



WELCOME TO THE GUILD

Head of Finance

Candidate Information Pack





WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in coming to work at the University of Exeter Students' Guild. We are privileged to represent and enhance the experiences of over 26,000 students at the University of Exeter. As an independent charity, we offer a wide range of opportunities, services, and support to help students get the most out of their time at University.

Why is it an exciting time to be joining the Guild?

We are looking for someone who is eager to help us become a sector-leading organisation dedicated to helping students love Exeter and ensuring every person in the Guild is working towards that mission. This is a truly exciting opportunity to join an organisation that is really going places. Based across one of the most beautiful university campuses in the UK, the Guild offers a flexible, supportive, and collaborative working environment and has a huge appetite for innovation and new ideas.

We are looking for someone who can provide.....

- Financial Oversight and Leadership: Ensuring smooth finance operations, oversee budgeting, and develop strategies to support organisational goals.
- Effective Communicator and Culture Builder: Foster a genuine business partnering environment with all stakeholders, whilst reinforcing a culture of strong financial management.
- Innovative Revenue Diversification: Drive innovation by exploring new income streams, leveraging a solid understanding of charity finances and ethical values.

If this sounds like you, We really hope you'll want to join us in helping students to Love Exeter, we can't wait to meet you!



Alex Martin
Guild President



Alison Chambers
CEO

ABOUT US

WE EXIST TO HELP ALL STUDENTS LOVE EXETER

We do this by shaping an excellent student experience for all students at Exeter, by empowering students to take their place in the world and to make a positive difference.

We have been on an exciting journey over the last few years. From the transfer of our commercial outlets to the University and changes to Guild leadership, to redefining our approach to democracy – it's been busy!

We know we're not there yet and still have a way to go, but we're really excited about this journey that will (as always) have students at the heart of everything we do.

WHAT WE DO

We provide a whole host of opportunities for students to get involved with, such as societies and volunteering, advice and support. We represent the student voice and help them to make change. We pursue our purpose through:

- **Influencing** the Exeter student experience to ensure it is both a high quality, value for money experience for all students, and transforms their lives.
- **Collaborating** with students to ensure there is a supportive, inclusive, empowering, and enriching community at Exeter for every student. Students are proud of Exeter and feel they belong to the community here.
- **Connecting** Exeter student life to the wider world, ensuring that whilst studying and beyond, our students and graduates are skilled and networked.

OUR VALUES

COLLABORATIVE

EMPOWERING

**RADICALLY
INCLUSIVE**





HOW WE'RE RUN

The Students' Guild sits at the heart of the student experience which encompasses representation, support services, student activities and volunteering.

Our charitable purpose is the advancement of education of students at the University of Exeter for the public benefit.

FINANCE AND FUNDING

The Students' Guild operates independently, and is funded primarily by the University through an annual block grant.

OUR TRUSTEE BOARD

The Guild is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are responsible for ensuring that we are acting within the best interests of Exeter students. The Board of Trustees is made up of five Full-Time Officers, five Student Trustees and five external Trustees, who are volunteers from external organisations that add knowledge and expertise to what we do.

Our Trustee Board is accountable to the Charity Commission and ensures that we make sound financial decisions, act within the law and respond to the needs of our members. Responsibility for the day to day operating of the Guild is delegated to the Chief Executive and staff team.

The Guild President is the Chair of the Board of Trustees. They are responsible for chairing Board meetings, leading the performance management of the Chief Executive and acting as lead ambassador of the Guild to external stakeholders and the public.



WHAT WE DO

ACTIVITIES

The Students' Guild offers approximately 300 societies on campus, meaning that there is something for everyone to dive into, either as an experienced devotee or someone wanting to try something new. From the Doctor Who Society to Exposé our student newspaper, we cover a wide variety of hobbies, interests and cultures.

Our Activities team supports Exeter students to raise money for a variety of causes, helping make a positive difference to local, national and international communities. We have over 13 dedicated fundraising groups on campus, as well as our student-led group, Exeter Raise and Give (RAG), organising a multitude of events and challenges for Exeter students to take part in.

STUDENT VOICE

Democracy and collegiate decision-making are the core parts of what we as a students' union do, and we make sure that student voice is a central factor in shaping the student experience and the decisions affecting their education. We run Elections twice a year for the students who lead and represent all students, and support student leaders to make change.

ADVICE

The Guild provides support to students with problems they might be experiencing during their time at University. Our experienced advice team offers a wealth of information and helps with students' worries, from course problems and landlord issues to health worries or money difficulties.

“No day is the same at the Students' Guild, which is why I love working here! We support so many incredible and inspiring students during their time at Exeter, and it's one of my favourite parts of the job to work with the ideas they come up with and see them come to life!”

Emily Jameson - Student Activities Manager



OUR FULL TIME OFFICERS

The Full-Time Officers are elected each year by, and from, the student membership of the University. Our Officers take a year out of their studies (or immediately after graduating) to lead the Guild, work on campaigns they're passionate about, and to represent students' interests at the highest level in the University.

Our 2024 - 2025 Full-Time Officers are:



Alex Martin
Guild President

As **Guild President**, I lead the Full-Time Officers to make sure that we are working for you. I regularly meet with students, the community, the Vice-Chancellor and University Senior Management to make sure your voice is being heard and that decisions being made benefit you and other students.



Sebastian Racisz
Education Officer

As **Education Officer**, I help students make sure that their academic needs are met. This includes across learning and teaching, assessment and feedback, learning resources, postgraduate research and supervision, academic mitigation and support.



Kira Brookes
Student Living Officer

As **Student Living Officer**, I represent students' voices on the issues that impact them outside of their studies. This includes housing, financial support, student safety, living in the local community and sustainability within the Guild.



Thomas Tran
Communities and Equality Officer

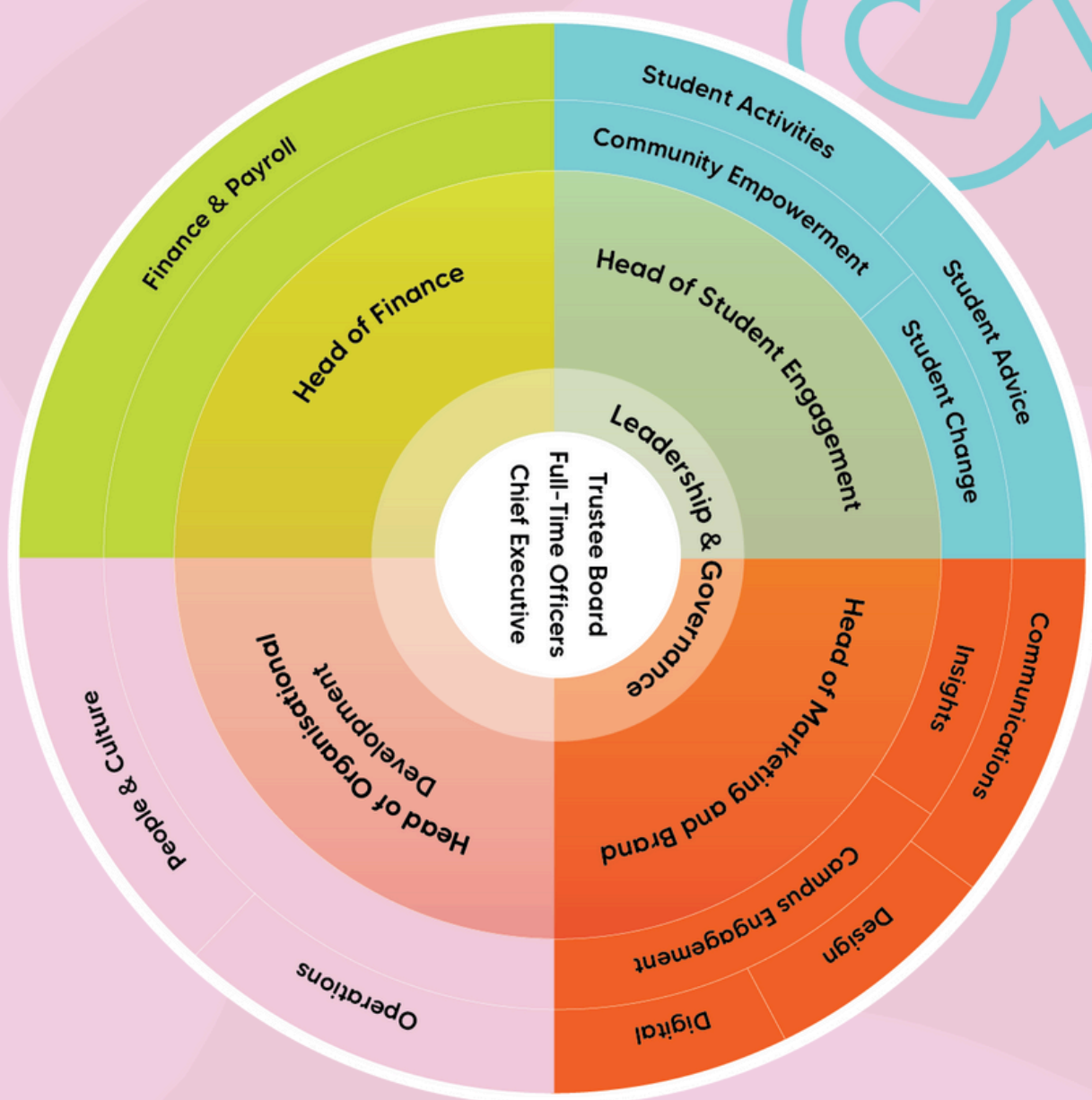
As **Communities & Equality Officer**, I make sure students from different communities and underrepresented groups are celebrated, supported and represented during their studies. I also support students to remove systematic and structural barriers impacting them within the Guild, University and beyond.



India Walton-Salmon
Societies and Employability Officer

As **Societies & Employability Officer**, I make sure societies, student-led groups and student-led events are supported and championed within the Guild and University. I also make sure that students have access to development opportunities that enhance their student experience and employability.

OUR TEAM STRUCTURE



“

Working at the Students' Guild is a rewarding and enriching experience. Every day brings exciting opportunities to learn, grow and have an impact with our work. People are friendly and supportive and work well together. The most rewarding aspect of all is knowing that our work directly impacts the experience of talented young people many of whom will go on to be our country's future leaders. I have been at the Students' Guild for over seven years and would thoroughly recommend working here.

”

Luke Appleton - Digital Manager



[Find out more about the Guild's talented and passionate team here.](#)



WORKING AT THE GUILD

OUR LOCATIONS

The University of Exeter has some of most beautiful buildings and grounds in the country, including lakes, parkland, woodland, gardens and even an outdoor swimming pool to enjoy throughout the year.

Although many of our services are based on the University's Streatham Campus, the Guild also has a strong presence at the St. Luke's campus, which is just over a mile away.

Our main office address is: Devonshire House, Stocker Road, Exeter, EX4 4PZ.

OUR BENEFITS

Working at the Guild comes with loads of great perks, including:

- Paid time off to support with caring responsibilities, volunteering, life and family events
- A personal development budget of up to £300 for you to use on your own development
- Regular individual, team and organisation-wide learning and development opportunities
- Sustainable travel incentives including cycle to work, bike storage and bus services
- A total of 27 days holiday per year, plus bank holidays and Winter closure
- Enhanced paid time off for new parents and for fertility treatment
- Confidential employee advice service and assistance programme
- Paid attendance at industry conferences and networking events
- Regular team wellbeing days and organised social activities
- University Parking Permit Scheme for qualifying postcodes
- An additional 2 days' leave for religious holidays
- Discounts and employee rewards via Perkbox
- Up to 6% employer pension contributions

WORKING AT THE GUILD

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING

We understand that balancing work and home life isn't always easy, and the Guild is a great place to achieve that balance. We genuinely care about our people being able to thrive both at work and at home, and we're proud to empower our colleagues to work in a hybrid way, and to structure their working week in a way that helps them to be at their best and deliver outstanding services to our members. We welcome suggestions and requests for flexible working, including part-time working, job shares, condensed hours, and homeworking.

AN AWARD-WINNING EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

We think that the Guild is an exceptional place to work, but don't just take our word for it!

In 2022 and 2023, we were proud to have our efforts recognised by NUS Charity as part of their annual Employee Engagement Awards. We have won not one, not two, but SIX fantastic awards that demonstrate the important commitment we've made to People & Culture, staff development and wellbeing here at the Guild.

85%

of our people agree that working at the Guild is good for their personal development and growth
(Best Companies, 2024)

89%

of our people believe that they can make a valuable contribution to the Guild's success
(Best Companies, 2024)





RADICALLY INCLUSIVE

OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

Being Radically Inclusive means that we celebrate diversity, champion anti-oppression and equal opportunities, and create inclusive communities for all our students.

To do this well means having a commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workforce, where everyone is empowered to shape our culture and challenge our ways of working.

We are committed to ensuring that people with a diverse range of skills and experience are encouraged to apply and develop their career with the Guild. We will strive to remove the barriers that prevent people from applying to join our team, and ensure that our application and selection processes are inclusive of and accessible to people with a wide range of skills and lived experience.

OUR GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME

The ACEVO and Voice for Change Home Truths report in 2020 highlighted a significant lack of representation of Black and Asian individuals in senior roles within the charity sector and the huge lack of opportunity for Black and Asian individuals to begin, develop and succeed in their careers in the sector.

We recognise that this lack of opportunity is compounded for Black and Asian people with intersecting identities, including individuals from the LGBTQ+ community and disabled people. We'd therefore particularly welcome applications from candidates from these communities and operate a guaranteed interview scheme to support this.

You will be able to opt-in to this scheme as part of the application process. Decisions made at interview will be entirely based on skills and abilities demonstrated as part of the selection process.

90%

of our people agree that people at the Guild care about each other (Best Companies Survey, 2024)



LIVING IN DEVON

ABOUT EXETER

Exeter is a small city that packs a big punch. It has a rich history and a real sense of individuality. Its varied cultural and independent arts scenes are embraced by proud locals, and the city is renowned as one of the foodie capitals of the South West.

Exeter is located in the heart of Devon, surrounded by miles of countryside and set right on the coast, surrounded by beaches, hills and a cityscape of medieval gothic and Georgian architecture.

Excellent road, rail and air links make Exeter conveniently close to the rest of the UK. Exeter is considered to be the main rail hub within the south-west and is linked to most lines in Devon, including Paignton, Exmouth, Barnstaple and Okehampton, and is also well connected by train to Bristol, Plymouth and London. Exeter airport serves Newcastle, Norwich, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow and many international destinations. The advantage of being so close to the M5 also makes it especially easy to visit other places by car.

RELOCATING

If coming to work at the Guild would mean relocating, we'd love to help. We're so confident you'll love it here, that we'll even provide a relocation allowance to help with your moving costs.



WHAT TO EXPECT

APPLYING

You'll find instructions for applying on page 17.

GETTING HERE

If you're coming to meet us in person, our main space is at our Streatham Campus, and we're in Devonshire House (Stocker Road, EX4 4PZ). We recommend that you arrive around 15 minutes before your interview time. More information will be provided with your interview confirmation, including where to go when you arrive.

We have a smart casual dress code – there is no need to wear a suit!

THE INTERVIEW

The interview is a useful way for us to get to know you, and gives you the chance to meet the recruiting manager and some of the people you will be working with, as well as ask any questions you might have.

When you apply, you will also have the opportunity to tell us about any adjustments you might need during the selection process, or anything we can do to make the process more accessible for you.

If you'd like to submit your application in a different way, please e-mail peopleandculture@exeterguild.com.

USING AI TO HELP WITH YOUR APPLICATION

We get it – writing application letters and answering questions takes time, and it's sometimes hard to find inspiration and know where to start. We therefore recognise that some candidates might use AI (such as Chat GPT) to help them write their application. This can lead to some challenges that might impact your application. So, we've put together some tips to help you avoid some of the common pitfalls. **[Read them here.](#)**

THE ROLE

JOB TITLE:

Head of Finance

WORKING HOURS:

Between 21 and 35 hours per week (our preference is 0.6 FTE, 21 hours however we are open to explore a range of working patterns)

SALARY

£53,000 to £60,000 (pro-rated)

REPORTING TO

Chief Executive Officer

DIRECT REPORTS

Finance Manager

ROLE PURPOSE

To lead and direct the Finance department to deliver a comprehensive service to the organisation and its stakeholders, supporting the Guild to achieve its strategic goal of helping all students to 'Love Exeter.' This means taking overall responsibility for all finance functions including setting the financial goals, budget, forecast, and policies that align with the Guild's vision and mission.

The role will enhance business partnering by ensuring high standards of customer service and collaborating with the Senior Leadership Team to embed strong financial management across the Guild. The Head of Finance will inspire confidence and empower colleagues, managers, trustees and other stakeholders with the information they need to make sound financial decisions.

ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- Collective leadership of the Students' Guild as a member of a high performing senior leadership team.
- Development and delivery of organisational and finance specific KPIs.
- The provision of accurate and informative financial information within an agreed timeframe including monthly management accounts.
- Leadership of a budgeting and forecasting process that enables the organisation to make informed decisions.
- Accurate and timely submission of returns to required regulatory bodies, including financial, company and charitable returns.
- Smooth and efficient management of external and internal audit processes and excellent administrative standards across the Students' Guild.
- Effective performance management and development of colleagues within the Finance team, ensuring a strong focus on customer service and continuous improvement.
- The finance function is an effective business partner that supports the delivery of strategic goals across the Guild.



THE ROLE

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

- Support the development and implementation of the Guild's long-term financial strategy including identifying opportunities for income diversification.
- Work with the Senior Leadership Team to devise and implement systems that give excellent finance management information to inform quality decision making.
- Contribute to building a strong culture of effective finance and resource management.

DELIVERY

- Lead on reporting to the Trustee Board and its committees on the Guild's financial planning and performance.
- Support the finance team to partner with managers to deliver innovative finance and budget planning solutions.
- Produce guidance, provide support for and oversee the Guild's budgeting and re-forecasting process, promoting best practice.
- Ensure systems are in place to guarantee that transactions and reconciliations are correctly processed, interfaces with the main accounting system are operating effectively and that errors are detected.
- Oversee the operation of the Guild accounting system and associated processes (including ensuring month and year-end procedures are completed) and ensure the effective implementation of key financial processes (including invoicing, payments, reconciliations, banking and central billing systems).
- Manage cash flow / reserves and ensure timely production of monthly management accounts.
- Collaborate with the Senior Leadership Team and Trustee Board, providing data and analytics for informed decision-making.
- Oversee financial responsibility and budget ownership across the Guild.
- Oversee the payroll function, ensuring all staff are paid accurately and on time.
- Ensure excellent administrative standards relating to finance are in place throughout the organisation and deliver an outstanding internal customer experience.
- Support the risk management and business continuity planning process, including attending University meetings where required.
- Maximise opportunities for streamlining systems and processes across the Guild where they interface with the finance system.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Role model the Guild's values and collaborate with senior leaders to ensure a collaborative, inclusive, and empowering working environment, actively challenging misaligned behaviours.
- Align the department with the Guild's strategy, ensuring team members understand their contribution to the mission and vision.

THE ROLE

- Ensure excellent delivery standards across the Finance Team.
- Manage staff within the team effectively providing coaching, 1-2-1s, support, performance management and development.
- Effectively manage the resources of the organisation including managing the activities of the department within agreed budgetary parameters and forecasting, preparing, and managing the annual budget for the Finance cost centre.

STAKEHOLDERS

- Ensure that the Trustee Board and Full Time Officers have the papers, information and advice they need to facilitate good decision making.
- Collaborate with the senior leadership team to ensure that the finance function supports managers across the organisation to develop their financial literacy and enables them to contribute effectively to good financial management and budget optimisation.
- Identify, build and maintain effective relationships with senior leaders, managers, and external partners.
- Manage important relationships with key external partners including auditors and University stakeholders.

COMPLIANCE

- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and procedures in relation to financial and governance requirements - including company and charity law, the Education Act, GDPR etc.
- Support the finance team in staying up to date on relevant policies, regulations and legislation.
- Maintain up-to-date systems, policies, processes, and procedures.
- Ensure statutory returns are submitted on a timely and accurate basis, including to the Charity Commission and Companies House.
- Ensure asset registers are accurate and maintained.

OTHER

- Actively engage in student-facing projects and activities of all kinds as required.
- Be an enthusiastic advocate for student leadership and the organisation's values.
- Maintain own professional networks and promote the Guild on a local and national level.
- Attend Leadership Team meetings, Trustee Board, committees and other meetings as required.



THE PERSON

EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- Proven experience in a finance management role, with a focus on supporting finance business partnering.
- Financial management of monthly accounts, budgets, forecasts and cashflows, and managing financial month-end and year-end processes and reporting.
- Knowledge of VAT rules and principles, payroll processes and legislation, and charity finance requirements.

ABILITIES

- **Business Partnering:** Able to demonstrate knowledge of effective business partnering models, and an ability to align finance activity and processes to organisational strategy and business needs.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Able to build and maintain effective relationships with senior leaders, managers, trustees and external partners.
- **Data and Reporting:** Able to communicate finance reports and management information, and make complex accounting concepts accessible to a non-finance audience.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** Demonstrates a strong understanding and commitment to DEI principles, and the ability to integrate this into processes and practices.
- **Financial Management and Accounting:** Able to use finance software confidently, and use digital systems and tools to improve efficiency and drive continuous improvement.
- **Budget Management:** able to manage departmental resources and budgets effectively.

CHARACTERISTICS

- **Teamwork:** taking the time to understand yourself and those around you, so that you can collaborate effectively across teams and achieve shared goals.
- **Insight:** able to spot issues and think creatively about how to solve them.
- **Accountability:** taking responsibility for your personal development, challenges, and successes, and being aware of the impact of your work

VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

- A demonstrable commitment to the Guild's values.
- Shares a genuine interest for contributing to the leadership of a sector-leading membership charity and championing student leadership.



HOW TO APPLY

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE:

12pm on Monday 19th August 2024

FIRST STAGE INTERVIEWS (REMOTE):

Thursday 5th September 2024

FINAL INTERVIEWS (IN PERSON):

Thursday 12th September 2024

YOUR APPLICATION

Please ensure you have read the recruitment pack carefully before applying. On the online application form you will be asked the following questions related to the role:

- **Why are you interested in applying, and how do you feel your personal values align with our organisational values?**
- **What are the key achievements and outcomes within your career that make you a strong candidate for the role?**
- **Can you explain your approach to presenting financial information, and how this may differ for different stakeholders?**

You may wish to prepare your answers to the questions on the form in a separate document, to avoid losing your responses before you submit them.

AtkinsonHR

CLICK HERE TO APPLY


MARBLE
MAYNE

For an informal conversation about the role and application process, please contact Nida Ashraf at Atkinson HR Consulting: careers@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk

