Role Profile

Role title:	Research Assistant
Salary:	£13.45 per hour + holiday pay
Full/Part Time:	Part-Time
Contract term:	Zero Hours, Fixed-Term until July 2027
Accountable to:	Research Assistant Supervisor & Insight Coordinator
Accountable for:	Insight & Data for Student Experience, Experience & Market Research
Hours:	Approximately 2-8 hours per week during term-time
Location:	Usually located at the main Students' Union Building / with an option to work some hours remotely
Eligibility:	Open to applicants with relevant skills and experience who are eligible to work in the UK / and a current student at either UoM, MMU or UoS
Benefits:	We offer a great range of benefits. You can see them here.

Our Organisation

We are Manchester Students' Union, the biggest SU in the country, supporting over 40,000 students throughout their time at university. We help to make student life the best it can be by supporting students to campaign for change, creating opportunities to meet new people, providing employment opportunities, providing advice and support and being a safe place on campus.

We are a values-centred organisation that employs around 90 permanent, full-time members of staff. We recruit a wide range of roles throughout the year within all our departments from our Commercial team operating Manchester Academy Venues, 13 Media, Bar 532 & Kitchen and Corridor Coffee to our Student Activities, Student Engagement, Marketing and Communications, Finance, HR and Facilities teams. Our team of around 400 part-time, studying staff are instrumental in providing to support to all departments as well as leading major projects like Student Angels. When you join UMSU, you'll be immersed in an environment that empowers staff to make great things happen and we're always on the lookout for innovative, passionate, and proactive people to join us.

Our staff team is led by our senior leadership team who are instrumental in driving our strategy at UMSU. It's made up of our CEO, COO, 4 Directors and 6 Associate Directors. We are governed by our trustees and Exec Officers, you can find out more about that here. All our permanent, full-time roles are graded (Grade A-E) which means that there is a clear path to your development and progression whilst at UMSU.

Our Organisational Values

Our values are really important to us and shape the work that we do every day. As part of our recruitment process, we want you to demonstrate how your experiences, behaviours and skills align with our values.

Our values are

- We put students at the heart of what we do
- We provide a 'great experience' service

- We believe in improvement and progression
- We are a community
- We are open and transparent
- We are inclusive

You can find more detailed explanations of our values on our website.

Role Overview

As a **Research Assistant** at the University of Manchester Students' Union, you will play a vital role in driving the success of the Students' Union by supporting the Research and Insight Team in designing surveys, gathering and analysing data, conducting market research and writing reports with directional insights. Your work will directly inform key decisions and campaigns, such as the freshers' campaign, strategy, impact and satisfaction survey work, cost of living insights, and more. By providing data-driven insights, you'll shape how the Students' Union responds to student needs, ensures member satisfaction, and enhances the student experience.

Your ability to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data and report on findings and deliver directional insights will significantly impact the effectiveness of Union activities. You'll support and inform decisions that align with the Union's goals to continuously improve student services, engagement, and communications.

Department Overview: Marketing & Development

The Research and Insight Team sits within the Marketing & Development department, a critical part of the Union that drives student engagement, communicates Union initiatives, and strengthens the Union's connection with its members. The department's goal is to ensure that all activities, events and services offered are informed by student feedback and aligned with the evolving needs of the student body. Through insightful analysis and research, we ensure that our events, marking, communications, design are inclusive, relevant, and student focused.

How This Role Contributes

In this role, you'll support the success of the Students' Union by contributing to a wide range of projects that aim to enhance the student experience. Examples of your work may include:

- Driving key insights for Union campaigns by designing reports, analysing survey data and producing reports with directional insights that highlight trends, feedback, and areas for improvement.
- Implement the Union's strategy through your research and insight work ensuring that student voices are at the heart of decision-making processes.
- Collaborating with departments and teams across the Union to create meaningful research projects that gather deep insights from students, directly influencing everything from student engagement initiatives to commercial offerings.
- Innovating data collection processes, contributing creative solutions to collect and analyse data that reflect the diverse student population, and providing recommendations that promote inclusivity and relevance.

- Contributing to student satisfaction and engagement by helping the Union better understand the student community, ultimately shaping the services, events, and campaigns we run to align with their needs.

Key Result Areas

Responsible for	Contributor to
Designing surveys, analysing data and generating reports with directional insights for at least 3 insight campaigns including education, student experience, commercial, marketing & communication projects.	The research and insight operation plan to be the experts on student academic and university experience. Lead staff with insight to identify research and make the best decisions based on data.
Leading or supporting in at least 2 qualitative research projects (e.g. focus groups) including data analyses and writing reports	The research and insight operation plan to be the experts on student academic and university experience. Lead staff with insight to identify research and make the best decisions based on data.
Maintain consistent communication with line manager and project stakeholders to inform and update progress of the project by attending regular update meetings and responding to communications within 3 working days.	Ensuring insight projects are delivered on time to stakeholders and updates are communicated efficiently.

Organisational Stewardship & Leadership Responsibilities

- You'll assist in key Students' Union events & activities throughout the year including Welcome Week, elections and supporting the officers in delivering their plans.
- You'll perform duties in line with the Union policy & procedure framework.

What You will Gain

- Hands-on experience using PowerBI working with real organisational data, writing reports, generating key insights, and holding focus groups that shapes decisions made by senior staff.
- Structured training and support to build your skills, even if you are starting from scratch.
- Experience presenting data insights that directly influence Union campaigns and services.
- Flexible, term-time hours designed to work around your studies.

Person Specification

Criteria		Assessed at:			
	Essential/Desirable	Application Form	Interview	Assessment Task	All
Education					
Studying at the University of Manchester in the academic year 2026-27	Essential				✓

Skills					
Experience of designing research projects by meeting with stakeholders to gather their requirements for research	Essential				✓
Experience of quantitatively and qualitatively analysing data through excel or other statistical software or coding to creating insight and drawing distinct themes.	Essential				✓
Experience of holding focus groups or talking to a large audience with the ability to conduct presentations, ask probing questions and influence participants to contribute to discussion.	Essential		✓		
Report Writing Skills				✓	
Communication skills (confidence in conversation and consistent in online communication)	Essential		✓		
Critical thinking skills	Essential		✓	✓	
Experience with survey tools such as Microsoft Forms, Survey Monkey	Desirable	✓			
Experience using PowerBI dashboards	Desirable				
Values & Behaviours					
Align with the SU's values and behaviours both personally and professionally					✓
Insight driven – always looking for ways to collect data from a range of sources to measure the impact of your work on the		✓	✓	✓	

student community or to inform your work					
Collaborative – great at working collaboratively with team members, seeks ways to ensure all voices are heard, works with colleagues to problem solve		✓	✓	✓	
Active Bystander – continually seeks to dismantle barriers, ensures all working practises are accessible, seeks to ensure all voices are heard and factored in when making decisions			✓		

Our Recruitment Process

The way that we recruit is designed to be fair, transparent, and inclusive as well as being an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. You should expect to receive great communication and a warm, welcoming experience.

Every member of staff is recruited the same way, by submitting an application form and attending an interview. We use a recruitment platform called StaffSavvy where you'll submit your application and book interviews, if successful.

Our process allows you to show us your authentic self, gives you a platform to display your skills and knowledge in relaxed and welcoming setting. We'll never put you under any necessary pressure on you, ask you trick questions or interrogate you in an interview and we'll support you all the way through our process.

You can find more information about our recruitment process on our website.