

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.

The Book Store's mission is to support the best student experience at Western University. To help students, faculty, and staff at Western and people in our community fulfill their educational goals and life potential, we are dedicated to providing products, services and information for their academic, professional, social and cultural needs.

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 and supplies departments 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 and supplies sales. The Buyer will negotiate the best price, terms and delivery with vendors, and determine the quality and quantity of products purchased.

The Buyer will be required to maintain an 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, and participate 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, marketing and merchandising
- Experience providing customer service related to supplies, apparel, giftware, and promotional goods in a retail setting
- Experience supervising staff, preferably in a unionized environment
- Recent experience working with a computerized inventory system
- Experience in a higher education environment is preferred

### **Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:**

- Knowledge of Campus Store industry, specifically the General Merchandise and Supplies area preferred

- 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
- Familiarity with University policies and procedures preferred

Interested applicants are asked to visit: <https://recruit.uwo.ca> to apply online to job reference #18640, by midnight on March 16, 2020.

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](mailto:hrhelp@uwo.ca) or phone 519-661-2194.