

Job description

Post title:	Head of International Student Engagement
Salary:	£34,650 - £38,850 (plus a cost of living award will be added from August) Negotiation is possible and expected, but will result in enhanced expectations
Full/Part Time:	Full time (open to part time working requests of 0.8 FTE)
Contract term:	Fixed term, ending 31 st August 2026
Date of Writing:	April 2024
Accountable to:	Director of Student Engagement
Accountable for:	n/a
Hours	Standard hours are 35 hrs per week – these hours can be worked flexibly we are happy to discuss alternative working patterns
Location:	Usually located at the main Students' Union Building, and there is an option for some home working where duties do not need to be delivered on site (40-80% on site working)
Eligibility:	Open to applicants with relevant skills and experience who are eligible to work in the UK
Benefits	We offer staff many benefits including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual leave 30 days + Christmas close (or equivalent) + bank holidays• Employer pension contribution matched up to 8%• Hybrid / flexible working (where possible)• Enhanced sick/maternity/paternity/adoption pay• Needs based compassionate leave• Travel loan scheme• Free Manchester Academy gig tickets

Purpose of the Role

It is an exciting time to join University of Manchester Students' Union as we supercharge our international student engagement work. We believe that all students should have the opportunity to thrive during their time at the University. International students, often because of their intersecting identities, are more likely to face barriers that prevent them from making the most of university. We are committed to systematically identifying and dismantling these

barriers to involvement with all the university has to offer by ensuring all services are designed with an understanding that 1 in 4 students are from outside the UK.

You will use excellent project management, partnership building and senior stakeholder engagement skills to lead on a new area of work. You will be responsible for developing an insight led, student needs centred and operationally achievable international student engagement strategy for the union. You need to ensure that an effective understanding and appreciation of inclusion practice is weaved throughout this work. It is essential that you take a proactive approach to develop your own knowledge of inclusive practice and use this to develop the knowledge and skills of colleagues across the Union in engaging International Students. There is a rough timeline outlined in the responsibilities section for this role, and once appointed, we expect you to adjust and tweak as necessary.

The Students' Union and the International Society (<https://internationalsociety.org.uk>) merged in Autumn 2023. The International Society is a student facing brand that encompasses the community building aspect of what we'd like to do as part of a broader engagement strategy. We have good levels of engagement from international students in societies and volunteering and those that run for election to be our full-time student officers. We know our international student population is not homogenous, we're unsure if international students are getting what they need in terms of information and guidance on student life, whether there are any differences in educational outcomes and we think student jobs and employment will be important. We have really good teams who do some of this work already, so you'll be adding to services rather than creating new ones. This means you'll really be working at the cutting edge of international student engagement work. How exciting!

Typical Working Day

Time will be spent in a variety of ways. This role will be largely desk-based working with computer systems such as Microsoft Office. Writing reports for board sub-committees, managing a budget and ensuring this major cross organisational project is managed and communicated are typical activities. The role includes a large relationship building element, building on existing networks, and developing people's skills and confidence. This will involve meetings and workshops in person and on MS Teams. The office space where desk space is available is a large open plan office that can be busy at times, opportunities for homeworking are available.

Principal Duties

Role specific activity

- Develop an international student engagement strategy by March 2025 that is insight led, student needs centred and operationally achievable. We expect the strategy to cover the following areas and are open to you making alternative suggestions; educational success outcomes; access to education; effective transition into the university community; information support and guidance needed around safety, housing, visas, employment, transport, finances, digital access, wellbeing; strategic policy priorities at university,

regional and national level; community building between students of similar cultural background and of different backgrounds; skills development and access to extra-curricular opportunities such as volunteering, clubs and societies, sports, arts; and career development offerings.

- Ensure the international support offer developed and designed as a result of the strategy is embedded within existing teams across the union, university and any other partners over your time in this role. This is to avoid duplication and make existing services accessible. There is some funding to support where teams need to begin new work, which you will set targets for and monitor success against. Your role is to ensure any extra investment is having the desired impact aligned to the international student engagement strategy.
- Work collaboratively with the SU Research and Insight team and university colleagues to gather insight from existing data. Commission the SU Research and Insight team in 24/25 to fill gaps in understanding of our international student need by scoping new research. Conduct your own independent research on good practice in international student engagement in higher education institutions globally, and ground that in relevant academic and good practice standards. This should be completed by December 2024.
- Build a network of productive working relationships and partnerships with University and Students' Union teams that support the international student experience towards outcomes and goals identified in the strategy by March 2026. You are expected to have identified and developed longer term plans to fill any gaps to achieving the strategy in our current environment by September 2025.
- Ensure there is oversight and steer on this work from the International Student Subcommittee. This was formed following the merger with the International Society, and is an advisory committee to the trustee board, formed of previous International Society trustees.
- Other duties of a similar nature as required by manager

Organisational stewardship & leadership

- To guide the work of teams, participating in the development of annual operating plans to support the achievement of strategic aims, holding teams accountable for delivery against these plans
- To contribute to the development and delivery of risk mitigating strategies as they relate to departments area of work
- To ensure all team are assisting in key students' union events throughout the year such as Welcome week and elections and proactively identify opportunities to support the officers in delivering their plans
- To lead teams acting as an exemplar of the Union behaviours ensuring all staff are given appropriate support in line with the Union management framework and teams are

consistently held accountable for delivering against expected performance standards (both role performance and behaviours)

- To be accountable for the financial performance of area of responsibility taking prompt action where financial targets are at risk. Contribute to the forecasting & budgeting exercises in line with the organisational framework
- To own the policy as it relates to departmental activity, have good working knowledge of the Union policy and procedure framework as it relates to the teams' function and ensure that all teams activities are conducted in line with this framework
- To proactively contribute to maintaining the communal spaces and ensuring whole team share responsibility for managing team stores and keeping areas clean and tidy

Person Specification

Criteria	Assessed Via	
	Application form	Interview
Qualifications		
We consider applications from all education backgrounds		
Experience		
Experience of managing a project that produces a strategy, implements that strategy across a range of teams working with partners and funders from bigger organisations	✓	
Experience of coaching, managing, and developing teams to achieve high performance standards (even if not in a line management context)		✓
Managing a budget or commissioning funding for desired outputs	✓	
Experience of embedding equity and diversity in daily work activity		✓
Knowledge & Skills		
Advanced knowledge of international student issues to guide and steer strategy and programmes	✓	
Demonstrate knowledge of relevant legislation, policy, and good practice standards around the international student experience		✓
Demonstrable ability to communicate complex information and structuring communications in an appropriate format to engage diverse audiences		✓ (task)
Embedding data driven user feedback and insight into delivery plans	✓	
Proactive approach to working as part of a senior team ensuring that a collaborative approach is taken to developing cross team activity and driving organisational performance	✓	
Personal Attributes		
Self-motivated individual demonstrated through a commitment to continuing professional development, confidence in making day to day decisions and ability to set and prioritise work of teams	✓	
Values & Ethics		
Understanding of the Union values (see following section)	✓	

What are our values?

We put students at the heart of our work

We believe that student experiences are a priority and that we need to help students make the most of their journey while studying at University of Manchester. We are committed to supporting our students in their education, employment, and activities by integrating student opinions into our work. We will seek to empower and represent our students as we believe we know our students better than anyone else.

We provide a 'great experience' service

We believe that to have a lasting positive experience, we need to provide the best levels of service to students, colleagues and external stakeholders. We endeavour to provide the best support and service while promoting positivity and friendliness.

We believe in improvement/progression

We believe that to be the best we can be as a union we should be striving to develop new ideas and improve existing services to support the diverse and fast-changing needs of our students. By continually reflecting and reviewing what we do and acknowledging areas for improvement and growth we can become a sector-leading organisation. We are committed to listening to our students and our stakeholders to gain useful feedback and ideas that we can use to constantly improve every aspect of our business.

We are a community

We believe that seeking opportunities to work with students, colleagues, and external stakeholders is necessary to develop ideas and deliver activities as we recognise the passion, knowledge, and creativity of Manchester. This is important as we look at the bigger picture – we gain multiple perspectives which leads to better planning and more inclusivity. We will try and foster communities to create a sense of belonging as we continually seek to learn from our communities.

We are open and transparent

We believe that a great union should communicate openly and provide a clear reasoning in its decision making to earn the trust from students, staff and stakeholders. We must maintain active communication with students, making sure that they are a part of our decision-making process and being transparent about both our successes and failures. We need to deliver on the outcomes of our democratic processes, never diverting from the truth or creating false narratives. Job Description & Person Specification

We are inclusive

We believe that our work and priorities should reflect the whole of the diverse community we serve in way that recognises and celebrates our differences. To do this we are seeking to

include a diverse range of voices, beliefs, and values in all our work. We will identify the barriers and structures in place that are limiting students, staff, and stakeholders; seek to bring these barriers down; and examine our role in creating them.

Liberation, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement

What is Liberation, equality, Diversity & Inclusion at the Students' Union?

The purpose of the Students Union is to ensure that we are supporting and advocating for the 50,000 students of the University of Manchester.

We aim to ensure that the Students' Union is a welcoming and accessible space where all our students are treated with dignity and respect. We do this by ensuring that we are consciously removing barriers to students' participating in our many activities. As such it is an essential part of all our staff team's roles to be conscious of the kind of barriers encountered by different groups and to proactively take steps to remove them from all activity.

Collective Liberation Guide

Who & how does this role support?

This role supports the students at the University of Manchester. This role supports the students at the University of Manchester and members of the International Society (which could be students from other educational institutions or members of the wider community). There are around 50,000 students and between 25-30% of the student body are international students at the University of Manchester.

How does liberation impact on this role?

The postholder must ensure that our work in this area is accessible to all international students, and that the relationships developed between different communities of students (international and UK) are built to meet our strategic aims. All programmes must be as assessable as possible to the cohort of students they are geared towards. This role works across all student-facing teams to roll out strategies across activities to ensure the inclusion of anyone who wants to participate.