

## UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON STUDENTS' UNION

### JOB DESCRIPTION



<b>Post</b>	Postgraduate Officer
<b>Hours</b>	37 per week (fixed term for 1 year)
<b>Responsible to</b>	Board of Trustees

### Role

Brighton Students' Union provides representation, support and services to the 19,000 students studying at the University of Brighton, with a mission of *Making Student Life Better*. Currently our key focus is improving the welfare of all students.

This role is a full time, elected paid role for 12 months to be one of the lead representatives for all students.

The Postgraduate Officer takes a lead on all aspects of postgraduate life. This includes representing postgraduate academic needs, making sure that the postgraduate voice is heard within the University and encourage postgraduate involvement in extracurricular activities. Each Officer role is also assigned a campus to particularly focus on.

In addition to the representation responsibilities, the Postgraduate Officer is also a Director and Trustee of Brighton Students' Union. These responsibilities have a separate agreement.

### Representation and Campaigns

- Work closely with the Engagement team in developing the Union's postgraduate priorities.
- Encourage postgraduate students to complete the PTES and PRES surveys and then take relevant actions from the surveys to improve the student experience.
- Support the Engagement team with the training and support of PGR and PGT reps.
- Encourage postgraduates to actively engage with student life at the University.
- Work closely with SU departments to improve their services for postgraduate students.
- Support a range of SU activities and events aimed at postgraduate students.
- Work closely with the Doctoral college to improve the experience of PGR students at the University.
- Working closely with the relevant staff and officers to plan and deliver activities to meet the manifesto points on which they were elected (providing that they do not breach Union policies and procedures).
- Take on any additional campaigning responsibilities not covered by other officers as agreed with the officer team during summer training eg. prevent, information services, accommodation.
- Work collaboratively with the other officers on joint areas of responsibility.

### Committees and Meetings

- Attend committee meetings, internally in the Union and externally on behalf of the Union relating to your areas of responsibility.

- Prepare for and actively attend meetings, briefing colleagues before and afterwards as appropriate.

### **Duties of All Full Time Officers**

- Promote positive student health and welfare in accordance with the Union's Strategic Plan.
- Be the lead officer for one campus. The campus will be decided during the officer induction training.
- Ensure effective communications and engagement with students on all campuses so the Union delivers engaged student representation across its activities.
- Actively represent students from liberation and widening participation groups.
- Engage the voice of the students through active participation in Union organised student meetings.
- Work with other full-time officers in establishing a calendar of activities which is responsive to student need.
- Work closely with staff colleagues in delivering events related to areas of responsibility, including 'Hello' activities.
- Provide supportive cohesion to other full-time officers in working as an effective and well-functioning team.
- Regularly attend all campuses engaging students through a range of communications and to participate in campus development team meetings.
- Be the external public spokesperson for matters relating to students' union areas you lead upon and engage the media as needed to ensure the voice of students is heard.
- Produce and maintain an on-going record and file of significant activities and achievements in the full-time role to inform impact reports.
- Produce an effective handover file for the next full-time officer in post and be part of the handover process.
- Work with the Engagement team in identifying key issues to be engaged with stakeholders and to receive briefings in policy positions.
- Meet regularly with the CEO.

### **General duties for all staff and officers of BSU**

- Work in a manner which reflects the values and democratic structure of the Union as shown in the Union's Articles and Strategic Plan.
- Keep up-to-date with relevant legislation, policies and practices, rules and regulations relevant to the role.
- Adhere to all Brighton Students' Union policies and procedures.
- Ensure the delivery of a positive image of the Union, both internally and externally by displaying high standards of professionalism, politeness, conduct and service.
- Undertake such other duties as may reasonably be expected given the incumbent's qualifications and experience.
- Participate in and take ownership of their induction, personal development plan, departmental staff meetings and be responsible for undertaking duties with full regard for others within the conditions of employment detailed in the Staff Handbook.
- Assist in key events and activities throughout the year eg elections, open days, freshers' week and sustainability activities as required.

## Location

The Students' Union covers all University of Brighton sites. Currently this role is conducted remotely during the coronavirus pandemic. In the future, the role can be conducted with a blend of remote working and in person meetings on our campuses. Flexible working arrangements can be discussed with the SU CEO, however there would be a requirement for some in person on campus activities so working entirely remotely would not be possible.

## POSTGRADUATE OFFICER ROLE - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Being a Sabbatical or Full Time Officer (both terms are used for the same thing) is a fantastic experience for the post holders to make real changes to the student experience, in both the University and Students' Union. It is also a very unique role that is elected by the students, so this additional information is set up to give potential candidates and post holders more information than a standard job description.

### What do you actually do?

The role has many set tasks, but there is also the flexibility to allow you to pursue the issues you have been campaigning on. No two days are the same, but hopefully this gives an idea of what is involved:

**University** – You will work closely with the Doctoral College to improve the student experience for PGR students and have good relationships with key people around the University such as the Pro Vice Chancellor Education and Students. You will meet these people on a regular basis, both individually and as part of larger committees. If the University have an external assessment during your term of office, then you will be heavily involved in putting that together.

**BSU Strategic** – the Postgraduate Officer also sits as a Trustee and Director of BSU. This is the highest decision-making body in BSU and decides what the Union will focus upon. Our current strategy runs from 2018-2021, so the incoming Officer team will have a direct impact on the work the Union plans from 2021 onwards.

**BSU Operations** – you will be working every day in the Union. This role is mainly focussed on improving the student experience for postgraduates. You will do this by supporting postgraduate reps, attending university committees to represent the views of postgraduates, supporting SU staff to improve their services for postgraduates and engaging in local and national campaigns that effect postgraduate students. In addition, the Union needs your feedback to improve its own activities. This doesn't mean that you will be running all the services and departments – this is done on your behalf by the staff team – however your feedback will be vital in making sure that we are responding to the ever-changing demographic and needs of our members.

**Day to Day** – each day really will be different - this isn't a normal 9-5 job. You might be working in the evenings at student events or on Saturdays supporting University open days. You might find yourself lobbying for change for postgraduate students in University meetings, or spending the evening organising events for postgraduates to make friends at university. You will also be working closely with the Engagement team in conducting research to find out the latest issues affecting postgraduate students.

Whilst this is a busy role, there is plenty of support and experience around you in the staff team and Uni contacts, and will provide amazing opportunities that might not ordinarily be available to a recent graduate or student taking a sabbatical.

## Areas of responsibility

Each Officer role has different areas of responsibility. Some areas are also across several roles so require each officer to work collaboratively as a team.

The following table lists the Officers and their lead responsibility areas. It is not an exhaustive list, and may change depending upon the needs of the business:

Lead Officer	Lead Responsibility Areas
<b>President</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee and chair</li> <li>• Welfare</li> <li>• University Governing Body</li> <li>• Trustee board contact with Trade Union</li> <li>• Lead contact for University industrial action</li> <li>• IT governance</li> <li>• Lead external spokesperson</li> </ul>
<b>Activities Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee</li> <li>• Welfare</li> <li>• Societies</li> <li>• Sport</li> <li>• Fundraising (RAG)</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Employability</li> <li>• Student Media</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> </ul>
<b>Education Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee</li> <li>• Welfare</li> <li>• Course Reps</li> <li>• Education campaigns</li> <li>• NSS</li> <li>• Academic Processes</li> <li>• Attainment Gap</li> </ul>
<b>Postgraduate Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee</li> <li>• Welfare</li> <li>• Postgraduate societies</li> <li>• Postgraduate events</li> <li>• Postgraduate education campaigns</li> <li>• PGT &amp; PGR Reps</li> <li>• PTES &amp; PRES</li> <li>• Postgraduate employability</li> <li>• Working with the Doctoral College</li> </ul>

## The Ideal Candidate

Full training and support will be provided throughout the term of office so no experience is required, and it does not matter what 'type' of student you are. The ideal candidate will have a passion for representing student interests, enthusiasm for campaigning to make change and the dedication to be a Trustee of a Charity. These qualities are what will get you elected by the student body and help you succeed in your role.

## Eligibility Criteria

The only real criteria is that you must be a student at University of Brighton at the time of election, and have no disciplinary action that may prevent you from carrying out your role.

Students can take a sabbatical year from their studies to take up this post, so you don't need to be a final year student at the time of election. It is not possible to study full time alongside this post however due to the demands of the role.

Due to the Charity Regulations, each successful candidate will have a DBS check to ensure they meet the requirements of being a Charity Trustee. Please get in touch for more information.

## What can I get out of being a full-time officer?

Being a full-time officer is a fantastic development opportunity. Below are just some of the benefits:

- Earn an annual salary of £21,080.
- 30 days annual leave.
- The opportunity to make a real difference for current and future students.
- Have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to run and direct a large organisation with an annual turnover of £3.7 million and a membership of around 19,000 students.
- Improve your employability by learning and developing key skills in areas such as communication, team working, networking, innovation, research and problem solving.
- Develop invaluable life and work skills in areas such as project management, planning and running a campaign, advocacy.
- Network and create contacts with local and national organisations.
- Receive professional delivered training and support throughout your time.
- External coach to add to the existing staff support within the Union.

AND...

- Have an unforgettable, life changing year where every day is different.

Former officers have gone on to work in politics, advocacy, SUs, teaching, running bars, university support, charities etc. The role really does allow you to find out where you are most interested in pursuing a career – if you don't know already!

## More Information

For more information, contact one of the current officers or staff members. They would be very happy to speak to you and answer any questions that you may have.

## Important dates

- Nominations period: opens Mon 22nd February 10am and closes Fri 5th March 4pm
  - Voting opens: Mon 15th March 10am
  - Voting closes: Thurs 18th March 4pm
- \* please note online voting will be open 10am-10pm Mon, 7am-10pm Tues & Weds and 7am-4pm Thurs
- Elections count: Fri 19th March
  - Results Party: Fri 19th March, TBC
  - Start date – TBC (Normally the last week of June)