

Observing Support Assistant

LO15 Grade C

Objectives

The main objectives of this post are set out below.

- 1. To provide an expert service in operating the WHT in accordance with the requirements of the observing runs, and to take responsibility for the safety of people and equipment (telescope and instruments) during night-time observing at the WHT (80%).
- 2. To carry out daytime duties in support of the ING's programme as are considered appropriate to the post holder's skills and experience, including the training required to keep up to date with technical modifications of the telescopes and instruments (20%).

Duties

Certain duties and responsibilities must be assumed to achieve the above objectives, such as:

- 1. Exercising judgement and interpretation of situations based on training, knowledge and understanding of the operational requirements of the ING.
- 2. Responding to faults on equipment or systems, calling for assistance when necessary following a defined protocol.
- 3. Preparing the building, telescope and associated equipment at least 30 minutes before sunset.
- 4. Operating the telescope during night observing in the most efficient way so as to minimise the loss of observing time, and deliver the best results for the observers.
- 5. Advising and assisting observers on instrument operation as required.
- 6. The timely filling of cryostats with LN₂, following a set of standards.
- 7. Operating and supervising ancillary equipment such as the RoboDIMM and MassDIMM as priorities and weather conditions permit.
- 8. Providing phone advice to INT observers at their request.
- 9. Carrying out WHT telescope quality control tests following set procedures and co-operating with experts in the testing and commissioning of new technologies.
- 10. Making decisions on whether to shut down or abandon the WHT and the INT in the event of, for example, severe weather.
- 11. Adjusting instrument settings during night observing when required by the astronomer, e.g. changing dichroic, gratings, and filters.
- 12. Ensuring observing log is created, data archived, important information logged, faults reported and colleagues informed at handover.
- 13. Checking that the dome, telescope and associated equipment are safely shut down at the end of the observing night.
- 14. Carrying out tasks designated by the Head of Operations, or a delegated individual, generally related to the development of instruments and equipment,

and to each OSA's individual specialist area of work, e.g. electronics, software, astronomy, optics, operations team, etc.

15. Carrying out all duties in a safe and professional manner following health and safety regulations and codes of practice.