



**Head of Student Engagement
Full Time
Recruitment Pack
April 2024**





Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the position of Head of Student Engagement at Kent Union and for wanting to work with us. We are a vibrant, student-led organisation with a bright future ahead of us. After a challenging few years, we are going from strength to strength with a renewed focus and energy to amplify the voice of our members and ensure they have a fantastic student experience.

Our driving force is our new strategy, which sets out our priorities over the next two years. Students are the reason Kent Union exists. We are there through their university journey. Our amazing staff and volunteers work towards improving their experience, whether it's helping them with their studies, practicalities of life or to have fun.

We are a strong and successful students' union that delivers a broader range of services than most other UK Students' Unions. We run student opportunities, events and services that are sector-leading and engage thousands of students every year.

The goals in our strategic plan going forward are to be 'student led', 'here for you' and 'a place of opportunities' for our students. We do this by being an expert on and advocate on behalf of students, campaigning and challenging for a positive and inclusive experience for them and empowering them to make the most of the many opportunities available to them.

Kent Union is a great place to work. We were re-accredited with Investor in People Gold status in December 2014, and were accredited with Leaders in Diversity in 2013. We were the first students' union in the UK to achieve Investing in Volunteers status and have been included in the Sunday Times 100 Best Not-For-Profit Organisations to Work For, for 11 years, placed 17th for 2020.

I hope you will want to apply and you should find everything you need in this pack about the role and about working for Kent Union, but if you do have any questions you can contact us at kentunionhr@kent.ac.uk.

Zaid Mahmood
Students' Union President




Information about the post

Are you passionate about creating vibrant and inclusive communities within a Higher Education setting? Kent Union is seeking a proactive and visionary individual to lead our Student Engagement department as the Head of Student Engagement. In this role, you will have the opportunity to strategically drive initiatives that enhance the student experience, foster a sense of belonging, and cultivate a dynamic campus community.

Key Responsibilities include:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Developing and implementing engagement strategies aligned with Kent Union's vision and values to create a cohesive and inclusive campus community.
- **Operational Oversight:** Overseeing the planning and execution of student group activities and events, ensuring high-quality programming that enhances the student experience.
- **Financial Management:** Overseeing budgeting and financial controls for the department, optimizing resources to achieve impactful outcomes.
- **Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement:** Fostering productive relationships with university stakeholders and external partners to enhance student engagement opportunities.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Upholding health and safety standards within the department, implementing best practices for student activities and events.
- **People Development:** Mentoring and supporting a team of dedicated staff, empowering them to achieve departmental objectives and personal growth.

We're proud about our academic year's engagement. The Big Fair in January brought in nearly 3,000 attendees highlighting our student community's enthusiasm. With over 10,000 active members in near to 250 student groups, including nationally recognised award-winners, our campus showcases exceptional talent and dedication. Our Give it a Go programme and events have drawn over 3,000 attendances, offering exciting opportunities for students to connect and explore new interests.



If you are a strategic thinker with a passion for student engagement and community development, we invite you to apply for the position of Head of Student Engagement. Join us in shaping the future of student life at Kent Union!

This pack should provide everything you need to support your application. It contains:

- Job description
- Person specification
- Copy of full advert
- About the role
- Application and selection process and timetable



Why work for us?

We're Bold

You'll be working for an organisation that is innovative and challenges the status quo to stand up for students and ensure they have the best time at University. You'll get to directly shape what we do and pioneer new areas of work.

We're Supportive

We offer minimum of 37* days of annual leave, time off for volunteering, generous wider benefits and defined benefit pension scheme. We're also really flexible as we understand that life isn't 9-5 and we'll always look at how we can best adapt to meet your needs; this includes the ability to work remotely.

We're Inclusive

We are an organisation that champions equity and diversity and works to embed this in everything we do. We positively encourage applications from all individuals irrespective of their gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, religious beliefs or disability.

And It's Great Fun!

We are always working hard to improve the student experience but we have a great time doing it. You'll be joining a team of passionate and friendly people and get to be involved in all the incredibly random fun things we do that make Students' Unions such amazing and unique places to work.

*Entitled to 23 days' leave, increasing by 1 day a year to a maximum of 28 days; 6 'customary' days' leave, normally taken over Christmas; and 8 Bank Holidays (full-time equivalent).



Information about the role

Job description:	Head of Student Engagement
Department:	Student Engagement
Reports to:	Director of Engagement and Belonging
Role purpose:	To spearhead innovative engagement strategies that cultivate a vibrant sense of community, foster deep belonging, and elevate the student experience

Duties and Responsibilities

Operational Duties

- To oversee the team's function, developing new ideas in line with Kent Union's strategy that contribute to a sense of community and belonging.
- To have strategic oversight of all student group and Give it a Go activity, ensuring high quality provision.
- To review the funding model for student groups, developing an approach that ensures value for money and a quality member experience.
- To champion equity, diversity, and inclusion by developing targeted strategies that bridge engagement gaps and cultivate a community where everyone feels at home.
- To oversee risk management i.e. finance, health and safety, reputation, GDPR etc for the department ensuring systems and processes are in place to manage it appropriately.
- To have responsibility of Kent Union's events calendar; to collaborate with the University of Kent to ensure a co-ordinated approach to events on campus, avoiding duplication.
- To oversee the development of opportunities for students staying on campus during vacation times and reimagine how Kent Union delivers support for University Open Days.
- To work alongside the Director of Engagement and Belonging to oversee Welcome and other intake points across the academic year. To lead on the delivery of Welcome Fair in September and Welcome Back Fair in January.
- To oversee all behaviour risks amongst student groups; to investigate high level student disciplinary matters and have responsibility for the interpretation of the Student Disciplinary Policy.
- To liaise with University staff and other key stakeholders, endeavouring to develop constructive, mutually beneficial and strategic relationships. Key stakeholders include Kent Sport, Campus Security, Student Conducts and Complaints, Student Support and Wellbeing, the University's Student Experience Team and Resident Life Team.


- To work closely with elected officers, providing mentor and operational support, empowering them to drive impactful change.
- As a member of Kent Union's Senior Management Team (SMT) to contribute towards the achievement of the strategic plan.

People Responsibilities (if any)

- To co-ordinate the work and monitor the workloads of direct reports, ensuring that staff levels are adequate and efficient.
- To lead on the recruitment of career staff in the team, ensuring that the roles fulfil the department's needs.
- To undertake performance reviews of direct reports, in line with Kent Union policy.
- To effectively lead, coach and mentor people to help achieve their own potential.
- To actively review, plan and evaluate individual training needs, encouraging a learning and development culture.
- To effectively communicate individual, team and organisational goals to all team members through the development of the department operating plan.
- To oversee the implementation of best practice in volunteer management, ensuring our volunteers are supported and equipped to run their groups effectively. Including, induction, training, reward and recognition and on-going support.
- To oversee and lead on creating a health and safety culture within the department, developing a clear approach for how processes and practices can be instilled within our student groups and activities.
- To oversee the health and safety of our members through the completion of training, risk assessments, safety checks, inventories, event planning and trip lists in line with Kent Union's Health and Safety Policy.
- To oversee that our current processes, systems and procedures are in line with our Policy to ensure they are effective and easy to follow.

Financial Responsibilities

- To oversee, via delegated budget holders and manage the budgets for the department, ensuring adherence to Kent Union's financial procedures. This includes overseeing the production of the relevant annual budgets and in-year monitoring.
- To maintain financial controls and ensure that the Finance Department receives all relevant financial information promptly, in accordance with Kent Union's financial procedures.
- To ensure best value for money is obtained through overseeing the current contracts for leisurewear, playing kit and transport (minibuses).

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- To oversee the implementation of student group finances on our new accounting software Ipllicit.

Expected Behaviours

- To attend training sessions, and appropriate meetings as and when required by Kent Union
- To contribute to the positive image of Kent Union with students, University and the local community.
- To lead by example and demonstrate a full understanding of the organisation's democratic structures
- To ensure systems are in place to reduce Kent Unions' impact on the environment.
- To act as an ambassador for Kent Union and show loyalty to the organisation, abiding by the Union's Constitution, policies and procedures at all times.
- To encourage open feedback and debate from team members.
- To lead by example on own continuous personal development.
- To undertake other tasks and responsibilities compatible with the level and nature of the post as required by your manager from time to time to support the achievement of Kent Union's strategic plan.

This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

What we're looking for

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.				
Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at application
Generalist management qualification		X	X	X
Health and Safety management qualification		X	X	X
Experience	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at application
Experience of managing individuals or teams of people (paid staff or volunteers)	X		X	X
Experience of working with and ideally leading volunteers to achieve outstanding results		X	X	X
Experience of financial management, including responsibility for a significant budget and achieving challenging financial targets.	X		X	X
Event/activities management experience	X		X	X
Knowledge	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at application
A strong knowledge of health & safety legislation and best practice in health and safety management		X	X	X
Understanding of best practices in working with, supporting, and empowering volunteers, preferably in a higher education setting	X		X	X

Skills and Abilities	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at application
Sound judgement and ability to manage competing priorities and a demanding workload in a high-pressure environment	X		X	X
Proficiency in IT, particularly Microsoft Office	X		X	X
Ability to operate effectively in a complex environment, with political skills and acumen to develop productive relationships	X		X	X
Strong project management skills; the ability to lead projects successfully from initiation to completion.	X		X	X
Values & Behaviours	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at application
Demonstrated commitment to continuing professional development	X		X	X
Strong commitment to equality of opportunity, fostering inclusivity and removing barriers to diversity	X		X	X
Team player mindset, actively contributing to building successful teams, celebrating others' successes, and supporting individual and team goals	X		X	X
Dedicated to working in a democratic and membership organization, empowering and cultivating constructive relationships with elected officers	X		X	X



A bit about us

Why we're here – our mission

We are a charity that supports students at the University of Kent; we are:

Student led

Here for our members

A place of opportunities for our members

Why we do it – our beliefs

We believe every student at the University of Kent should have the opportunity to try out new experiences, have fun, make new friends and be part of a community; we believe every student should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential in life, have a voice in society and make a difference. We believe that Kent Union is integral to empowering students to realise this belief.

Where we're going – our vision

Our vision is to provide the best student experiences on the planet.

How we're perceived – our values

Bold – we are brave and courageous; we stand up for students' rights; we are innovative and we challenge the status quo.

Inclusive – we welcome all people and appreciate their uniqueness; we are champions of equality and diversity.

Supportive – we look out for people; we want students to succeed in life so we offer transformative experiences for them to get involved in; we ensure our staff have a healthy work-life balance.

Staff and Management Structure

Kent Union employs approximately 416 staff to provide services for its members. Staff are of two types: approximately 300 student staff, who work whilst completing their studies at the University of Kent and 116 career roles – professionals who have made working at Kent Union part of their career.



The important HR bit

Where we work:

We have five buildings over the University of Kent campus, from where we deliver services for students, including advice, entertainment, volunteering experiences, a nursery and shops.

Address: Mandela Student Centre, University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NW.

There are bus links to the campus and the nearest train station is Canterbury West, which is approximately a 20-minute walk. There are also parking spaces available on the purchase of a permit and the campus also has plenty of cycle parking spaces.

When we work:

Kent Union recognises the importance of helping its employees balance their work and home life and so we have a Flexible Working Policy in place. We have many different ways in which staff can work which includes earlier or later starts, compressed hours, part-time hours and term-time only contracts.

Where we can staff have flexibility in how they work. If staff wish to work some of their week remotely, and we can accommodate this, they can do so, with some key touch dates when they will be required to work on campus.

Any employee can make a request for flexible working. Whilst we cannot guarantee to accommodate a flexible working application, we do guarantee that we will carefully consider any request made. Our standard working hours are 9am to 5pm, 35 hours per week, with an hour unpaid lunch break.





About the role

Summary of terms

- This is a full-time, permanent position.
- The contracted hours are 35 hours per week
- This post will be based at University of Kent, Canterbury Campus.

Any other information:

Staff are typically expected to work on average 3 days in the office.

Salary

This post is Grade:

9-10

of Kent Union's pay scale.

Post holders usually start at point 1 within the pay grade, subject to experience which is

£c33-36k

and move up one incremental point annually, subject to performance.

Probationary arrangements

This post is subject to a 6-month probationary period, with 1, 3 and 6-month reviews.

Notice Period

The notice period for this position is:


8 weeks

Annual Leave Entitlement

The post holder is entitled to 23 days' leave, increasing by 1 day a year to a maximum of 28 days; 6 'customary' days' leave, normally taken over Christmas; and the 8 statutory leave days for England (full-time equivalent). Total entitlement is therefore 37 days in year 1, rising to 42 days after 5 years.

Pension

The post holder is entitled to join the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL), Start pension scheme with PensionsPlus (salary



sacrifice), in which Kent Union contributes 16% and employees contribute 6% of salary

Hours of Work

The contracted hours are 35 hours a week, with flexibility over work hours and times.

Benefits

Kent Union is committed to facilitating a healthy work-life balance and has cutting edge flexible working policies. Below is a list of some of the staff benefits:

- BUPA Health Cash Plan
- Generous holiday entitlement
- Generous pension
- Maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption and grand-parent leave
- Career break
- Time off for volunteering
- Time off for emergencies and compassionate leave
- Flexible working requests
- Time off in Lieu
- Short notice annual leave days (or 'duvet days')
- Workplace Nursery Salary Exchange scheme
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Length of Service rewards
- Staff recognition scheme
- Christmas and other social events

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

We have recently implemented our new EDI strategy 2023-28 the Strategy is here to ensure equity and inclusion are a priority for Kent Union. Please see the full document here [Link](#)

Annually we review racial diversity within our workforce and it is a key priority for us to improve racial and ethnic diversity amongst our workforce, and as such we particularly welcome applications from Racially and Ethnically Marginalised People (REMP) and have introduced a REMP Priority Interview Scheme.



Pre-employment checks

All job offers are conditional on the receipt of two satisfactory references.

We are also obliged to check your identity and obtain proof of your right to work in the UK, which you will be asked to provide at interview if you are successfully shortlisted.

Induction and training

All new staff benefit from an induction from the HR Team and their own team, as well as ongoing support and personal development.



How to apply

Application and Selection Process and Timetable

Position advertised	w/c 22/04/2024 12:00
Applications close	19/05/2024 17:00
Shortlisting	w/c 20/05/2024 12:00
Interviews	03/06/2024 09:00

Applications

To apply please download and complete an application form from our recruitment website kentunion.co.uk/careers and email it along with the Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form to kentunionrecruitment@kent.ac.uk; please ensure that you pay particular attention in your application to detailing how you meet the requirements of the person specification.

The Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form will be separated from applications prior to short-listing.

Completed applications must be received by:

19/05/2024 17:00

Website

Kent Union's website contains further background information about Kent Union to help potential applicants. Potential applicants are encouraged to look at the website prior to applying; the website address is kentunion.co.uk

Further Information and Questions

If you require further information, please contact:

Name	Rebecca Green
Job title	Director of Engagement and Belonging
Contact number	01227 824 200
Email address	r.j.green@kent.ac.uk

More information is available at kentunion.co.uk/careers

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

We have recently implemented our new EDI strategy 2023-28 the Strategy is here to ensure equity and inclusion are a priority for Kent Union. Please see the full document here [Link](#)

Annually we review racial diversity within our workforce, and it is a key priority for us to improve racial and ethnic diversity amongst our workforce, and as such we particularly welcome applications from racially and ethnically marginalized backgrounds candidates and have introduced a Racially & Ethnically Marginalised Peoples (REMP) Priority Interview Scheme.

The Racially and Ethnically Marginalised Peoples (REMP) Priority Interview Scheme

We recognise that applicants from racially and ethnically marginalised backgrounds may have experienced additional barriers when applying for new roles.

Therefore, we are taking positive action to address an under-representation within our organization. If you meet the minimum criteria (at least 80% of the “essential” criteria in the person specification) and are from a REM background, you’ll be guaranteed an interview.



If you are a REM applicant and would like to be considered under our guaranteed Interview scheme, you must indicate this by selecting the relevant box on the Diversity Monitoring Form.

If you do not select this box, your application will be considered alongside all other applications. The selection decision at interview will be based on the most suitable candidate, regardless of background or protected characteristic.

Job advert

Job title	Head of Student Engagement
Annual Salary	£c33-39k
Hours per week	35

- Generous pension and benefits
- 37 days' annual leave (rising to 42 after 5 years) (full-time equivalent).

Thank you for your interest in the position of Head of Student Engagement at Kent Union and for wanting to work with us. We are a vibrant, student-led organisation with a bright future ahead of us. We, alongside many organisations, have needed to make difficult decisions over the last year, but are building back stronger with a renewed focus and energy to amplify the voice of our members and ensure they have a fantastic student experience. Our driving force is our new strategy, which sets out our priorities over the next two years. Students are the reason Kent Union exists.

We are there through their university journey. Our amazing staff and volunteers work towards improving their experience, whether it's helping them with their studies, practicalities of life or to have fun.





Information about the post

Kent Union seeks a proactive and visionary leader to drive our Student Engagement department as the Head of Student Engagement, cultivating vibrant and inclusive Higher Education communities.

In this role, you'll strategically enhance the student experience, foster belonging, and optimize campus engagement. Responsibilities include developing engagement strategies, overseeing activities and events, managing budgets, fostering stakeholder relationships, ensuring health and safety compliance, and nurturing team development.

Join us in shaping the future of student life at Kent Union!

If you require further information, please contact:

Name	Rebecca Green
Job title	Director of Engagement and Belonging
Contact number	01227 824 200
Email address	r.j.green@kent.ac.uk

More information is available at kentunion.co.uk/careers

Kent Union is committed to the principles of equity and diversity and we have recently introduced a REMP guaranteed interview scheme, full details of which can be found in the Recruitment Pack.

To apply please download and complete an application form from our recruitment website kentunion.co.uk/careers and email it, along with the Diversity Monitoring Form to kentunionrecruitment@kent.ac.uk.

Closing date	19/05/2024 17:00
Interview date	03/06/2024 09:00