Job Title: Systems Administrator (Windows Services)
Grade: 7
Salary: £38,205 to £44,263 per annum
Department: Infrastructure and Operations, Digital Services
Hours/Contract: Full-time or job share, permanent
Job Family: Technical and experimental
Reference: 10649

Role Purpose

As an experienced systems administration professional, you will be responsible for ensuring Windows IT services used by the University are consistently available. This will include the monitoring of services running on physical/virtual/cloud infrastructure and ensuring they are managed and maintained to prescribed baselines and SLAs, perform as designed, are securely maintained, and regularly monitored.

Working in a hybrid environment as part of a small team in Infrastructure Operations, you will be expected to work closely and actively collaborate with other Systems Specialists across Digital Services.

Using your strong scripting skills to support automation, you will have fundamental responsibilities to support and monitor physical and virtual Windows server estates which are mainly based on premise but are progressively being migrated to the cloud as part of our digital strategy. As such, you will be conversant with a broad range of Microsoft features such as administering clusters, DNS, group policy management, quota management and administering Office 365.

You will also be responsible for complex Incident and Problem resolution, preventative maintenance, upgrade work, and capacity management.

Context

The Infrastructure Operations team is one of five teams that report to the Head of Infrastructure and Operations (the others being Platforms, Networks, Voice Operations and Research) and is part of the wider Digital Services department. The team 'run, maintain and optimise IT services and facilities' and collaboratively works with the other teams within Infrastructure and Operations, the Security team and the Application Services team on the development of new services, Incident escalation and Problem Management.

The main areas of focus for the role are: user administration in Office 365 which is underpinned by Active Directory (authentication for University-wide services), Microsoft Exchange in a hybrid configuration (email, calendaring and collaboration), proactive and reactive security patching, monitoring based on SCOM (System Centre Operations Manager)/Azure Cloud tools/Defender anti-virus, and the day-to-day administration of 700+ Windows servers running across multiple Domains.

In addition to focusing on core technologies you will have a broader set of skills and understanding that cover virtualisation, networks and data centres. You will support the full range of work undertaken by other members of the IT Operations team and across Digital Services on actively pursuing modernisation of our technology and infrastructure. Several developments are currently in-flight or are being planned around upgrading VMware ESXi 7.0 to version 8.0, migrating from Windows Server 2019 to 2022, migrating from on-prem shared/home folders to SharePoint, a network refresh valued at £5.5M, and increasing the presence of our low-value assets in the Cloud.

The role and the team are continually evolving hence this role would ideally suit an individual who can adapt to change. As a reward, you will have the opportunity to improve your career prospects as well as further expand your skills, knowledge and experience.

The post holder will work both on campus and in a hybrid environment, and will be entitled to a generous leave entitlement (comprising 27 University leave days, University closure days and UK bank holidays).

Resources Managed/Facts and Figures

Centralised systems and services that underpin University-wide activities where you will provide support include:

- Four on-premise campus-based data centres
- 700+ physical and virtual Windows servers running Windows Server 2019/2022
- VMware vSphere infrastructure
- Microsoft-based clusters providing file storage and database storage
- 400TB of configured storage providing users with 'home' and 'shared departmental' drive access
- Microsoft SCOM infrastructure and Azure Cloud tools for monitoring a broad range of infrastructure and services
- Microsoft Teams telephony integration and collaboration into on premise Atos Unify OpenScape voice
- CommVault enterprise backup system
- Microsoft Defender endpoint protection

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Support, monitor and maintain
    - Diagnose and resolve Incidents and Problems escalated from the Service Desk, Second Line Support teams, and transfer knowledge to those teams where appropriate
    - Liaison and coordination with suppliers, 3rd parties and auditors on issues such as problem resolution, technical support, co-ordination of maintenance activities and providing documentary evidence
    - Monitor **capacity** and **performance, identify trends** in patterns of **demand** to inform service development and replacement planning; collate, interpret and report service statistics
    - **Analyse logs** and other sources of data which may **indicate problems** such as attempted security compromises, performance bottlenecks etc.
    - Work with the Security team on **proactive/reactive maintenance**, updates and vulnerability management
    - Plan and lead **preventative maintenance** and upgrade work, preparing change requests and **undertake impact analysis** as necessary
    - Liaison, negotiation and coordination of **activities/defects management** with 3rd-parties, suppliers and maintenance providers
    - **Maintain awareness of product development roadmaps**, known problems, planned fixes and upgrade paths

- Infrastructure development

  - Work with senior technical staff across the areas of Digital Services, help to analyse requirements and formulate design proposals for service developments to meet functionality, performance, scalability, availability, business continuity and security requirements.

  - Carry out the detailed technical work packages involved in service development projects through **design, installation, configuration, integration and testing**

  - Produce technical design documentation including specifying detailed hardware and software configurations as required

  - Represent the team on development projects, advising on standards that will be applied during the development and **ensure compliance with standards**

  - **Develop, update and test IT service continuity plans** as systems are changed and as required

- Contribute to IT Development

  - Maintain and develop specialist skills in line with the needs of the service

  - **Provide innovative technical solutions** to meet business requirements

  - Investigation and evaluation of new developments and technologies

- Act as a technical authority

  - Provide consultancy within Digital Services and to the wider University

  - **Provide technical advice on the integration of systems and services** within the area of expertise and responsibility; ensure the adherence to established standards and specifications

  - **Maintain personal development**, skills and knowledge through active self-study to enhance personal growth and support the continuing and changing needs of the business

Internal and External Relationships

- Daily contact with customers on resolving issues and providing support and guidance; maintaining an excellent customer focus, service and rapport whilst promoting Digital Services

- Daily contact with team members and other teams on advising on areas of expertise and problems/queries, and ensuring that the complex interactions between physical/virtual infrastructure, operating system and applications are understood and optimised.

- Regular contact with teams and with the Digital Services Senior Leadership Team on planning service developments

- Regular liaison with system suppliers, and maintenance providers in developing services and dealing with complex issues

- Occasional contact with external consultants and auditors

- Contact with peers at other sites that have similar service requirements

- Occasional presentations, both internal and external, on service developments and proposals

Planning and Organising

- Forward planning/scheduling of hardware and software upgrades with lead times from weeks to several months; minimising the impact of downtime through planned changes

- Able to coordinate and bring together the efforts of individuals working in other teams to deliver projects, or in resolving problems that require a mixture of supporting skills, abilities and knowledge

- Plan, prioritise and organise own workload to meet the requirements of the team and service provision/development; ensure operational efficiency whilst responding to new pressures including those arising from non-standard work

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- Experience working in a complex IT organisation with a systems administration background *

- A degree in a technical discipline or a degree in a non-technical discipline combined with substantial additional experience directly relevant to this post *

- Excellent conceptual knowledge of the major components constituting a modern IT architecture and their interactions with other components

- Excellent experience in the structured approach required to run highly available and scalable IT services *

- Proven expertise in the administration of systems in a large complex environment with recent experience in security, scripting, automating manual tasks, monitoring and management of the following: *

  - Windows Server 2012 R2/2019/2022
  - Microsoft Active Directory (including Group Policy management)
  - Microsoft Exchange Hybrid environment
  - Office 365 administration
  - Microsoft SCOM
  - WSUS (Windows Server Update Services)

  - Server Endpoint protection, e.g., Defender, for Endpoint, etc.
  - Programming and scripting tools,.e.g., VBScript, PowerShell, WinRM, etc.
  - Virtualisation technologies, e.g., VMware, Hyper-V, Xen etc.
  - Windows Admin Console (WAC)

Desirable

- Experience in providing IT Services within a Higher Education environment

- IT Service Management (ITIL) Foundation and/or experience of working within an ITIL environment

- Relevant professional qualifications e.g., Microsoft Associate/Speciality, etc.

- Experience in using a Service Desk ITSM toolset, e.g., Ivanti, ServiceNow, etc.

- Experience of a broader set of technologies such as: *

  - Microsoft technologies
    - Microsoft Cloud technologies, e.g., IaaS, PaaS, etc.
    - Microsoft Core Features, e.g., File and Print Services, Distributed File Systems (DFS),

- o Microsoft Identity Manager
- o Multi-Factor Authentication integration
- o Collaboration, e.g., Teams, Viva Engage, OneDrive, SharePoint, etc.
- o System Centre Suite (Config. Manager (SCCM)/Orchestrator/Data Protection Manager)

Certificate Services, Clustering, Database, WSUS, etc.
- o Cluster Services, e.g., Cluster Aware Updating, Failover Cluster Manager, Database and Node failover
- o Web-fronted database services, e.g., IIS, MSSQL, SQL 2012+, etc.

- **Infrastructure monitoring**, e.g., VMware Log Insight, HPE OneView, etc.

- UNIX/LINUX/Microsoft Active Directory integration

- Exposure to working with 'Agile' based product delivery

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

Skills, Abilities and Competencies

Essential

- Highly developed analytical skills and problem-solving ability, with the ability to matrix-manage others in investigating and resolving issues *

- Excellent interpersonal skills

- Effective oral, written and presentation skills in order to communicate effectively with Staff and Students

- Effective planning and organisational skills

- Customer focussed.

Desirable

- Experience of working in a 'DevOps' culture

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

Criminal Declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

Supporting University Activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are expected to support key University activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We expect all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required.

University Values

Inclusive - We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring - We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful - As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community

Equity and Diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equity support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equity, diversity and inclusion.