

Programmes Lead - Sector Improvement

Recruitment pack



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About Student Minds

No student should be held back by their mental health. We challenge the health sector, higher education sector and government to work with students when making decisions that impact them and we make them accountable for prioritising student mental health.

By creating and curating resources, stories and tools, we empower students to build their own mental health toolkit to support themselves and their peers through university life and beyond. Together, we're improving university communities so that every student gets the mental health support they need to reach their goals.

We're proud of the progress we've made over the last decade, and the thousands of students and professionals, leaders, funders, and policymakers involved in improving student wellbeing. But we also recognise there is a long way to go to achieve our mission. We're just getting started!

We have recently experienced significant growth and now have a staff team of 30 members and turnover of £1.8 million. There is the opportunity for this to increase further over the next few years.

Over the next ten years, we commit to:

- Continue driving positive change for students. We'll keep working with the higher education sector, health sector, and government to make student mental health a priority, and we'll continue empowering students to look after their own mental health.
- Ensuring that positive change lasts. We'll focus on preventative, sustainable, long-term changes that will benefit future generations, as well as the students of today.

You can find out more about the [team](#) at Student Minds on our website, as well as read some of the current team member's [reflections](#) on working in the charity and read about our [trustees](#), our [strategy](#) and latest [Impact Report](#).

Our Values



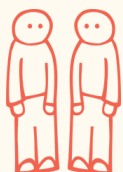
Collaborative

Teamwork and strategic partnerships help us to achieve better results. We are respectful, supportive and inclusive.



Courageous

We are willing to challenge the status quo and be decisive to shape a better future. We are ambitious, optimistic and will push the boundaries.



Empowering

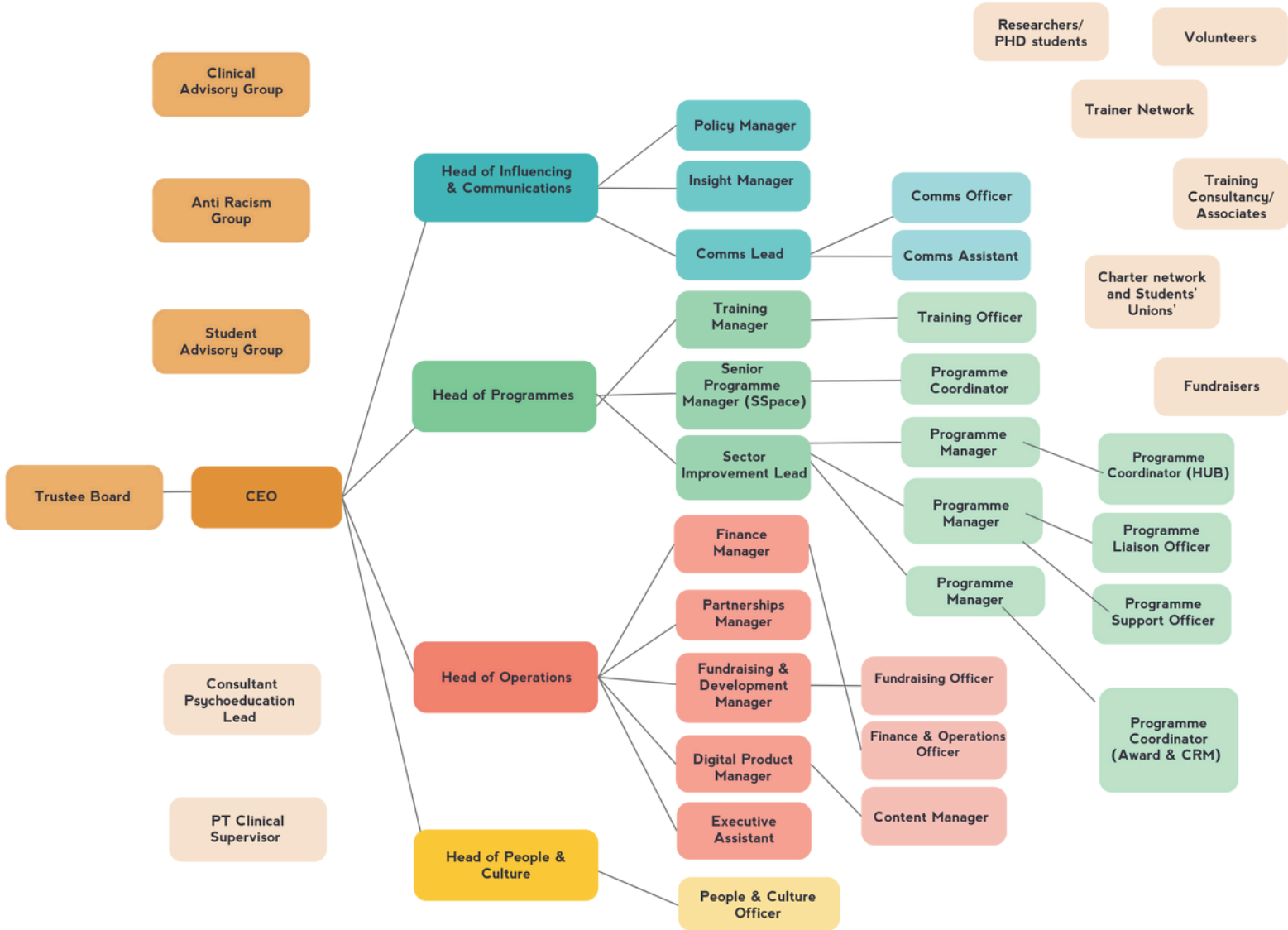
We invest in people, in the belief that they hold the key to effecting real change. We listen and mobilise the student voice.



Innovative

We strive for the best solution and the highest quality, using expert knowledge and evidence. We learn from our ground-breaking research and data to develop and grow.

Organisational Chart



About the role

The University Mental Health Charter ('UMHC') Framework was launched in 2019 and is a set of evidence-informed principles to support universities to adopt a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing. It has since been revised in 2024 and is widely recognised across the Higher Education ("HE") sector. To support the adoption of the UMHC framework, Student Minds launched an Award assessment process and holistic membership programme ('Programme') of support for universities in 2021. Through the UMHC Award and Programme, we want to ensure that every university and higher education organisation in the UK has a strategic, whole-organisation approach to wellbeing, and proactively creates conditions where all students can belong and succeed in the ways that matter to them. This is an ambitious, impactful programme that sits at the heart of the current Student Minds strategy.

The role of the Programmes Lead - Sector Improvement is to lead the team of staff who deliver the UMHC Programme and Award Assessments for universities, working closely with the Head of Programmes to set the strategic direction and be responsible for the overall oversight and delivery of the work.

There are currently 113 Universities signed up as UMHC Programme members in 2024/25. Throughout the year, members have access to practice-sharing events (both online and virtual), participation in communities of practice and development opportunities to upskill them to implement the framework in their context. The UMHC Programme draws on the expertise of both the Sector Improvement team and wider Student Minds colleagues, as well as a network of contacts from the HE sector.

When they feel ready, members of the UMHC Programme can voluntarily apply to the UMHC Award, a rigorous assessment and accreditation process that recognises those universities that demonstrate excellent practice. We currently have over 40 freelance Award Assessors who we recruit from the higher education sector, train and who deliver the Assessments, supported by Student Minds staff who fulfil Award Manager responsibilities in addition to their day-to-day roles. The Programmes Lead - Sector Improvement is ultimately responsible for the oversight of the management of the Award Assessors recruitment, training and consistency of approach.

Whilst driven by programme impact, the SI team is an income-generating team, responsible for a significant proportion of overall organisation income. We have seen rapid growth in the Programme and Award Assessment, and the Sector Improvement Team has also doubled in size. The team currently consists of three Programme Managers, two Programme Coordinators and two Programme Officers.

About the role

This is an exciting opportunity with the potential to impact 2.5 million staff and students across the UK.

We are on the lookout for individuals equipped with key skills, such as accountability, adaptability, resilience and the capability to lead a team that is constantly evolving. The role demands an adeptness at navigating change and uncertainty. We are looking for a strong leader who has:

- Proven experience managing complex programmes, demonstrating the ability to oversee multiple moving parts and deliver on strategic objectives.
- Strong commercial awareness, with the ability to balance cost, quality, and time to achieve successful outcomes.
- Extensive experience in change management, with a track record of leading teams through transitions effectively.
- Excellent stakeholder management skills, with the ability to build and maintain relationships with key internal and external partners.
- Excellent team management and conflict resolution capabilities, ensuring a positive, collaborative environment even in challenging situations.
- Public speaking experience, confident in communicating complex ideas to diverse audiences.
- Knowledge and understanding of system change approaches, with the ability to adapt to evolving needs and processes.

Though not essential, desirable candidates would also have:

- Experience leading an Award Assessment Programme
- Experience and knowledge of the higher education Sector
- Experience and knowledge of the mental health Sector



Key information

Location:	We are very open to flexible, hybrid and home-working (The role will require in-person attendance and meetings at our office in Leeds in addition to in-person events/programme activities nationwide. Travel is on average once a month).
Accountable to:	Head of Programmes
Responsible for:	3 x Programme Managers, 2x Programme Coordinators and 2 x Programme Officers, as well as relevant Award Assessors and Associates
Direct management of:	3 x Programme Managers
Hours of work:	37.5 hours per week, with flexible and consolidated working arrangements available
Contract:	Permanent
Salary range:	Band B: £35,000 to £37,595 per annum, full-time equivalent (negotiable for exceptional candidates)
Role purpose:	The Programmes Lead - Sector Improvement will oversee Student Minds' sector improvement (SI) programmes, working with the team to deliver programme objectives and provide strategic guidance and support.
Start date:	April 2025



Key Responsibilities

Leadership and development of the Sector Improvement (SI) team and function

Leadership

- Have oversight of the UMHC Programme and Award, and support the Programme Managers to ensure that deliverables, objectives and outcomes of the programmes are achieved as specified, within timescales, to budget and agreed quality standards.
- Provide line management support for the SI team, overseeing and providing mentorship to enable team members to achieve their objectives, and to progress their personal development goals.
- Support the Programme Managers to produce detailed project planning and documentation (project deliverables, success criteria, dependencies, budget management, risk management) in collaboration with colleagues across Student Minds, including escalating risks and issues as required.
- Work with the UMHC Clinical Lead, Award Panel, Senior Assessors and internal staff to continually review the Award Assessment processes, support continuous improvement and assist with individual awards where complex issues arise.
- Recruit, train, upskill and manage a team of over 40 UMHC Award Assessors to deliver the UMHC Award Assessment.
- Lead on planning and reviewing our UMHC Programme membership offer, our processes and our allocation of resources, ultimately supporting continuous improvement and the delivery of our strategic goal.
- Work with the SI team, UMHC Consultants and external stakeholders to lead the development and delivery of a programme of events and activities to support universities to develop their whole-university approach, share practice and prepare for their participation in assessment for the UMHC Award.
 - Within this work develop and deliver strategies to recruit new programme members and support existing members to engage with the programme.
- Work closely with the Programme Manager responsible for impact and evaluation to develop and embed insight gathering and impact measurement processes, linking to the UMHC and Student Minds Theory of Change models.

Delivery

- Oversee the development, delivery and continuous improvement of the UMHC Programme and Award, managed and delivered by the SI Team.
- Support the delivery of specific UMHC Programme and Award assessment activities such as in person and online events and attending site assessment visits.
- Use Project management software to lead work of the SI Team, effective oversight, reporting, task allocation and management. Upskill team members in the most effective way to utilise software to support the team.
- Maintain oversight of the development and management of digital systems to make the most of opportunities including: Project Management Software, CRM, UMHC HUB for Programme Members.

Operational planning

- Lead on detailed operational planning and programme documentation (project deliverables, success criteria, dependencies, budget management, risk management) in collaboration with colleagues from across Student Minds, including escalating risks and issues as required.
- Lead ongoing quality management and reporting.

Financial management including income generation

- Manage a complex budget across different programmes of work with different dependencies.
- Work with the Head of Programmes and Finance Manager to set and review UMHC Programme and Award fees annually, as well as setting price points for supplementary income activities to ensure full cost recovery.
- Work with relevant colleagues to maintain appropriate finance procedures as well as ensuring budget reporting requirements are agreed and met.

Strategic development

- Lead strategic planning for the UMHC including setting and meeting core objectives for the year, modelling a required for the scale of the UMHC, financial management and forecasting.
- Support the ongoing development of long term sustainable funding models and the development of sponsorship packages and other forms of supplementary income.
- Produce, collate and present written and oral reports and management information on the programmes to key stakeholders including Senior Leadership, advisory groups and funders.
- Provide strategic advice, direction and input to colleagues, supporting them to respond to complex enquiries from higher education institutions and other organisations relating to our SI work.
- Represent our SI work externally at events and conferences, and in collaboration with the Senior leadership Team attend meetings with strategic partners, government, and statutory agencies, and cross-sector working groups.

General leadership within Student Minds

- Be an active participant in Student Minds' Leadership Group, supporting charity-wide planning and decision making for operational planning, implementation of change programmes, supporting evaluation and impact measurement processes and team development strategies and consistent leadership.
- Participate in shared leadership development opportunities as required.
- Uphold the organisation's values and ensure the team upholds these, including embedding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion practices and engaging with our antiracism work.
- Provide flexible support and feedback to other project teams at timely points across the academic year within Student Minds, to enable efficient and impactful delivery.

Other duties

- Such other duties as may be reasonably prescribed by the organisation, appropriate to the grade and responsibilities of this post.
- Attend team meetings with Student Minds colleagues.
- Focus on personal development and keep up to date with research, relevant legislation, policy and practice, and other literature relevant to the role.
- Ensure compliance with Student Minds' internal procedures and all external legal requirements.
- Engage with and provide feedback on projects and strategic reports developed by other members of the team.
- Work flexibly and undertake tasks to support Student Minds colleagues as required.

Person Specification

The appointed candidate will likely have the following experiences, skills and attributes. We will provide training and support to enable candidates to grow into the role.

We are open to candidates who don't meet all the experience and skills criteria. If you are excited about the responsibilities in the role and feel you meet the minimum criteria listed below, we encourage you to apply.

Criteria	Minimum/ Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Experience and a confirmed track record of managing and delivering complex and high-profile projects and/or programmes	x	
Experience with projects or activities related to improving an organisation's culture and/or the wellbeing of its participants	x	
Proven experience of leading teams and providing line management, mentoring and/or coaching to others	x	
A sound commercial awareness and experience of setting pricing strategies (including costing) and managing budgets	x	
Experience of using a systems thinking approach to embedding change at a strategic level	x	
Experience leading a national programme at scale	x	
Experience in leading an Award Assessment Programme		x
Experience and knowledge of the higher education sector		x
Experience and knowledge of the mental health sector		x
Experience delivering workshops and/or training		x
Basic knowledge of developing sustainable business models in a nonprofit or social enterprise environment		x

(continued on the next page)

Criteria	Minimum/ Essential	Desirable
Skills and knowledge		
Developed team leadership skills. Previous experience in line management and leadership of a team	x	
Developed Programme Management skills and a proven track record in organising and delivering complex and multiple projects, familiar with project management tools and techniques	x	
PRINCE 2 or equivalent Project management qualification or able to demonstrate relevant on the job experience	x	
Experience and competent ability to use Project Management Software (for example, ASANA, Monday.com)	x	
Experienced in the use of CRM systems	x	
Demonstrated experience leading a team to develop and embed digital software to improve systems, processes and efficiency (eg- CRM, LMS, project management software)		
Evaluation and Development experience: familiar with ways of collecting, evaluation of programme data and embedding improvement processes in response	x	
Research and analytical skills; the ability to synthesise information, draw on evidence, and scratch beneath the surface of what you're being told	x	
Highly developed interpersonal skills and an ability to work with a wide variety of people. An ability to deal sensitively and diplomatically with people that have different life experiences and roles	x	
Excellent communication skills with the ability to develop compelling messages, produce concise and persuasive written information and speak powerfully to diverse audiences	x	
Excellent IT skills, with a willingness to learn how to use relevant software and applications (such as Google Workplace, Microsoft Office, Slack, CRM systems)	x	

Criteria	Minimum/ Essential	Desirable
Personal attributes		
Commitment to our vision, mission and values, including our priorities of student co-production, mental health and wellbeing, inclusion and antiracism	x	
Proactive, problem-solving abilities, able to find constructive solutions to systems and issues which affect services and projects, and foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement	x	
Ability to lead by example, inspiring and motivating teams by acting with integrity, enthusiasm, flexibility, and sensitivity	x	
Commitment to creativity and innovation, with a growth mind-set that balances ambition with self-care and reflection	x	
Ability to work on initiative, prioritising a complex workload and supporting the planning of work by others effectively to meet deadlines	x	
Comfortable switching between long-term planning, and short-term execution requiring attention to detail and accuracy		
Proven ability to thrive in a growing and developing team; ability to adapt to change and uncertainty	x	
Flexibility to travel to meetings as required within the UK and able to work evenings and weekends on occasion	x	

Benefits

We want people to thrive at Student Minds; we believe you do your best work when you feel your best. As such, our team comes first and we are proud of our culture; we offer a supportive, flexible and enjoyable place to work.

As part of our staff team, the following benefits are available:

- Generous annual leave allowance - 25 days annual leave, plus bank holidays, plus a 2-week winter closure
- Flexible working - we encourage all employees to reflect on when and where they work best and how they need to fit work around caring or other commitments
- Wellbeing is at the heart of what we do - we support staff to implement Wellness Action Plans, provide an employee assistance programme, and offer 10% of weekly working hours for you to invest in your wellbeing
- Winter Flu vaccination
- Birthday vouchers
- Learning and Development opportunities



For other benefits and more information please see our [website](#).

To apply

Our jobs are open to all.

We believe that diversity in the workplace creates dynamic, relevant organisations, fostering spaces for innovation and creativity. Embracing diversity, promoting equality, and challenging discrimination are values we wholeheartedly endorse. We warmly welcome job applications from individuals of all backgrounds.

This broader collective perspective enriches our ability to make a significant impact, and we are actively striving to enhance diversity within our team. We're looking forward to hearing from candidates who want to help us make our vision a reality. We are keen to hear from individuals with personal experience of mental health difficulties and we particularly encourage applications from men and ethnic minorities, who are currently under-represented in Student Minds.

You'll notice that we don't collect CVs at Student Minds, and instead, we have a short application form to create more of a level playing field for all of our applicants. We also ask for you to complete our separate equality monitoring form - this is kept separate from the main application process and only reviewed if you confirm you would like to be considered under our Priority Interview Scheme for candidates from an ethnically diverse background or where there is a tie-breaker in shortlisting so we can consider inviting those who are currently underrepresented in Student Minds to interview as a priority. For more information on the Priority Interview Scheme [please refer to our website](#).

The deadline for applications is Sunday 23rd of February at 11.59 pm.

Please detail your relevant skills and experience that make you a good fit for the role. Please use the person specification as a guide. You might want to use the [STAR method](#) to structure the answers you give to questions.

Please note that we reserve the right to close the application deadline earlier than anticipated if we feel we have received a sufficient number of qualified candidates.

You will hear back from us the week of the 24 February 2025 and should you be shortlisted.

There will be a two staged interview process:

- First stage: an online interview on [Wednesday 5 March 2025](#) and will involve a competency interview along with a short presentation or task.
- Second stage: In-person interview on [Wednesday 12 March](#) at our Leeds Office

For the first stage of the interview, we will provide details about the task 5 days in advance to allow candidates time to prepare and we will also provide the interview questions 1 hour in advance so that all candidates can perform at their best.

To apply, fill in our [equality monitoring form](#), and download, complete and submit the application form [via this unique Programmes Lead - Sector Improvement recruitment link](#).



Accessibility and inclusivity

We are committed to making our roles and culture inclusive. We can make reasonable adjustments to application processes, interviews, locations and working hours on a case-by-case basis.





If you are interested in applying and have particular accessibility needs, including special educational needs, please get in touch at vacancies@studentminds.org.uk and let us know any requirements you may have.

If you have any questions about the role itself, please contact Flora (People and Culture Officer) at flora.kerepesiova@studentminds.org.uk, who will share your enquiry with a member of our senior leadership team.



Find us online:

www.studentminds.org.uk

@StudentMindsOrg    



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