

Principal Data Scientist

Basic information

Band: C

Job family: Analysis

Terms: Two-year, fixed-term contract, with a view to permanency

Location: Cheltenham

Reports to: Head of Analytical Product Development

Team: Analytical Product Development

Business unit: Analysis and Insights



Role purpose:

The Principal Data Scientist will be responsible for the development of a high performance scrum team, and the delivery of the data product roadmap, in collaboration with the delivery manager, to time, cost, and quality.

Key duties and responsibilities:

- Lead a multidisciplinary scrum team, and be accountable for achieving required outcomes.
- Lead the development of data products, providing technical direction, and ensuring the team's decisions and approach align to the product roadmap.
- Work collaboratively with the delivery manager to deliver the product roadmap to time, cost, and quality.
- Provide leadership and coaching for the scrum team, to improve skillsets and capabilities.
- Proactively assist in developing the product development vision and strategy.
- Create a high performance scrum team.
- Champion agile ways of working, blending management principles into an agile environment.
- Build and maintain internal and external networks of stakeholders.
- Collaborate across scrum teams and the wider business – sharing knowledge and best practice to ensure seamless delivery to our customers.
- Develop a deep understanding of customer needs, ensuring an excellent customer experience through the products and services the team builds.

- Represent the Analysis and Insights business unit at internal meetings, and UCAS at external meetings, as required.
- Deputise for senior management at internal and external engagements.

Accountabilities:

- Technical quality of all work in the scrum team.
- Ensuring reuse and automation are designed into all products and associated processes.
- Continuous improvement of individual products, and the product development process.
- Acting as a role model to the scrum team, the Analysis and Insights business unit, and wider business, upholding UCAS' culture, standards, and values.

Person specification:

Essential:

- Demonstrable experience of product development.
- Demonstrable experience of agile working.
- Demonstrable experience of developing and leading a substantive area of work, and/or line management of a team.
- Minimum of three years' demonstrable experience of using statistical methods, data science, or machine learning in manipulating and analysing large datasets to create insights and value.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills, with the ability to explain technical insights to a non-technical audience at all levels.
- Extensive knowledge of at least one analytical programming language, such as R, Python, or SAS.
- Bachelor's degree (or higher) in a numerate discipline, such as mathematics, statistics, computer science, operational research, data science, or a related field.
- An understanding of the importance of data security and stewardship.

Desirable:

- Demonstrable experience in building and implementing statistical models in a commercial environment.
- Experience of leading a scrum team.
- Experience of commercial software and product development.
- Master's-level degree in a numerate discipline, such as mathematics, statistics, computer science, operational research, data science, or a related field.
- Qualified scrum master.

This role profile sets out the scope and main duties of the post at the date when it was drawn up. Such details may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the level of the post. All UCAS employees are expected to be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to their role and may be asked to perform other duties, which reasonably correspond to the general character of their role and their level of responsibility.

Our values in action

Customer-focused – We understand what our customers want, and we act on their changing needs.

Collaborative – We collectively create an engaging and positive work environment.

Accountable – We take ownership of our individual and organisational performance.

Service excellence – We realise, grow, and maximise our potential.

Trusted – Individuals are trusted to make informed decisions and take appropriate risks.