriers to their success and adopt more effective study strategies. They may address the student's expectations of themselves and others, address timetabling issues and clarify goals. Students may also benefit from support that helps them manage the impact of a recent diagnosis or the effects of medication on their studies.

Mental Health Mentoring is not the same as Study Skills support although on occasion the roles can often combined with that of the Study Skills Tutor. There are benefits for many students in having both types of support provided by the same person. Some students benefit from working on motivation, time management, organisation of workload and maintaining focus with a Mentor. The Study Skills Tutor's role would encompass a wider range of academic tasks such as essay writing, effective reading, writing a dissertation, exam preparation and referencing.

The role of a Mental Health Mentor is not the same as counselling and does not replace the role of the University's Mental Health Teams (Counsellors, Wellbeing etc.), who may provide therapeutic support to students with more severe difficulties, or who are experiencing crisis situations. Mental Health Teams may also make referrals to other agencies when required.

### **What we expect of Mental Health Mentors**

The focus of Mental Health Mentoring should be on practical aspects of studying and should not be confused with the intervention provided by other specialist internal College or University staff.

Mental Health Mentors are expected to:

- Discuss and explore what support the student may find helpful in relation to addressing any barriers or difficulties they face that directly impact on their ability to study effectively.
- Clarify role boundaries with the student about what support they can and cannot provide.
- Plan and agree how the approved support will be used to achieve identified goals.
- Where regular weekly support has been recommended, the Mentor should agree a schedule of meetings with the student at the initial meeting.
  - Note: It would then be up to the student to request any future changes (e.g. a decrease in the frequency of the sessions) and to discuss this with their Mentor.
- Mentors should also note that where students have been recommended regular weekly support by an Adviser or through an assessment process, it is important that this is maintained until it is clear the support is enabling the student to settle

into study more effectively.

- Adhere to College/University guidelines regarding confidentiality and be clear they must not normally discuss confidential details of a student's support without their written permission to do so
- Mental Health Mentors would normally be expected to raise any concerns about the student's support with the relevant Disability & Inclusion Adviser.
- In specific circumstances, it may be necessary to contact the University's Counsellors or Mental Health Advisers, without permission, if the student's welfare is of serious and immediate concern and is believed to be a threat either to themselves or to others.

#### **What we expect of students using a Mental Health Mentor**

- Students are expected to keep agreed appointments unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as unforeseen illness or emergency) or to give at least 24 hours' notice of cancellation where feasible.
- Students are expected to engage with any agreed suggested actions.
- Students should seek advice from their Disability & Inclusion Adviser at an early point if any concerns or queries arise, including a request for additional hours.

## Note-Taker Full Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to deliver specialist one-to-one note-taking support for a student who require assistance in lectures or seminars. Students may have difficulty taking notes for several reasons e.g. sight/hearing impairments, specific learning difficulties or if writing is difficult or painful.

University Note-Takers will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. These hours will cover all the students' note taking support for both lectures and seminars and may be used as the student deems necessary to be assisted.

### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To support each student's academic progression by providing clear and accurate notes as a record of a student's lectures or seminars. All note taking should be comprehensive in nature and requires accurate spelling and the ability to extract relevant information from the lecture/seminar material.
2. Note-Taker's must discuss the student's preferred format for note-taking and take these into consideration. We expect all support staff to type notes in-class unless the student specifically prefers handwritten notes. No type up time will be paid by Theorise unless we are specifically informed this is required by the university/college and student.
3. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to ensure they are receiving their notes and to keep updated to classroom changes or cancellations.
4. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
5. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote positive note-taker/student relationships.
6. To undertake continuous personal development and knowledge exchange, particularly to maintain current awareness of relevant issues to the role.
7. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
8. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

### The role of a Note-Taker

Note-Takers are required to support students with ensuring they can access a record of key points from their lectures where they are unable to do so themselves for a variety of reasons including:

- A hearing impairment
- A visual impairment
- A long-term physical impairment affecting the ability to hand write
- A temporary condition such as a broken arm

- Auditory processing or attention difficulties

### **What is expected of Note-Takers?**

The following are standard expectations of Note-Takers at Theorise: Notes should be:

- Typed or if no alternative handwritten and legible
- Clear and consistent
- On one side of a page
- Given to the student on the day of the lecture unless agreed otherwise with the student
- Note-Takers are not expected or allowed to contribute to discussions

Note-Takers are expected to prepare in advance to provide the most effective support (see below)

Note-Takers are not expected to attend lectures and take notes if a student is absent unless a student cancels at short notice due to illness or other exceptional circumstances. Note-Takers should adhere to the approved hours of funded support for a student. Note-Takers are expected to alert Advisers to any issues or difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Note-Takers are expected to prepare in advance to provide the most effective support:

- Prepare suggested toolkit: laptop / tablet, pens
- Ask for copies of the slides from the student in advance if they are available
- Familiarise yourself with key vocabulary and terminology
- Compile a list of abbreviations to give to the student if complex terminology is used.
- If taking notes in group discussions, find out the names of the other students involved
- Note-Takers should introduce themselves to lecturers if this can be done discretely and without disruption

The following should be discussed with a student and agreed beforehand:

- Where they would like you to sit – near them or at a different place in the room?
- Are key points preferred or a 'verbatim' record as far as possible?
- Do they require notes from discussions/group work taking place?
- How do they want the notes organised?
  - Bullet points?
  - Spacing?
  - Colour coding?

### **What we expect of students using a Note-Taker**

Students are expected to:

- Meet their Note-Taker to discuss their preferred approach to notes when first working with a Note-Taker
- Agree practical details such as where they would prefer the Note-Taker to sit
- Provide the Note-Taker with a timetable of their lectures, when they are taking place, room numbers, campus locations and advise them of any changes to planned arrangements for each trimester
- Provide as much notice as possible (preferably more than 24 hours' notice, where feasible) if they will not be attending a planned lecture for any reason
- Speak to their Adviser at an early point if any difficulties arise

## Proof-Reader Full Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to deliver specialist proof reading assistance for students who require support in their academic writing. Students may have difficulty with accurately producing academic pieces of work due to their specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia and therefore require assistance to ensure their work is submitted free from grammatical or spelling errors and is logical and methodical in the way it answers the assignment.

Proof-Readers will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. These hours will be used to cover the student's proofreading support and can be used as the student deems necessary to be assisted. The proof-reader can correct grammatical and spelling errors for students; however, it is strictly prohibited for any proof-reader to fully edit, restructure or add in their own wording. Changes can be suggested for students to make their own amendments to these areas, but this cannot be done on behalf of the student.

### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To support each student's academic progression by providing concise and accurate proofreading support to assist the student in submitting assignments that are accurate grammatically and free from spelling issues.
2. Proof-Readers should agree with students' reasonable timescales to be provided assignments prior to deadlines and provide the student information on when they expect the work to be completed by. All proof- reading assignments should be returned directly to the students' university e-mail address unless otherwise notified.
3. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to ensure they are aware of your availability and you are aware when the student has assignments due that may require proof- reading.
4. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
5. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote positive proof-reader/student relationships.
6. To undertake continuous personal development and knowledge exchange, particularly to maintain current awareness of relevant issues to the role.
7. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
8. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

### **The role of a Proof-Reader**

Proof-Readers review students' work and assignments, primarily to correct spelling, grammar and punctuation errors. Proof-Readers do not edit or correct work in other ways, although if the information being reviewed is not clear, they may clarify the intended meaning with the student or make suggestions.

Personal proofreading support is recommended by Colleges/Universities only in very limited circumstances. The Colleges/Universities have a range of networked software programmes available to enable proof reading and spellchecking of documents. Students are strongly encouraged to make use of these tools for checking their work, so they become independent and confident academic writers. The use of personal Proof-Readers is therefore restricted to students for whom the use of this software is not considered feasible. Decisions are based on an assessment of the student's needs.

### **What we expect of our Proof-Readers**

We'd ideally prefer our Proof-readers to hold a specialist proof reading qualification and/or have extensive experience of proof reading for students with a special learning difficulty or disability. If you do not hold a specialist dyslexia, disability-related or proof-reading qualifications, we expect you to be sufficiently knowledgeable about these particular difficulties and possess 'attention to detail' skills for proof reading purposes.

We expect you to have good communication and organisational skills, a willingness to support students with particular needs in a flexible, approachable, patient and understanding manner.

In some cases, it may be helpful to meet with students to discuss proof reading of a particular assignment, but this will not always be necessary; proof reading support can often be done via email exchanges.

### **Approach to Proofreading**

The beginning approach:

- Note the length of the assignment and the submission deadline.
- Read the work first as a complete piece to gain a sense of the content and the student's writing style.
- Then re-read, giving attention to the piece of work as a whole and quickly identifying any obvious errors.

After the first reading:

- Highlight any corrections soon after the first reading using the track changes process on the PC. Corrections should include references, footnotes, etc.
- Make the corrections so that the work is of a readable standard.
- Where sentences are unclear, ask the student to clarify what they intend to say so that any corrections you make correspond with the intended meaning.

- Match the tone of the piece you are proof reading with the style of the writer:
  - the temptation is to make it your own style – remember that you are working on someone else’s work
  - do not correct errors to the extent that the assignment seems to have been written by two different people; the final piece must reflect the student’s own work
- Mirror the writer’s intention:
  - changes should be subtle
- Check phraseology:
  - stock phrases and repetition
  - query and give alternative suggestions
- Work with what you are given:
  - Please note - rambling sentences can show a lack of confidence in the writing process and a lack of evidence or a weak argument can equally demonstrate a specific learning difficulty with written language. Where an assignment contains rambling sentences, clarify the content with the student and encourage them to re-write. If rambling sentences appear in subsequent assignments, refer the student to their Dyslexia or Disability Adviser for further advice - workshops, individual sessions and specialist study skills books are available to support students with academic writing.

#### Working within the word count:

- Good proof reading does not change the context:
  - understand the voice of the student
  - elaborate the argument by suggesting they add in or take away words
  - flag up those extra, unnecessary words
- Making it all match up:
  - match the corrections in relation to the context you are working in
  - if you are unfamiliar with the subject area and doubtful about the use of specific terminology or phraseology, Google any unknown terms to ensure the word(s) used is(are) correct within the context

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## Study Skills Tutor Full Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to deliver specialist one-to-one study skills support to provide the student a vehicle to assist overcoming certain specific learning difficulties. Study Skills Support Tutors will work with students in most circumstances with Dyslexia or Dyspraxia and sessions will be focused usually on assignment structure, time management, organisation, revision techniques & strategies and any other areas either the student requests or Study Skills tutor identifies.

Study Skills Tutors will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. It is the responsibility of both the Tutor and student to liaise with one another to arrange appropriate times to carry out this support on an ongoing basis.

### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To provide individual one-to-one support to empower students by assisting their academic progression through a range of study skills assistance, focusing on promoting strategies to assist the student in their management of organisation, essay writing, examination preparation and any other areas of study support that the tutor sees fit or the student requests.
2. To deliver the specialist sessions to students in line with accredited standards, and internal policies and procedures. The support recommended will vary on the needs of each student, in accordance with Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and their Needs Assessment Report (NAR).
3. To develop, design and deliver learning and teaching opportunities to suit the needs of each student on an individual basis based on their learning difficulty.
4. To have up to date knowledge of the Equality Act 2010 and DSA to assess students need for the provision of reasonable adjustments on ongoing support.
5. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to arrange suitable times and dates to meet students and ensure they are all treated equally and fairly.
6. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
7. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote support tutor/student relationships.
8. To undertake continuous personal development and knowledge exchange, particularly to maintain current awareness of relevant issues to the role.
9. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
10. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

### **What is the role of a Study Skills Tutor?**

The aim of support from a Study Skills Tutor is to provide the student with a firm foundation for managing academic work so they become a more confident and independent learner and successfully complete their course.

Study skills are the 'practice makes perfect' skills needed for life as a student. By frequently applying specific methods, approaches and strategies that work for them, students can develop their own learning style and become more skilled in how they approach tasks set as part of their coursework assignments and studying in general.

The more skilled and confident a student becomes as they progress through their course and as they understand how to apply these skills, the fewer study sessions we would expect them to need. Students should be reminded of this!

The range of study skills topics that students may require support with can include:

- Planning, organisation and time management - demands of the course and assignment structure (essays, reports, logs, portfolios, dissertation)
- Dealing with procrastination
- Searching in the library and on the internet
- Understanding your assignment: questions set and learning outcomes
- Reading processes – scanning and skimming; close and detailed reading
- Researching processes
- Critical thinking
- Note-taking and making notes
- Referencing written work
- Presentations and oral exams – planning and preparing
- Practical activities – planning and preparing
- Exam revision – making the most of your revision
- Exam performance – hints and tips to improve the exam experience
- Numeracy skills
- General computing and assistive technology skills
- Feedback – making the most of this to improve future work

#### **Important Note - study skills and subject-related support**

Study skills support is not subject-related. While it may be helpful for a student to have a Study Skills Tutor who is familiar with their subject area, this is not the function of study skills. The only exception to this is if a student has dyscalculia and maths is an integral part of their course, e.g. drug calculations in nursing. The Tutor would be a maths specialist who can help the student to understand numerical processes by devising methods that suit their learning style and support their specific difficulty. Students with dyslexia who also have a severe difficulty with numeracy can access this support, if maths is part of their course.

### **What we expect of our Study Skills Tutors**

We expect our Study Skills Tutors to hold a specialist dyslexia qualification, specific learning difficulties or special education qualification and (or) have extensive experience in supporting students with particular difficulties in study skills. If you do not hold a specialist qualification, we expect you to be sufficiently knowledgeable about these particular difficulties within the higher education context.

We expect you to have good communication and organisational skills, a willingness to support students with particular needs, and an approachable, patient and understanding manner.

On a practical level, we expect you to -

- make contact with students within three working days of the initial allocation of your assignment
- behave in a professional and respectful manner at all times, mindful of our legal obligation to support students under the Equality Act (2010)
- respect the confidentiality of students in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- establish a positive working relationship with all students assigned
- make your responsibilities clear to the student and draw up a working agreement, as specified above in the initial meeting section
- be aware of your own limitations, skills and competencies and work within the boundaries of a Study Skills Support Worker and the working agreement
- address the study skills needs of the student at all times
- set target tasks for the student for subsequent study skills sessions
- make use of all resources available to students within the University, particularly assistive technology
- prepare for each study skills session, providing necessary individualised resources for each task
- encourage the student to adopt specific methods, approach and strategies that work for them while using their preferred learning styles in working through tasks
- give constructive feedback to the student in a supportive manner
- restrict your support to study skills strategies only and not comment on the subject-related content of the assignment
- direct all enquiries relating to the student and their course to the student's Dyslexia or Disability Adviser and not to contact the student's College or University lecturers directly
- update and enhance your personal development by attending the CPD training workshops provided
- make the Dyslexia or Disability Adviser aware of any additional support required or any difficulties that arise in the working relationship
- work towards encouraging students to become independent learners
- not to get involved or give advice on a student's personal difficulties, but rather to

refer onto their Adviser or appropriate support section

### **What we expect of students using study skills support**

- meet Tutors at the arranged times
- give at least 24 hours' notice to cancel any session
- behave in a respectful manner at all times
- fulfil the requirements of the working agreement discussed with the Tutor
- prepare for each session, as agreed
- constructively work on any feedback provided by their Tutor
- not to ask a Tutor to help with any subject-related content
- acquire the skills of learning and make progress during the course of these sessions
- make use of all resources available within the College/University, particularly the assistive technology on our university network
- inform their Dyslexia or Disability Adviser of any difficulties with their Tutor and the support provided
- inform their Dyslexia or Disability Adviser of their need for a temporary Tutor, if their own Tutor is absent for any reason

### **Other useful information about Study Skills**

#### **Your relationship with students**

It is important that the relationship between the Tutor and the student is a positive one, as we expect the student to work with the same Tutor throughout their studies. On occasion though, the student may need to see someone else if you are absent for any reason. We expect the student to make this temporary Tutor aware of their specific needs for that session, particularly if deadlines are imminent.

Students need to feel confident in working with you, and that they are progressing with the support offered. If, for any reason, the relationship is not working out e.g. you and the student are not 'clicking', then we expect you to make the respective Dyslexia or Disability Adviser aware of this. If the difficulties cannot be resolved, we will assign another tutor to the student.

Please note both you and the student can request a change of tutor at any time.

## Support Worker Full Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to deliver specialist one-to-one support work for students who require assistance with several aspects of university or college. Students may have a range of specific learning difficulties (Autism, ADD, ADHD, etc.) and the role of the Support Worker can take many roles and responsibilities such as assisting the student in classes to keep them focussed and on task, working as a personal assistant to help them access relevant research materials for assessments, note taking support. This is not an extensive list of duties that the support worker can be carried out and will vary on a student-by-student basis. However, this role is vital in assisting the student's academic progression.

University Support Workers will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. The Support Worker should liaise with the student at the earliest opportunities to work with the students' timetable and ensure availability.

### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To support each student's academic progression by providing the type(s) of assistance that are required by the student as and when they are required.
2. To understand the importance of the role you are engaged in for the student whom you are working with.
3. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to ensure they are receiving all the assistance that they require and that the support you are providing is sufficient for the student.
4. To work in a professional, helpful and flexible manner to assist the student's academic progression.
5. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
6. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote positive support worker/student relationships.
7. To undertake continuous personal development and knowledge exchange, particularly to maintain current awareness of relevant issues to the role.
8. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
9. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

### The role of a Support Worker

A student may require assistance in specific or all of their timetabled classes. Depending on the students own specific learning difficulties this may take on a number of different

roles including note taking support, personal assistant (description below) or areas such as trying to keep the student focussed and on task. It is important that the relationship between the in-class Support Worker and the student is a positive one, as we expect the student to work with the same Support Worker throughout the full academic year. On occasion though, the student may need to work with someone else if you are absent for any reason. We expect the student and the University or College to make this temporary Support Worker aware of their specific needs for that session;

Students need to feel confident in working with you, and that they are progressing with the support offered. If, for any reason, the relationship is not working out e.g. you and the student are not 'clicking', then we expect you to make the respective Disability Adviser aware of this. If the difficulties cannot be resolved, we will assign another Support Worker to the student.

Please note: both you and the student can request a change of support worker at any time.

### Personal Assistant Full Job Description

**Job Purpose:** Working as part of Theorise external support team to provide assistance with the student's learning environment in a number of aspects of university or college life. The Personal Assistant may have a range of duties in order to assist the students learning from assisting them to access relevant research materials for assessments, assisting the student in day-to-day aspects of university i.e. printing, scanning, research, orientation support. This is not an extensive list of duties that the support worker can be carried out and will vary on a student-by-student basis. However, this role is vital in assisting the student's academic progression.

University PA's will provide an agreed number of hours' maximum to work with a student each year as per set by the DSA which will be clearly communicated by Theorise. The Support Worker should liaise with the student at the earliest opportunities to work with the students' timetable and ensure availability.

#### Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To support each student's academic progression by providing the type(s) of assistance that are required by the student as and when they are required.
2. To understand the importance of the role you are engaged in for the student whom you are working with.
3. To maintain regular contact with the student, from the outset of your work commencing, to ensure they are receiving all the assistance that they require and that the support you are providing is sufficient for the student.
4. To work in a professional, helpful and flexible manner to assist the student's academic

progression.

5. To attend training sessions, reviews, team meetings and meeting other institutional or Theorise staff as required.
6. To liaise with client academic staff when appropriate and promote positive support worker/student relationships.
7. To undertake continuous personal development and knowledge exchange, particularly to maintain current awareness of relevant issues to the role.
8. To work within the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
9. Undertaking other duties not specifically stated which from time to time are necessary without altering the nature or level of responsibility.

### **The role of Personal Assistant**

A student may require assistance with practical tasks such as getting equipment, study materials and personal belongings into or out of bags or lockers. They may also need assistance to set up their equipment ready for class or private study e.g. in the Library. The Personal Assistant may be required to help the student access study materials in the Library and photocopy or print articles for them. The role of the Personal Assistant will normally be agreed in advance in discussion with the student's Disability Adviser. On commencing support, day to day tasks should be discussed with the student clarified at the start of the support. The Assistant's role is not to provide personal care unless this has been formally agreed by the Disability & Inclusion Team and funding secured.

### **What we expect of Support Staff undertaking other roles**

- All Support Staff are expected to follow the key University/College protocols that are set out.
- Support Staff are expected to speak to the student's Adviser at an early point if any difficulties arise

### **What we expect of students using Support Staff undertaking other roles**

- Have an initial meeting with their Support Staff to discuss the day to day practicalities of their support requirements before support commences this may be organised directly by the College or University.
- Provide the Support Staff with a timetable of their lectures, when they are taking place, room numbers, campus locations and advise them of any changes to planned arrangements for each trimester
- Advise their Support Worker of any other specific requirements to enable day to day support to be carried out
- Provide as much notice as possible (preferably more than 24 hours' notice, where feasible) if they will not be attending university / planned lectures for any reason
- Speak to their Adviser at an early point if any difficulties arise

### Testimonials

We love what we do. Creating strong relationships with our Clients, Candidates & Students is what we strive to achieve and specialise in. Don't just take our word for it though...

### Clients

"We have worked with Theorise for a number of years now, they continue to provide our students with an excellent standard of support. The team at Theorise are responsive to student needs and concerns and will do their utmost to ensure that each student is supported to their individualised needs. Equally, the team will endeavour to pair up students with an appropriate support worker and if and when a relationship between support worker and student requires a change (which is not the norm) Theorise are more than willing to facilitate that change.

I have no equivocation in recommending Theorise to other FE and HE institutions they are an excellent team that provide personalised/individualised support both to the institution and students to an exceptionally high standard!"  
Perth College UHI.

"I would like to add how impressed I am with the efficiency and professionalism shown by Theorise. My request for support was responded to very swiftly and the communication throughout the whole process has been exemplary. Feedback from the student has also been extremely positive in relation to the support provided."  
Inverness College UHI.

### Candidates

"Working with Theorise Ltd in a Note-Taker role has been the perfect job for me over the last year. It has allowed me to utilise my skills and knowledge in an extremely rewarding way whilst also allowing me to develop transferable skills and gain new experiences within the education sector.

The company are an absolute dream to work for. They are reliable, accommodating, excellent at communicating and also make you feel like a valued member of their team by sharing positive feedback and being completely flexible with your other commitments. I am absolutely thrilled to be working with them again next year."

Claire Docherty, Note-Taker, Edinburgh area.

“I have worked with different agencies and directly with clients over the years, and working with you at Theorise is definitely the best experience I have had – from the quality and robustness of the agency’s professional and safeguarding standards, to the agency’s excellent communication, streamlined processes, speedy payment and your swift responsiveness to any query or issue. I also very much enjoy working with you Dany and wanted to thank you for being a friendly and approachable soul, as learning support is a very human role at the end of the day. Theorise is not an ordinary agency – we are all making a difference in our own way. Thank you also for supporting me and trusting me to do a good job. I feel very lucky to do this work, which I enjoy very much.”  
Kathryn Pierce, Study Skills Tutor, Edinburgh area.

“I have worked with Theorise over the last academic year as a Study Skills Tutor, and have found the Theorise family to be approachable, supportive and professional throughout. They are extremely accurate and timely regarding payment; the work is interesting, and their communication is excellent – there has never been a time when they haven’t responded promptly to a query. I look forward to continuing our working relationship into the foreseeable future.”  
Alison Spencer, Study Skills Tutor, Glasgow area.

### Students

“Now my support has finished I wanted to email you to thank you and to let you know how useful I’ve found your company’s mentor provision over the last few months.

The last four months have seen me turn a corner and instead of giving up on my studies, the mentor you allocated to me, has guided me and encouraged me to continue and achieve really good grades.

I was seven assignments behind and now I’m all caught up and focusing on my dissertation!

I have even managed to achieve a distinction and an outstanding distinction which I never thought I would manage as I was floundering so much with my health and concentration.

Initially, when I was told that I would get help I was concerned that I would be designated a mentor who didn’t appreciate masters level study. This has not been the case and I have been so relieved and delighted by the study engagement I have received.

I particularly found that touching base each week and looking at different techniques for study, very useful especially when used alongside the debates that my mentor and I have had on my chosen topics. It has helped me to set a pace for my study and to really think about what I write and how I wrote it.

I am very grateful that I have been taught the tools to be able to take hold of my studies and future

through this help and my disability no longer seems such a barrier to success.”  
Moray College UHI PG Student

"Working with a Theorise tutor has greatly improved my self-esteem, confidence and ability to manage my anxieties. With my Theorise tutor's support I feel better able to express my ideas and plan my work. I have noticed an immediate improvement in my academic work and have achieved distinction marks I previously thought were out of reach."

Queen Margaret University MSc Student