DOUGLASCOLLEGE

STAFF JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DESCRIPTION:	International Student Advisor		
DEPARTMENT:	Douglas International		
REPORTS TO:	Manager, International Student Success & Advising		
JOB DESCRIPTION #:	440.31	PREVIOUS JOB DESC. #:	
PAY LEVEL:	16		
ORIGINAL DATE:	September 2020		
LAST REVISED DATE:	July 2026		

Primary Function:

The International Student Advisor provides advanced, regulated advising to support international student success, retention, and compliance with immigration and institutional requirements. Acting within the authority of a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) or Regulated International Student Immigration Advisor (RISIA) designation, the role exercises independent professional judgement to assess and advise on complex, interrelated immigration, academic, and personal circumstances affecting international students.

The position interprets and applies immigration legislation, IRCC operational guidance, and institutional policies to individual student cases, with a focus on the immigration implications of academic decisions. While primary academic advising is delivered by designated academic advising units, the ISA provides specialized analysis and guidance on how academic choices may affect students' immigration status and compliance.

Working collaboratively with the Team Lead, International Student Advising, Douglas International advising colleagues, Student Success Advisors, and other campus partners, this role contributes to consistent institutional interpretation of immigration regulations, investigates complex or precedent-setting cases, and identifies emerging policy or operational issues affecting international students. The role contributes to insights and recommendations that help to inform operational guidance and recommendations to management.

Responsibilities:

1. **International Student Advising**
    a. Provides advanced case-specific advising to international students involving complex immigration, academic progression and regulatory compliance considerations.
    b. Applies culturally responsive, student-centred advising practices, including active listening and coaching techniques, to support positive advising outcomes.
    c. Advises students on the implications of academic decisions, including program selection and changes, course load, withdrawals, academic standing, leaves of absence, work eligibility, study abroad, and post-graduation pathways.
    d. Supports students' immigration planning by providing compliant advice related to study permits, work permits, visas, medical insurance, dependents, employment, and related matters.
    e. Prepares professional written communications to immigration authorities and intervenes, where appropriate, to support fair and accurate consideration of student cases.
    f. Assesses non-academic student support needs and facilitates referrals to appropriate internal and external services, following up as required.
    g. Supports the resolution of emotionally charged or challenging advising situations through professional communication and referral.

h. Exercises independent professional judgment in resolving advising cases involving overlapping immigration, academic and personal circumstances.

2. Complex Case Analysis and Resolution

a. Investigates and resolves complex international student advising cases involving overlapping immigration, academic progression and institutional policy considerations.
b. Documents case analysis and outcomes in accordance with legal, professional, and institutional requirements.
c. Analyzes the immigration implications of academic decisions (course load changes, withdrawals, academic standing, program changes, leaves of absence) on student immigration status and provides recommendations to students and College partners.
d. Collaborates with the Senior International Student Advisor and advising colleagues to analyze complex or precedent-setting cases and contribute to consistent institutional interpretation of immigration regulations and advising practices.

3. International Student Success Programming

a. Contributes immigration and academic expertise to international student orientation and transition programming.
b. Provides subject-matter expertise to support the development of international student success programming and contributes recommendations based on advising trends and emerging student needs.
c. Prepares and updates documents such as orientation information booklets, manuals and other publications for international students on academic & immigration success-related topics.
d. Plans and delivers international student success program (workshops and co-curricular course content) aligned with student-lifecycle and interest needs.
e. Conducts co-curricular international student success program reviews each semester with input from participants, organizers, and external contributors.
f. Provides education and awareness sessions for faculty and staff on immigration-related topics affecting international students.
g. Creates and curates content for regular international student communications (e.g. newsletter, social media, posters) to raise awareness of international student success programming, immigration updates, events and availability of services.

4. International Program Articulation & Pathways

a. Analyzes international academic programs, courses, and exchange standards to assess course and credit alignment for articulation agreements and pathways.
b. Provides analysis and recommendations regarding immigration and academic implications of international articulation agreements and program pathways.
c. Prepares and maintains course/credit reports with international colleges and universities to reflect any additions or removal of course and program options.
d. Utilizes the BC Transfer guide and the College transfer database to analyze case specific issues related to course and program transfer in order to ensure accurate recognition for prior academic work.

5. Administration, Compliance & Operations

a. Maintains accurate and confidential student records in compliance with IRCC requirements, FOIPPA, and College policies.

b. Interprets and applies IRCC Operation Manuals and Bulletins, regulatory guidance, and professional codes of ethics to meet legal and reporting requirements.
c. identifies operational issues affecting advising practices and provides recommendations to the Senior Advisor and Manager to improve advising procedures and service delivery.
d. Represents Douglas College externally as required to government and professional organizations such as: IRCC, Canadian Border Services Agency, BC Provincial Nominee Program, Services Canada, Health Insurance

BC, and the local MP's office.

e. Contributes to the development and updating of advising procedures, training materials, and manuals.
f. Plans and implements on-campus immigration-related communications for relevant non-ISS staff and faculty that are accurate, consistent and in line with immigration legislation and regulations.

6. Expert Consultation & Institutional Collaboration

a. Provides consultation to faculty, staff and College departments regarding immigration regulations and the implications of institutional policies for international students.
b. Collaborates with advising colleagues to analyze complex or unusual cases and contribute to shared institutional interpretations of immigration regulations and institutional policies.
c. Provides legally sound advice to colleagues and College departments regarding immigration legislation to support consistent institutional interpretation and compliance.

7. Professional Practice & Continuous Improvement

a. Maintains RCIC or RISIA certification and completes required professional development.
b. Monitors immigration policy changes and assesses implications for advising practice and institutional operations.
c. Maintains current knowledge of college programs, transfer pathways, student services, and employment trends relevant to international students.
d. Participates in professional networks, associations, and communities of practice to remain current on best practices.
e. Contributes to College committees, working groups, and initiatives related to international student services and success.

8. Student Assistant Supervision and Guidance

a. Hires, orients, trains, schedules, supervises, evaluates, mentors and provides ongoing feedback to Student Assistants supporting projects that the International Student Advisor is leading.
b. Develops and implements training resources, instructions, and onboarding materials for Student Assistants.
c. Regularly coordinates and assigns schedules, sets priorities and deadlines, and provides day-to-day direction to one or more Student Assistants on projects they are leading including social media campaigns, orientation support, current student workshops, peer communications, and outreach initiatives.
d. Reviews and monitors student assistants' work for accuracy, compliance, and quality standards, approves work before publication or execution, and provides ongoing coaching and feedback.

9. Performs other duties

a. Performs other related duties of comparable scope and complexity, including participation in College-wide projects, service improvement initiatives, and system enhancements.

Supervision or Guidance Exercised:

- Mentors and trains new staff in Douglas International on ISA related duties.
- Provides orientation and training to staff faculty and staff external to Douglas International on immigration/international student issues when requested.
- Hires, orients, trains, schedules and supervises, evaluates, mentors and provides ongoing feedback to Student Assistants.
- Assigns and monitors work, coordinates schedules, and provides day-to-day direction to Student Assistants.

Physical Assets and Information Management:

- Maintains confidential student and partner data in Douglas College student records systems.
- Maintains confidential immigration documentation in Douglas International agent & student database.

- Creates and maintains content and student information in Douglas learning management system.
- Maintains Douglas International partner database articulation and exchange agreement content.
- Prepares and updates informational materials, posters, websites, etc.

Financial Resources:

- Requisitions for new materials.

Required Education and Experience:

- Bachelor's degree in a related discipline from a recognized post-secondary institution.
- A minimum of 3-4 years of progressively responsible experience advising students in a post-secondary or regulatory environment.
- Certification as a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) or Regulated International Student Immigration Advisor (RISIA).
- Must be in good standing with the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC).
- An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Extensive knowledge of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Immigration and Refugee Protection Act/Regulations, and policies and procedures pertaining to international students.
- Strong understanding of the post-secondary system in BC, including course and program transfer institutional pathways and admissions.
- Excellent working knowledge of College programs, including programs of study, admission requirements, and learner pathways.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in credential evaluation and in program articulation/ transfer credit processes related to international partners.
- Comprehensive understanding of post-secondary policies and procedures related to domestic and international students.
- Knowledge of international student needs and concerns related to study, work, immigration and well-being.
- Knowledge of post-secondary student lifecycle and service needs from 'new student to alumni.'
- Excellent interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills including written and verbal fluency in English with a proven ability to interact effectively, tactfully and respectfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Good emotional self-management and conflict resolution skills.
- Working knowledge of office systems and procedures including filing, administrative control systems, and standard business communication.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, Planner) and Zoom.
- Demonstrated ability to:
    - communicate clearly, persuasively, assertively and diplomatically.
    - effectively interview students.
    - collaborate effectively and seek support when addressing complex or challenging situations.
    - analyze, problem solve and exercise sound judgment.
    - ensure accuracy of information and enter data accurately.
    - maintain a high degree of confidentiality.
    - prioritize tasks and manage time effectively for self and team contributions.
    - effectively lead and support project-based work using planning tools.
    - research, analyze and synthesize complex information into clear communications.
    - create and deliver engaging presentations and workshops for large groups in formal and informal settings.
    - adapt speaking style and register for audiences of different cultural backgrounds and positions.

    - work independently and collaboratively as a team with minimal supervision.
    - maintain high levels of customer service while under task, time, or interpersonal pressure.
    - work within an environment where there is a constant flow of enquiries requiring attention to detail, endurance, and the need to stay focused over prolonged periods of time.
    - advocate on behalf of others to resolve errors or change procedures.
    - organize, retain, and communicate complex information to support others.
    - build and maintain a professional network.
- Proficiency in a second language is an asset.
- A working knowledge of student information systems and learning management systems such as Banner and Blackboard is an asset.
- Knowledge of adult educational design and co-curricular learning principles is an asset.
- A working knowledge of social media platforms is an asset.

This job description reflects the general responsibilities and duties associated with the job and should not be viewed as a comprehensive list of job tasks.