



GRADUATE UNION

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

*Postgraduate Engagement
Coordinator*

Recruitment pack June 2019

Dear candidate,

RE: Recruitment of a Postgraduate Engagement Coordinator to the University of Cambridge Graduate Union

Thank you for considering an application for the position of Postgraduate Engagement Coordinator.

This is a new position; the successful applicant will provide support to our Sabbatical Officers, volunteers and our members. This role will help us achieve our charity objectives, to advance the education of postgraduate students and our other members by:

1. Promoting the interests and welfare of graduate students and other members of the Union, and providing support and advice to them;
2. Being a recognised representative channel between postgraduate students and the University, and bodies external to the University; and
3. Providing forums for discussions and debate for the development of postgraduate students and any other persons who are members of the Union,

The role will involve building our engagement with postgraduate students and other members and helping students enact their campaigning plans. The Graduate Union is one of the only postgraduate Unions in the UK, and we hope that candidates will read through this pack and our website in order to understand our work.

If you are interested in applying, most of the information is in this pack or on our website: www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk. Otherwise do feel free to get in touch with me: manager@gradunion.cam.ac.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Ali Chahine, BA (Wales) MA (London) FRSA
General Manager and Chief Executive
University of Cambridge Graduate Union

Recruitment Pack

Application deadline: 11am 5th July 2019

Short listing: 5th July

Expected interview dates: week beginning 8th July 2019

All applicants will need to apply to manager@gradunion.cam.ac.uk by:
11am **5th July 2019**

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About the Graduate Union: introductory information

The University of Cambridge Graduate Union is a small and specialist Students' Union representing the postgraduate students at the University of Cambridge. It is a registered charity, number 1147864.

The Graduate Union was founded in the 1950s by humanitarian Greta Burkill, essentially as a combined soup kitchen and social hub for postgraduate students and their spouses, who she felt were neglected as a consequence of the University's focus on undergraduates. Over the years, the Union has evolved from a University-run members' club into a student-lead representative organisation, becoming first in the late twentieth century a modern Students' Union and then in 2012 a registered charity. It is officially recognised by the University, and is responsible for providing postgraduate student representation to a large number of University bodies, including the University Council and the General Board of the Faculties.

In 2016-17, the operating budget of the Union was c. £240,000. The Union's income streams include direct University support, levies paid by Colleges, and commercial income generated in the course of providing services to students (e.g. hard-case thesis binding, gown rental).

Membership profile

The postgraduate student body at the University of Cambridge is a highly diverse and international community of advanced students and early-career researchers working at the highest international standards of academic excellence.

A way of an illustration of the diversity of the community, roughly two-thirds of postgraduate students at Cambridge are from outside the UK. In addition, over a tenth of the community are studying part-time, and around a twelfth are student parents. Roughly a fifth are on taught courses, while the remaining four-fifths are undertaking research.

The Graduate Union represents all postgraduate students, mature undergraduate students, and undergraduate students in their fourth or higher year of study (e.g. clinical medicine students). In addition, the Union seeks to include the partners and children of its membership in as many of its activities as possible and includes the partners of full members as associate members.

Organisational context and partnerships

The Union operates within a complex and diverse institutional environment, a consequence of the Collegiate structure of the University and the natural evolution of students' unions at the institution over its long history. Every student of the University is also a member of one of the 31 autonomous, fiercely independent Colleges – and each College has its own students' unions (usually one for undergraduates called the JCR and one for postgraduates called the MCR).

Students are represented at University-level by two central Students' Unions to which College unions may affiliate: the Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU), which represents all Cambridge University students, and the Graduate Union, which specifically represents postgraduate and mature undergraduate students. Members of the Graduate Union are therefore also members of CUSU and their college union, and the Union works closely with these institutions to ensure the best outcomes for their shared membership.

The Union's relationships with CUSU and the MCRs are critically important. CUSU is a much larger organisation than the Graduate Union (although still small by the standards of the sector), and the two

unions share many resources, including office space and an increasing number of joint staff employed to support both unions. Although the two unions are politically independent and organisationally autonomous of one another, their shared goals and values are laid out in a memorandum of understanding between the two which commits each to a constructive working relationship with the other. The Graduate Union is better able to achieve its objects with the aid of CUSU's organisational infrastructure, and CUSU is better able to fulfil its representational duties towards postgraduate students through collaborating with the specialist Graduate Union.

The Graduate Union relies upon the MCRs in order to effectively represent postgraduate students – generally speaking, MCRs have a more direct relationship with their members while the Graduate Union is best placed to effect changes in policy at the University-level. A strong relationship between the Union and MCRs helps ensure postgraduate voices are heard by the central University'. Fostering a strong relationship with MCRs based on mutual trust and interdependence is therefore imperative to the success of the Graduate Union.

Governance

The Union is primarily governed by its Board of Trustees, comprising two full-time Sabbatical Officers, two current postgraduate students, one alumnus trustee and two external trustees. The Board has ultimate responsibility for the day-to-day management and operation of the Union, through delegation to the President, Vice-President and the General Manager. The Trustees ensure the Union remains legally compliant, solvent, and functions in accordance with the Constitution.

The full-time Sabbatical Officers are directly elected for year-long terms by the postgraduate students of the University. Presently, the President and shared GU/CUSU Welfare & Rights Officers take office in July, while the Vice-President's term of office begins in January – their term is deliberately offset to provide a measure of continuity. All full-time officers have the opportunity to be re-elected for a further term.

All other trustees are appointed by the Union's Council on the nomination of the Executive Committee (comprising all full and part time student officers). Student trustees serve for one-year terms of office and the alumnus and external trustees serve for up to four-year terms of office, all renewable for a further term.

The General Manager reports directly to the Board via the President (who is ex officio chair of the Board) and a second nominated trustee who provides a further avenue of support and direction. The General Manager's authority arises through delegation from the Board.

Democratic structures

The Union's membership is represented through the Council on which all University faculties and all affiliated MCRs have a representative. The Council sets the policy of the Union and holds the elected officers to account.

The student activities of the Union are coordinated through the Executive Committee, of which all elected student officers are members, and which is formally a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee is also responsible for maintaining a coherent record of policy adopted by the Council and developing and proposing new policies for the Council to consider.

Recent history and future goals

The Graduate Union has recently undertaken a significant expansion and restructuring as a response in part to a challenging period following the Union's conversion to registered charity status in 2012. In

the last two years the Union has established for the first time both a senior full-time permanent member of staff, the General Manager, and a second full-time elected Sabbatical Officer, the Vice-President, thereby tripling the number of full-time Sabbatical Officers.

The Union is now therefore at a stage of consolidation and strategic planning following a period of development. The organisation is in a good financial position with reliable income streams and appropriate amount of reserves. Furthermore, the recent expansion and restructuring have left the organisation with the capacity to begin expanding the range of projects and campaigns from a position of institutional security and stable governance. Further, ensuring the quality of the postgraduate student experience is of high strategic importance to the University.

The Graduate Union is also working closely with CUSU and developing plans to work closer, in order to more effectively represent postgraduate students. These plans are at the student/staff consultation stages, but we are happy to provide more information on request.

Further information

[Charity commission annual returns, including accounts](#)

[Brief history of the Graduate Union](#)

[An overview of the structure of the Collegiate University](#)

[Recent articles published on Wonkhe, a higher education blog, concerning postgraduate education](#)

Postgraduate Engagement Coordinator

Purpose: To be the lead staff member supporting our Sabbatical Officers, helping run our democratic events and improving our engagement

Salary: £23,000

Probation: 6 months, with review at 3 months

Length of appointment: Fixed Term Contract to July 2020

Leave: 28 days plus bank holidays

Pension: We are part of the Cambridge Assistants scheme, which involves 5% employer and 5% employee contributions.

1. What would the Postgraduate Engagement Coordinator do, day-to-day?

They will help prepare our Council, elections and Executive Committee. They will work with Sabbatical Officers and Executive Officers on their campaigns, which might involve preparing them for meetings or helping them develop engagement plans. They will lead on inductions, especially for Executive Committee.

They will carry out training for subject and college representatives as well as members of the Executive Committee. They will lead on our fresher and other induction period events.

They would carry out research relating to postgraduate engagement and campaigning.

2. Context/background

The Graduate Union is a growing charity in need of additional support. Currently there are three full-time Sabbatical Officers (one of which is shared with our sister charity CUSU). We have a full-time General Manager. We also have a number of shared staff with CUSU, such as the Advice Service staff. We also use the reception provided by CUSU. We also have three associate staff members: a finance clerk, an IT manager and a parent-toddler group leader. We want to provide more support on our engagement and representation fronts, mainly executed by our Vice-President, and help connect this with the work of our President who sits on numerous University committees. Finally we have a growing base of volunteers who need support in running campaigns, events and having more sustainable student engagement in their respective areas.

3. How to apply

We ask applicants to supply a Curriculum Vitae (CV) limited to two sides of A4, as well as to read through this pack in order to highlight relevant skills or experience in a cover letter – also limited to two sides of A4. This should be submitted by 11.00am 5th July 2019 to manager@gradunion.cam.ac.uk.

4. What skills are we looking for?

We are looking primarily for those who care about our members: postgraduates and mature students, and their education at Cambridge.

Though specialist skills would be helpful, you will also be contributing to work across the whole organisation. A person specification is included at the end of the application.

5. Interview

The interview will focus on your ability to work with our staff to support officers and postgraduate students. You should be prepared to explain how your skills and experience are relevant to the role.

6. Start date

To be agreed with the successful candidate, likely from August 2019.

Postgraduate Engagement Coordinator

The Graduate Union is a specialist Union representing, supporting and offering services to our postgraduate and mature student membership. The role will help in achieving this.

Purpose of the post:

- To develop, support and deliver the GU's student engagement activities working closely with the General Manager and Sabbatical Officers to deliver and develop targets outlined in GU's Strategic and Annual Plans.
- Support the Sabbatical Officers in their roles and build an inclusive team which feeds into other areas.
- Support the delivery of student democracy processes within the GU

1. Campaigns

- Support the delivery of GU campaigns, projects & schemes
- Responsible for managing progress on specific projects/campaigns by arranging meetings, and maintaining records and plans
- Provide administrative and operational coordination and support with the implementation of campaigns
- Work closely with other relevant staff to develop communication plans and strategies for campaigning activities
- Evaluate, monitor and report on the impact and success of campaigns
- Provide support with the preparation of handbooks and other relevant materials
- Encourage members to create their own campaigns and policy through the relevant Union bodies

2. Support for elected Sabbatical Support

- To support the Sabbatical Officers in engaging students with campaigning activity
- Empower Sabbatical Officers, and help them to be evidence-based in their campaigning and lobbying
- Help draft reports with the Sabbatical Officers
- Contribute to Sabbatical Officer and student trustee Induction

3. Support for the Executive Committee and Volunteers

- Contribute to a wider plan to engage other groups of students and bring them into the GU
- To deliver training to the Executive as well as volunteers and student representatives of other organisations when required
- Create a structured approach to relationships with colleges and departments and work with the colleges regularly
- Provide comprehensive support to the members of the Executive Committee to plan individual and organisation-wide campaigning priorities through the development of project plans

4. Democracy

- Support the delivery of the organisation's democracy including Council and annual elections
- Support the Chairs of the Executive Committee and Council, including taking minutes when appropriate

5. Postgraduate Enhancement

- Identify themes in postgraduate education and use these to develop related action plans
- Provide expert insight and develop briefings on relevant issues affecting students in HE, and liaising with colleagues in the Advice Service and CUSU when necessary
- Undertake detailed analysis of a range of both quantitative and qualitative data, including from the Student Barometer, and other postgraduate surveys and produce reports and briefings as required
- Undertake occasional primary and desk based research on relevant matters

6. General Duties

- Support the delivery of GU events
- Support the delivery of communication to stakeholders
- Promote the mission and values of GU through interactions with internal and external stakeholders, ensuring productive working relationships.
- Adhere to GU's Equality and Diversity Policies
- Comply at all times with GU's policies and organisational values
- Attend meetings and training events as required
- Undertake any other duties as appropriate

7. Data, Health & Safety

- Comply with all GU Health and Safety legislation and internal policies, ensuring compliance across the Graduate Union
- Take personal responsibility for Health and Safety of yourself and those around you
- Assist officers, volunteers and staff in evaluating Health and Safety
- Assist officers, volunteers and staff in the responsible use of Data
- Undertake Health & Safety training and attend meetings as required

Person Specification Essential requirements should be demonstrated before appointment and maintained in post. Desirable elements should be developed and maintained once in post as needed	Essential	Desirable	Tested at interview	Tested at application
Experience				
Designing, planning and delivering effective campaigns and projects to achieve organisation objectives, both personally and through empowering others, ideally volunteers		X		X
Experience of building strong and productive relationships with external stakeholders to deliver shared objectives	X			X
Experience of working with, supporting and empowering volunteers and/or elected officers to deliver organisational objectives		X		X
Experience of developing, planning and delivering training programmes, in particular soft skills	X			X
Experience of supporting elections in Students' Unions or similar organisations		X		X
Experience of collating information and presenting data or information in relation to desired change	X			X
Knowledge				
A thorough understanding of the current issues affecting a variety of postgraduate students. Particular knowledge of international students may be helpful.		X	X	X
A understanding of democracy and democratic organisations	X		X	
An understanding of the current issues affecting higher education institutions and students	X		X	X
A good knowledge of using engagement tools	X		X	X
Skills and Abilities				
Excellent communication skills, with the ability to communicate clearly and concisely in a positive way, choosing the most appropriate method of communication for the audience	X		X	
Sound judgement and ability to self-manage competing priorities	X		X	
Knowledge of consultation and research methods (qualitative and quantitative)	X		X	X
High level of computer literacy (using common software packages, particularly Microsoft excel)	X			X
Able to work independently and/or as part of a team	X			X
Values and Behaviours				
An individual who values diversity, shows respect for all people and works well with people who have different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds	X		X	
A strong commitment to working in a democratic and membership organisation; the ability to empower and build constructive relationships with elected officers	X		X	

committed and transparent

representation

experienced, accountable, value-driven

support with
compassion

welfare, support, empathy

**our
values**

promoting
inclusivity

freedom of expression, equality,
solidarity, equal representation,
freedom from discrimination

provide and promote
community

family, fostering communities, fun,
engagement, intergradations

promote
education and
**professional
development.**

academic & professional development,
support services

our vision:

is to be an organisation that will have a positive impact on every
postgraduate students' Cambridge experience

Ensure that our members are an integral part of University **life,**
research & education

Ensure that Cambridge is an environment where all postgraduate
students **feel welcome** & able to **achieve their full potential**

Ensure that every postgraduate student is effectively **represented**

This is our vision which enables us to achieve our mission

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