

ALL **ABOUT U** – JOB DESCRIPTION

DEPARTMENT OFFICER

Department	Student Engagement
Reports To	Student Engagement Coordinator (Academic)
Location	Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh and Galashiels

ABOUT US

We're Heriot-Watt University Student Union, an independent charity buzzing with energy, driven by and for our students. We're all about doing good, that's why all surplus funds generated through Liberty's Café, Geordies Bar and the Student Union Shop are channelled straight back into crucial student support services like our Advice Hub. So, yes, we're a charity, but we also mean business.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At HWSU, diversity isn't just celebrated; it's our strength. We thrive by bringing together voices from all walks of life, and we're excited for you to help us champion this mission. At HWUnion, you'll find more than just a job - you'll find a community eager to welcome your talents. Let's do something great together.

ROLE OVERVIEW

You'll be acting as a key part of our undergraduate academic representation system, helping to be the bridge between students, Class Reps, the Student Union and the University for your department on students' learning experience. You'll help to make sure the voice of students in your department gets heard, and that feedback is turned into action.

To empower and champion the incredible work you do, training and support will be available to help you be well on your way to success in the role. This position is designed to be flexible to fit around your studies, with working hours that work for you and the Student Union.

As a Department Officer, you'll do a great deal to help us enhance students' academic experience. For this, you'll receive a stipend of £300 for the year, split into a one-off payment of £150 per semester, given that your engagement has been satisfactory, and key tasks have been completed.

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WHAT YOU'LL DO

- **Active participation** – Attend and contribute updates, feedback and ideas at fortnightly Department Officer meetings, chair your department Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC), participate in academic-led union events and review reports and student views on School Learning and Teaching committees and in Academic Reviews.
- **Team leadership** – Support and maintain regular contact and promote engagement between Class Reps in each year group across the department, delegating and guiding feedback to empower Class Reps to problem solve and resolve issues.
- **Relationship builder** – Meet with Year Coordinators, Heads of Department, Staff Reps and Associate Executive Deans for Education and Student Life and other key learning and teaching staff to co-develop solutions to problems faced by the students you represent.
- **Record keeper** – Stay on top of the work and achievements you make, supporting the production of handover documentation and keeping an eye out for actions that need progressing and flagged in your department to ensure the student voice remains accountable.
- **Rep ambassador** – Support academic staff advertise and recruit Class Reps where there are gaps in each department, delivering induction or lecture shout outs and providing information to interested students.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Engaging etiquette:** Ensure that you are ready and equipped to bring feedback and contribute to discussions on students' academic interests, sharing your thoughts and perspectives to guide and engender change.
- **Team leader:** You thrive on leading a team of engaging and switched on Class Reps, supporting them by offering advice on approaching issues and solutions.
- **People person:** You know how to build and drive new and existing relationships with key staff and student stakeholders, navigating challenging scenarios and tackling them diplomatically.
- **Organisational guru:** You know which meeting you need to attend, what you need to prepare, what you should speak up on and how to capture actions to drive changes to represent the student body.

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YOUR SUPERPOWERS

- **Communicative flair** – You're confident with words, whether engaging with Class Reps to offer support to putting your perspective forward in busy meetings.
- **Creative thinker** – You know how to consider problems from different angles and perspectives and sharing your approach with your peers.
- **People person** – You're approachable, friendly and can build and maintain relationships with students and staff alike.
- **Keen and intuitive** – You are always ready to show up, help and get involved in various academic activities and spaces.

VALUES YOU'LL CHAMPION

- **Inclusivity:** Make sure all our activities and communications are welcoming and make every student feel valued.
- **Student Focused:** Keep student needs at the heart of everything you do, building a vibrant and supportive academic community.
- **Team Spirit:** Collaborate effectively with staff, other Department Officers and students, creating a positive and engaging environment.

JOIN US

If you're fired up about improving the student experience and ready to get stuck into a fast-paced, supportive and slightly chaotic environment, we want you on our team. Help us deliver the behind-the-scenes magic that keeps students informed, included and inspired.

THE CORE BITS

ACTIVITIES

PRINCIPAL DUTIES

- **Provide support, guidance and mentorship** across your Class Rep team, helping them to achieve and advocate for the student voice across your department.
- **Attend and contribute** to key academic meetings, whether this is with your Department Officer peers or facilitating roundtables or stalls at academic union-run events to ensure active involvement in relaying the student learning experience.

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- **Engage and encourage** students to step forward and get involved as a Class Rep if there are gaps in your team to ensure you know what's happening across your department.
- **Maintain and develop** key relationships with Student Union and University staff to support the work and purpose of our academic representation system at every opportunity.
- **Create and administer** a clear log and diary of activities and involvement in projects and key academic representation work, supporting any handover documentation, student voice reports or engagement in Academic Reviews.
- **Chair and lead**, in partnership with university staff, your department's Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) to ensure the student voice oozes and is held accountable and adequately recorded.

You may occasionally be asked to take on other tasks that support the team's goals – flexibility is appreciated. Any other duties considered appropriate for the role by the Line Manager.

These duties are a guide to the work that the post holder will initially be required to undertake. Other duties or a change of duties may be necessary from time to time.

PERSON SPECIFICATION	Essential	Not essential
Enrolled as a Heriot-Watt Student until May 2027	x	
Proactive and takes initiative – spots what needs done and gets on with it	x	
A 'go for it' attitude – proactive in identifying opportunities, tackling challenges, and driving initiatives forward	x	
A passion for improving the academic experience – motivated by the opportunity to be a key voice for students' academic interests and an eagerness to resolve issues.	x	
Strong organisational and time management skills – can juggle tasks and keep things on track	x	
Good written and verbal communication skills – clear, friendly and student-appropriate	x	

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Comfortable using email, online forms, and Office tools (e.g. Outlook, Word, Excel)	x	
Positive attitude and willingness to muck in wherever needed	x	
Works well independently but knows when to check in with others	x	
Listening and being responsive – knowing when to pause and reflect on an approach by being attentive.	x	
Confident in talking to students and staff in person or by email	x	
Good problem-solving abilities – capable of proposing different approaches and lenses to identify informed solutions.	x	
Experience working with or supporting other students		x
Experience of being a class rep or another representative		x
OUR VALUES – YOU SHOULD BE		
Student-led – putting students first in everything you do	x	
Empowering – helping students take ownership of their communities and projects	x	
Fun – bringing energy, creativity, and positivity to the role	x	
Welcoming – making every student feel valued and heard	x	
Brave – willing to challenge barriers and push for real change	x	

For further questions or discussions about the role, please contact the Student Engagement Coordinator (Academic) via email at Jay.Brown@hw.ac.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!