

Deputy Chief Executive Candidate Pack



DURHAM^{SU}

Welcome to Durham SU

Dear Candidate,

We're so pleased you're interested in joining Durham SU as our new Deputy Chief Executive.

At one of the most distinctive, excellent, universities in the world, there's only one place where all students are welcome, regardless of course or College, background or interest. Durham SU has brought Durham students together for over 125 years.

Our Deputy Chief Executive will join us as we build on a long, proud, record of advancing the education of Durham students in two complementary ways: we hold the infrastructure for students to create and deliver social education to each other in over 300 student-led organisations, and we make academic education better by democratically raising the voice of students in institutional decision-making.

The successful candidate, fundamentally, will believe in the power of education to change people and society. We need a strong professional record too, of course, in building alliances, leading people, managing quality, creating opportunities, and making change. And it matters a lot to us that we do good work in the right way, so we won't compromise on our values or on quality outcomes.

You're likely to have a background in the higher education, voluntary, or membership sectors, but this is a new role at Durham SU and we're genuinely excited to see anyone who is excited about us. This is a good place to work and, as you progress through the recruitment experience, you'll speak to our students, staff and elected Officers, so you can feel confident you'll thrive here.

Durham SU does work that matters, with exceptional students. We hope you consider joining us.



Gareth Hughes, Chief Executive



Dan Lonsdale, President

Who are we?

WE ARE THE CHAMPION OF DURHAM STUDENTS

In 1899, Durham student formed the first collective organisation to represent all students across the Colleges. Student life and the work of the students' union have changed. Yet a lot of what we value and work on would look familiar to our 1899 founders. We're still students from across Durham who want the same things - to spend time together, and stand up for ourselves because we care about each other. We believe that if we do that work well, we'll achieve our vision: **Durham will be a better, fairer university because students make it happen.**

We're a membership of thousands, run by hundreds of student volunteers and elected student leaders, supported by a professional organisation. We have varied - and sometimes competing - ambitions and our new strategy celebrates our variety, and focuses on what we have in common, to further our vision. At Durham SU we use our influence to improve the academic education delivered by Durham University and we use our infrastructure to support social education delivered by students to each other.

We've recently undergone changes to our elected student leader structure and the make up of our leadership team within the students' union, making it a very exciting time for the new Deputy Chief Executive to help shape our future for students.

Durham SU is a separate organisation to Durham University and its charitable governance is overseen by a Board of Trustees made up of both student and external volunteers who contribute their expertise and experience to ensuring we are a well run organisation.



WHAT MAKES US

DIFFERENT

It's important that our values are front and centre in our new strategy. They describe our character and shape our actions, they help us make sense of the world when we encounter things we don't expect and can't plan for. We'll stick to our values, even when it's difficult, or inconvenient, or costly.

We value

We value:

- **Care** and **responsibility**, because our students matter more to us than anything.
- **Imagination** and **collectivism**, because we're grounded in our distinctive collegiate community.
- **Ambition** and **optimism**, because we believe Durham students can – and do – change the world.

WE ARE STUDENTS CHAMPIONING STUDENTS

- We're a student rights organisation, and our collectivism makes us stronger.
- We're trusted to make the best decisions about things that affect us.

WE ARE STUDENTS MAKING THE FUTURE BETTER

- We're a students' union with a purpose, relentless in pursuit of our vision
- We make change happen as students, with students, and in the student interests

WE ARE PROUD TO BE DURHAM STUDENTS

- We always recognise our successes while we strive to be better
- Our collegiate University means we do things differently. We like that.

Our Priorities

We've committed to a four-year plan focusing on these priorities:

- We'll bring students across Durham Together.
- We'll build confidence in the purpose and value of Durham Students' Union.
- We'll tackle the big issues that hold students back.

Our strategy has emerged from listening to students talk and inviting their input on the challenges they have faced over the last few years, what matters to them and what they want their students' union to be. We heard that the things that matter to students and the issues that impact them aren't new but that the context and perspective of students' experiences have been changing rapidly.

This strategy builds on the opportunities generated by how students adapt, challenge and innovate for change in their communities to strengthen the parts of Durham they value most and progress on the problems that impact them.



Our elected officers

As a democratic, membership organisation and charity we are an independent organisation. We are driven by the decisions and opinions of students and each year we elect Sabbatical Officers, who are responsible for supporting and representing their interests in various aspects of campus life.



WE'LL BRING STUDENTS

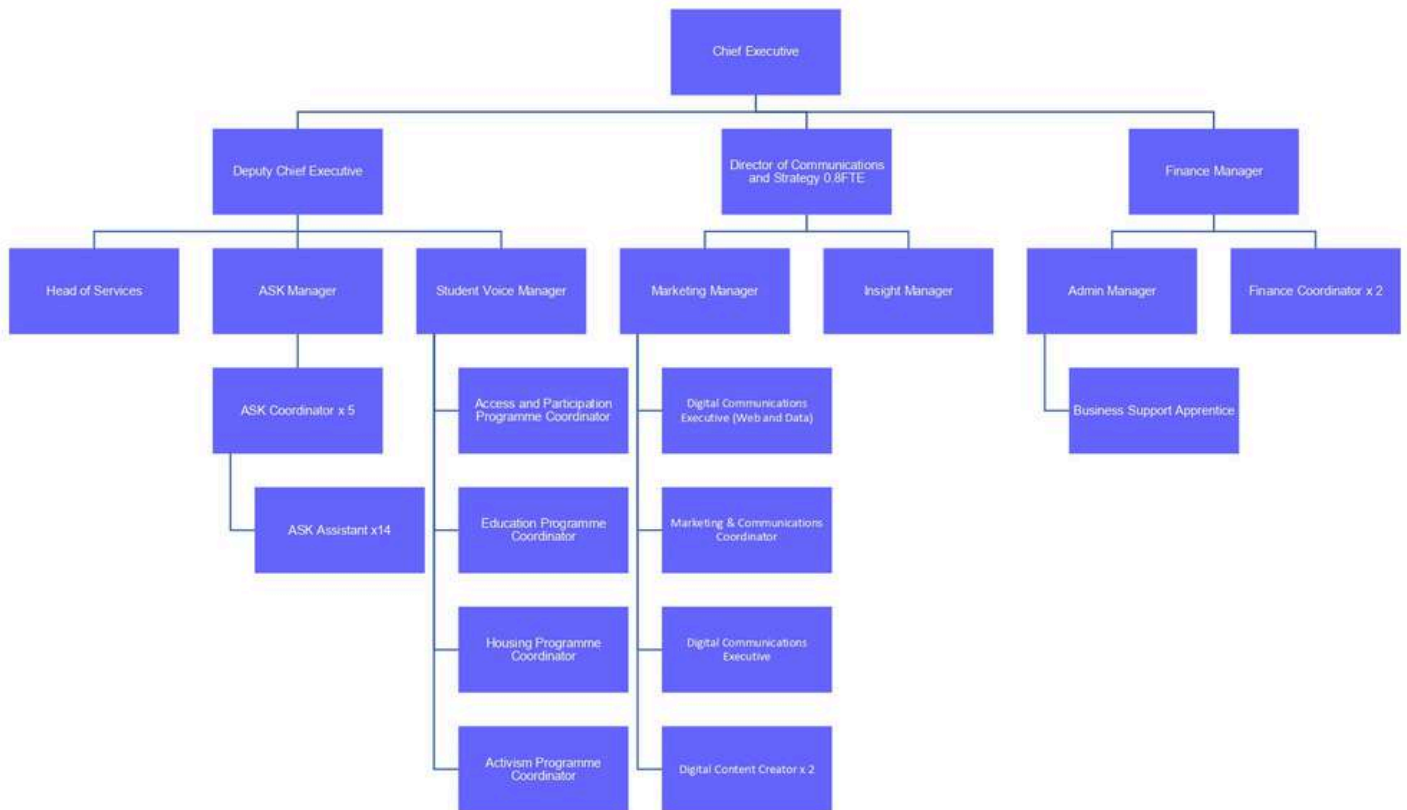
ACROSS DURHAM

TOGETHER



Our team

There is a wide range of experience at Durham SU, Every one plays an invaluable part in ensuring the effective running of Durham SU. The supportive and friendly working environment encourages everyone to work well together and the mix of people ensures that we continue to come up with ideas to improve and move Durham SU forward.



The role

Job title: Deputy Chief Executive

Working hours: Full time (35 hours per week) worked hybrid and flexibly with an assumption of work from Dunelm House, DH1 3AN as necessary

Contract type: Permanent

Salary: £49,045 to £60,274

Reports to: Chief Executive

Job Summary

The Deputy Chief Executive leads work across Durham SU to advance the students' union's mission to be the champion of students at Durham University, leading student-facing services including independent advice, student group support, and democratic services. The Deputy Chief Executive supports student leaders to make and implement decisions which further Durham SU's strategy.

Key responsibilities and duties

The Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for the performance and sustainability of the professional staff team and volunteers who deliver independent advice, student group support, and democratic services for Durham students. In particular, the Deputy Chief Executive will:

- Lead effective and efficient services for Durham students.
- Model and inspire behaviour consistent with Durham SU's values.
- Provide advice and make recommendations to student leaders, the Chief Executive, and the Board of Trustees on policy development within their area of responsibility.
- Support the Chief Executive in the development of policy and strategy which advances the students' union's mission and vision.

- Seek and maintain productive relationships with Durham SU's partners across Durham University, the North East of England, and the voluntary/students' union sector.

The Deputy Chief Executive will be accountable for:

- Excellent performance across the teams of volunteers and staff that they directly lead, against personal priorities, team plans, budgets, and standards of behaviour.
- Evaluating Durham SU's services, reporting success and improvement plans as appropriate to a range of audiences.
- Driving innovation in service delivery, in response to and in anticipation of student need.
- Coaching, mentoring, and managing student leaders, as appropriate, to respond to what democratic systems and reputable research indicates Durham students need.
- Anticipating and resolving risks to the success of Durham SU's student-facing services.
- Continuity of leadership in the absence of the Chief Executive.

WE'LL BUILD CONFIDENCE

IN THE PURPOSE AND

VALUE OF THE

STUDENTS' UNION

About you

Person specification

Qualifications

There is no particular qualification necessary for this role, but any qualification which demonstrates excellent literacy and numeracy is desirable.

Experience

We're looking for a good combination of experiences, but we don't expect you to have all of these experiences, and we don't expect you to be equally confident or strong in all of them.

- Management of people, including volunteers and employed staff, ideally including managers of teams.
- Management of projects and events that are large, longer time-frame, and complex, ideally through delivery teams.
- Management of change within an organisation which values culture as much as results.
- Working within a membership-led or democratic organisation, or an educational and people-development context.
- Building productive relationships with senior external stakeholders.

Skills

We'd like you to be able to do the following, but we know and love that you'll do it in your own particular way.

- Identifying and resolving barriers to access and success, though good use of data and relationships, and a sensitive balance of challenge, encouragement, and enforcement.
- Good computer literacy, with use of Microsoft Office applications preferred.

- Experimenting with new things, and new ways of doing things, creatively and systematically.
- Communicating with confidence and charm, helping a wide range of stakeholders understand and appreciate what you're telling them.
- Supporting others to lead, and to speak and act on behalf of you and your team, with your support.

Behaviours

Durham SU expects that all of our volunteers and staff behave in line with our principles that:

- We champion students.
- We're proud of Durham.
- We make the future better

These principles of behaviour are how we demonstrate our values. We expect that our values and your values complement each other:

- We value care and responsibility, because our students matter more to us than anything.
- We value imagination and collectivism, because we're grounded in our distinctive collegiate community.
- We value ambition and optimism, because we believe Durham students can – and do – change the world.

**WE'LL TACKLE
THE BIG ISSUES
THAT HOLD
STUDENTS BACK**

Benefits



30-days holiday annually plus 8-days bank holiday and 4-days Christmas closure



6% employer contribution pension scheme



28-hour work week in summer vacation period (10 weeks total)



Non-contributory HSF basic membership offered as a benefit



Interview Process

Stage One

Longlist interview - Monday 17th March 2024

- Remote interview
- 45 minutes long
- Interview question themes given to candidates in advance

Stage Two

Final Stage interview - Tuesday 25th March 2025

- Face to face interview
- The full process is anticipated to take around 3 hours
- Tour
- Stakeholder session activity to prepare in advance
- Panel interview with presentation
- Interview question themes given to candidates in advance
- Candidate interview preparation call available



APPLY NOW



Key Dates

Closing date: **5.00pm, Friday 28th February 2025**

Longlist interview: **Monday 17th March 2025**

Final stage interview: **Tuesday 25th March 2025**

Please ensure you have read the full Recruitment Pack before applying.

Step 1 >>> To apply please complete the [application form](#) where you can answer the following questions:

- Why are you interested in applying and how do you feel your personal values align with our mission?
- What are the key achievements and outcomes within your career that make you a strong candidate for the role?
- How does your leadership style support others in their growth and create a positive environment for empowerment?

Please respond to each of the questions with a maximum of 400 words per answer. You may wish to prepare your answers in advance in a separate document, to avoid losing your responses before you submit them in the form.

Step 2 >>> Please attach your CV

Monitoring the diversity of our applicants and their candidate experience is really important to us. Please do consider answering the optional questions in the application form.

AtkinsonHR

For an informal and private conversation about the role please contact our partners, Atkinson HR via anh@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk



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