



GSA

Chief Executive Officer

Recruitment Pack



**Graduate
Students'
Association**
UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Chief Executive Officer

(Full-time, Requests for flexible working welcomed)

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA):

Established in 1965, the [GSA](#) is an independent charity and one of the UK's only dedicated postgraduate unions. We represent over 7,000 postgraduate students at the University of York and exist to be their champion: helping our members form strong communities, giving them support and advice when they need it, and advocating on their behalf to ensure every postgraduate student and researcher at York has a great experience.

Our membership is diverse and expanding quickly. Our students are all over 21, most are returning to education, and well over half come from outside the UK. We also have a growing community of distance and part-time learners. We provide a wide range of evolving services and support to meet the changing needs of our membership through the leadership of our three elected sabbatical officers

The GSA trains and supports academic representatives and other volunteers to make changes to their course and to the University, we provide a platform for students to campaign on the issues that matter for them, we help members with their welfare and offer academic advice when they need it most, and we bring people together with a comprehensive calendar of events and trips including the UK's largest dedicated postgraduate welcome week, free sports sessions, and student-led networks.

The successful candidate will be joining our small team of nine staff and three student sabbatical officers, based out of our office in the heart of campus. We currently support a combination of home and office working.

The GSA recognises that our team does not currently reflect the diversity of our membership. We welcome applications from all individuals and particularly those from backgrounds currently under-represented in our team. We are willing to consider flexible arrangements for candidates with the appropriate skills and experiences.

The Role:

The GSA is a specialist students' union, with a small, dynamic team of staff and officers. We need someone who can be responsible for ensuring effective and efficient strategic leadership of the organisation and its operational management. It's a challenging and rewarding role that will suit an empowering and supportive leader who is passionate, innovative, and organised.

The GSA will shortly launch its new strategic plan and the post holder will be expected to work with the trustees on its implementation. The successful candidate will have real opportunity to input into this process and help shape the future direction of the GSA. In autumn 2024 we will also move into a new home in a new multi-purpose student centre. The CEO will have an opportunity to work with staff and our partners to reimagine how our services will be delivered in this new context.

The successful candidate will need to balance the needs of students with the best interests of the organisation and the competing demands of external stakeholders within the University. We need someone who has a strong understanding of the HE policy environment and the issues that are important to postgraduates - as well as those that should be. You will need to lead the development and delivery of interventions to mitigate these issues.

You will work closely with a team of three elected student officers, providing guidance and supporting them to develop as individuals and student leaders. You will provide them with the platform that they need to deliver change at the University and beyond for and on behalf of our members. As one of the UK's only dedicated postgraduate unions the GSA is well-placed to inform national debates on issues that affect our members including fees, funding, housing, jobs, and more. Above all the CEO will have the confidence and empathy required to work in tandem with these student leaders, in partnership with the University and our other stakeholders, and under the guidance of our Board of Trustees.

You will also be responsible for managing the finances of the organisation as well as maintaining a close and productive relationship with the University of York, our primary funder. You will report our financial performance to the University and our own Board of Trustees, and establish medium- and long-term financial plans to ensure the GSA has the resources needed to meet its organisational aims. The GSA has a turnover of around £300,000 funded by an annual subvention and around £20,000 of self-generated income.

Duties:

- To provide support, advice, and mentorship to the elected student officers.
- To provide leadership and management to the GSA staff team.
- To instil a culture of continuous improvement, challenging the GSA to develop ambitious and sector-leading services to its members.
- To act as an interface between the Board of Trustees and the staff team.
- To ensure that the GSA's decision-making structures are productive and that policy leads to interventions that benefit our members.
- To implement the GSA's strategic framework and monitor progress against it.
- To create and maintain strong working relationships with colleagues across the University of York and in the wider community.
- To identify, monitor, and manage risks to the organisation.
- To ensure the financial health of the GSA.
- To create an inclusive working culture that encourages progressive and proactive work and provides opportunities for staff development.
- To ensure the GSA is governed well and meets its statutory and legal requirements.

Responsibilities:

Strategic Leadership

- Implementing the GSA's strategic framework, ensuring that it is operationalised in a way that is sustainable and provides positive short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes.
- Developing effective performance measures to allow staff, trustees, and partners to clearly understand our success.
- Ensuring that the GSA gets the most out of its staff team and provides them with the opportunities they need to develop their skills and deliver on our organisational targets.
- Ensuring that all GSA staff are aware of our aims and objectives and how their roles contribute to them.

Management Team

- Providing effective and empowering leadership to the management team and supporting them to enact the same for all staff in the GSA.
- Supporting the management team to develop, take ownership of, and evaluate operational strategies for their areas of work.
- Ensuring that the management team are able to work effectively, openly, collaboratively, and inclusively with each other and with the elected sabbatical officers.
- Agreeing and monitoring objectives, KPIs, and development goals that are consistent with the GSA's strategic framework.

Operational Management

- Setting and managing the operational budget for the GSA. Maintaining oversight of the GSA's financial performance and providing regular updates and analysis as required to funders and the Board of Trustees.
- Developing and reviewing key performance measures that drive continuous improvement and that allow the Board of Trustees and other stakeholders to clearly understand our success.
- Providing a suitable working environment for staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring the GSA is compliant in all relevant employment regulations and is able to meet its other statutory requirements.
- Ensuring that all services are delivered effectively and according to the GSA's governing documents.

Policy and Governance

- Providing support to the Board of Trustees. Ensuring their meetings are facilitated and ensuring proper induction and training is available for new board members.
- Working with the Chair of the Board to set agendas and prepare papers.
- Advising officers, trustees, volunteers, and staff on their legal responsibilities. Ensuring that decisions are taken in a way that adheres to our constitution and bye-laws.

- Ensuring compliance with our legal and financial obligations under the Charities Act.
- Maintaining a strong knowledge of other legal requirements that affect the GSA, including where legislation changes. Acting to ensure compliance when necessary.

Other

- Providing empowering and collaborative mentorship and allyship to our elected student officers; ensuring that they have every opportunity to deliver on their manifesto pledges and objectives so that the University of York offers the best possible experience for postgraduates.
- Maintaining a detailed understanding of the HE sector, best practice in student engagement and support, and changes to the postgraduate environment. Positioning the GSA to act quickly and efficiently when our members' needs may change.
- Ensuring that the GSA has a consistent, open, and strategic approach to creating strong relationships with our members, the University, and the wider community in York. Improving our reputation with them all.
- Positioning the GSA to become influential nationally on issues that affect postgraduates.
- Working with partners at York University Students' Union to ensure that all students at York benefit from the expertise and opportunities offered by both unions.
- Ensuring that the GSA is run sustainably and in a way that is consistent with the values of our members.
- Undertaking other duties commensurate with the scope and spirit of the role as required.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience within a higher education environment	A postgraduate qualification or equivalent experience working with postgraduates Evidence of continuous personal and professional development (including qualifications in management, mentoring, or finance)
Experience	Leadership and management in an organisation of similar size or complexity. Building partnerships and navigating stakeholder relationships at a senior, strategic level. Provable success leading change. Implementing and evaluating strategic plans. Empowering, leading, and motivating staff and volunteers effectively.	Working in a not-for-profit, membership-focussed, or democratic organisation. Working with elected officers.
Knowledge	Knowledge of the higher education sector and the key trends, issues, and policy impacting postgraduate students and students' unions. Good understanding of effective financial oversight and the ability to make decisions based on financial management.	Knowledge of the role of students' unions and their democratic processes.

	<p>Knowledge of charity law and other legislation affecting students' unions or a clear ability to develop this knowledge quickly.</p>	
<p>Skills and Abilities</p>	<p>Strong influencing and advocacy skills and an ability to apply them in a complex organisational environment and to include a range of stakeholders.</p> <p>Excellent written and spoken communication skills.</p> <p>Effective organisation, planning, and administrative skills.</p>	<p>Effective research and comprehension skills.</p>
<p>Personal Attributes</p>	<p>Commitment to creativity and innovation in continuous service improvement.</p> <p>Commitment to student leadership.</p> <p>Commitment to equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Empathetic, conscientious, and responsible.</p> <p>Resilient, calm, and tenacious.</p> <p>Commitment to the GSA's values.</p>	

Closing Date:	Friday 25th November 2022
Shortlisting Date:	Friday 2nd December 2022
Interview Date:	Wednesday 14th December 2022
Commencement Date:	ASAP, depending on notice period
Salary:	Up to £38,800, depending on experience
Hours of Work:	Full time, 37 hours per week. Due to the nature of the role, working hours may exceed this total as business needs fluctuate. The GSA offers flexible working between the hours of 8am and 6pm, staff must be present for core hours between 10am and 4pm. The post may involve evening and weekend work.
Place of Work:	The Graduate Students' Association, University of York, Heslington, York. The post may require some minimal travel within the UK. The GSA currently allows the team to split their time between in-person and remote working, depending upon business needs.
Benefits:	30 days holiday per year plus all public holidays.
Duration of Post:	Permanent, subject to a satisfactory 6 month probation period.
Reporting to:	GSA Board of Trustees, via the Chair of the Board.
Application forms:	Should be returned via email to recruitment@yorkgsa.org
Contact:	We strongly encourage applicants to get in touch for an informal conversation regarding this role. Please contact Helen Coombs, HR Manager, on hr@yorkgsa.org . She will be able to arrange a call with the Interim CEO or the Chair of the Trustee Board.