

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Democracy Coordinator
Location:	The post will work primarily at Oxford SU's main office (currently Worcester Street, Oxford). We expect staff to be on campus 60% of the time.
Working hours:	37.5 hours per week
Contract:	Full-time, fixed-term for 1 year, with possibility for extension
Salary:	£29,659 (subject to inflationary increase end of March '25)

Oxford SU Transformation

In 2024/25 Oxford SU is going through a Transformation. We're reviewing every aspect of what we do, why we do it and how we do it. We're looking for innovative, creative and intellectual staff to support us through this process – people who can think big whilst also making sure that the day-to-day gets done.

Oxford SU is a student-led organisation. You'll be working with exceptional elected leaders and student volunteers across a wide range of projects – balancing your experience and expertise with active student representation and input. We work in a high-support, high-challenge environment – we are a small and relatively flat staff team which means our staff use their initiative and work together as a high performing team.

A major output of the Transformation project has been a complete overhaul of our democratic structure. In May 2025 we'll be launching a new model, putting Oxford University's unique common rooms at the centre of our new representative democracy structure. Alongside this, we'll be rethinking how we support common rooms and build infrastructure to enable common rooms to thrive.

Our new democratic structure is currently under consultation, but at the moment it is likely to be made up of a Conference-style democratic structure (known as Conference of Common Rooms) where representatives from each common room from each college of the Oxford University come together to set policy and take action. We'll be supporting marginalized voices and cross-college communities through 30 part-time volunteers whose role will be to represent their constituents to the University, alongside our 4 elected officers who are also full-time employees. Our 'RepComs' (Representative Communities) will bring together students with protected characteristics to make sure that our policy, organisation and work is inclusive.

We're looking for someone with experience of working within democratic structures who comes with strong relationship building and organising skills.

Job Purpose

- To ensure that the Oxford students' union remains a democratic and active students' union. This will include developing, delivering and continually improving democratic procedures.

- To build strong relationships with common rooms and colleges at the University of Oxford, this might include identifying new infrastructure projects for the SU to take forward.
- To equip common room representatives to advocate on behalf of their members within their colleges, providing high-quality training and support, developing datasets, insights and policy for common room representatives to use in advocating for themselves and others.

Responsibilities

To ensure that the Oxford students' union remains a democratic and active students' union. This will include developing, delivering and continually improving democratic procedures.

- Overseeing and delivering the full range of democratic procedures across the students' union including elections, referenda and Conference of Common Rooms
- Working with the wider Student Engagement Team to manage and support the relationship between our democratic procedures and Conference of Common Rooms and other representative spaces such as RepComs and part-time volunteers
- Working with students, trustees, sabbatical officers and staff to continually review and develop our democratic procedures, ensuring in particular that they are inclusive and accessible to all
- With particular reference to elections, overseeing the SU's annual leadership elections, taking a whole-year approach to candidate identification, as well as delivery of a high-turnout election, including acting as Deputy Returning Officer, and coordinating student election helpers
- Designing and delivering high-quality training resources which enable all students to actively engage in our democratic processes
- Working with students to develop motions and ideas into workable policy or actions
- Liaising with SU senior leadership including the Trustee Board to ensure that any policy or actions are properly risk assessed and in line with the SU's bye-laws and articles
- Organising, facilitating and minuting meetings, working groups and other activity, ensuring that our democratic calendar is delivered and actions are completed
- Work with the Communications Manager to own and deliver a strategic communications plan which drives engagement and transparency in the SU
- Ensuring that the democratic processes are regularly evaluated for effectiveness and working within the structures to implement a cycle of continuous improvement.

To build strong relationships with common rooms and colleges at the University of Oxford, this might include identifying new infrastructure projects for the SU to take forward.

- To work with common rooms to drive engagement in the students' union's democratic structures
- To work with common rooms to identify infrastructure, projects and support that the students' union could provide for common rooms
- To work with common rooms to strengthen their representative legitimacy within their individual colleges
- Design, develop and own the SU's common room stakeholder map, supporting improved relationships across the collegiate institution
- Keeping the SU's CRM and database up to date
- Regularly communicating the organisation's outputs, outcomes and impact to the membership and externally

Working with the elected Officers of the Students’ Union to equip common room representatives to advocate on behalf of their members within their colleges, providing high-quality training and support, developing datasets, insights and policy for common room representatives to use in advocating for themselves and others.

- To provide high quality training and support for common room representatives, ensuring proper infrastructure for handover as well as providing a regular training programme
- Identifying key policy targets within and across colleges, supporting representatives to collect data, policy & insights, equipping individual common rooms to deliver impactful change within their own colleges
- Providing comprehensive Deputy Returning Officer support for common rooms, supporting them to access our online voting system and deliver their own elections democratically

General Duties & Responsibilities

- Promote the mission and values of Oxford SU through interactions with internal and external stakeholders, ensuring productive working relationships.
- Adhere to Oxford SU’s Equality and Diversity Policy and demonstrate commitment to its progression
- Comply at all times with Oxford SU’s policies and organisational values
- Attend meetings and training events as required
- Have a flexible approach to duties and work, in particular, adopt a teamwork style across the departments and activities of Oxford SU
- Undertake any other duties appropriate for the grade and responsibilities of the post that may from time to time be reasonably requested after appropriate consultation and joint agreement

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with volunteers, students or campaigners • Experience of delivering training • Experience of working within a democratic organization or structure • Experience of working with others to support the delivery of project and impactful outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of delivering democratic processes with a similar membership organization • Experience of working with elected officers • Experience of working with a CRM or website development • Lived experience of studying or working at Oxford University
Skills, Knowledge & Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong analytical skills with the ability to understand and navigate complex structures • Ability to build relationships with stakeholders at different levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the roles and boundaries of non-political staff members in political organisations • An understanding of developing constitutions and governing documents

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong negotiation, partnership building, and networking skills. • Policy analysis & development skills • Report writing skills • Excellent communication, writing, and presentation skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the UK higher education sector • Knowledge of different UK voting systems such as single transferable vote
Values & Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passionate about supporting and enhancing the student experience • Demonstrates creativity and innovation • Collaborative and team-oriented, fostering a positive and inclusive work environment • High-support, high-challenge approach to working as part of a team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politically astute and comfortable navigating complex power dynamics whilst remaining neutral

Date Completed:	February 2025
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