

GENERAL MERCHANDISE BUYER – Western University

Job ID 15536

Faculty/Unit

Western Retail Services

Department

Bookstore

Employee Group PMA - Professional and Managerial Association

Appointment Type Continuing

Appointment Status Regular Full-Time

Hours per Week: 35

Apply at: <https://www.uwo.ca/hr/working/staff/>

Salary Grade: 13

About Western

Since 1878, Western University has been committed to serving our communities through the pursuit of academic excellence and by providing students, faculty, and community members with life-long opportunities for intellectual, social, and cultural growth. We seek excellent students, faculty, and staff to join us in what has become known as the "Western Experience" - an opportunity to contribute to a better world through the development of new knowledge, new abilities, new connections, and new ways to make a difference.

About Us

Primarily an educational resource for students and faculty, The Book Store provides course materials for all university courses. The Book Store is the official source of Western clothing, giftware, school and office supplies, and other products. In partnerships with campus and community groups, The Book Store contributes to Western's school spirit and culture. The Book Store is service driven and revenues support student services, facilities, and programming.

Responsibilities

The General Merchandise Buyer will be responsible for the vendor and product selection for a wide range of products for re-sale in the general merchandise department of the Book Store and various locations on and off campus in order to achieve a positive financial result. The incumbent will identify market trends, forecast sales, analyze past sales performance and utilize metrics, such as cost of goods and gross margins to develop buying strategies for upcoming fiscal year to maximize general merchandise sales. The Buyer will negotiate best price, terms and delivery with vendors, and determine the quality and quantity of products purchased.

The Buyer will be required to maintain a current understanding of current and prospective trends, as well as customer needs and preferences to ensure sales and revenue targets are met or exceeded. The incumbent will help manage visual standards, assist in determining marketing and merchandising strategies including preparations for major events such as convocation. The Buyer will establish and maintain strong partnerships and relationships throughout the university by sourcing, pricing, quoting and delivering on custom orders for staff, students and faculty to help the unit achieve its goals, while ensuring that the University is professionally represented.

Qualifications

Education:

- Undergraduate Degree in Business Management/Administration or related field
- Purchasing Management Association Canada (PMAC) preferred

Experience:

- 3 years' recent purchasing experience in a retail environment, with experience in contract development and negotiation
- Experience providing customer service related to apparel, giftware, and promotional goods in a retail setting
- Recent marketing and merchandising experience
- Recent experience working with a computerized inventory system
- Experience in a higher education environment is preferred

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- Knowledge of purchasing ethics, concepts and practices, and of best practices for contract development and negotiation
- In-depth knowledge of consumer preferences and demographic composition related to the University environment
- Ability to ensure expenditures and resources are within allotments, and to make appropriate modifications when required
- Proven ability to accurately manage inventory by using data from a computerized inventory system in accordance with purchasing budgets and purchasing plans
- Proven ability to identify market trends, forecasts sales, analyze past sales performance and utilize metrics such as cost of goods and gross margins to develop buying strategies
- Verbal communication skills to translate information into easily understood terms, summarize information, and provide a rationale for action
- Ability to apply critical thinking to evaluate information and make appropriate decisions or recommendations
- Ability to understand customer needs and expectations and provide responsive customer service to directly and indirectly satisfy expectations
- Ability to understand the impact of buying decisions on the financial performance of Western Retail Services
- Ability to determine the life cycle of products and coordinate markdowns
- Detail-oriented with an ability to function and process information with high levels of accuracy
- Proven ability to handle multiple tasks in high-volume retail environment with urgent deadlines and time constraints
- Supervisory skills; proven ability to determine priorities and direct staff, and to lead, train and mentor staff
- A well-defined sense of diplomacy, including solid negotiation and conflict resolution skills
- Computer skills with the ability to learn and use software programs, with intermediate skills in Microsoft Office Suite
- Demonstrated ability take initiative, to work independently and follow through on work assignments
- Ability to exercise tact and good judgment, and skillfully negotiate, bargain, compromise and conciliate as required
- Ability to collect and analyze data in an objective manner to make appropriate decisions and recommendations
- Ability to work independently and effectively as a member of the team to achieve department goals
- Ability to summarize and translate complex information to various stakeholders

- Familiarity with University policies and procedures preferred
- Knowledge of Campus Store industry; specifically the General Merchandise area preferred
- Ability to travel for work when required

Western Values Diversity

The University invites applications from all qualified individuals. Western is committed to employment equity and diversity in the workplace and welcomes applications from women, members of racialized groups/visible minorities, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, and persons of any gender identity or gender expression.

Accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities throughout the recruitment process. If you require accommodations for interviews or other meetings, please contact Human Resources at hrhelp@uwo.ca or phone 519-661-2194.

Please Note:

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only those chosen for an interview will be acknowledged.