MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

From Manchester for the world



Candidate brief

Senior Business Service Designer

November 2026

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Grade	7
Department	IT
Reports to	Chloe Gray
Duration	Permanent
Location	Oxford Road, Manchester

Enquiries about vacancy shortlisting and interviews
Email: talent.attraction@manchester.ac.uk

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this role at The University of Manchester.

Since 1824, our University has been defined by discovery, social change and a pioneering spirit. Today we are one of the UK's largest single site universities, recognised globally for excellence in teaching, research and impact.

In 2025 we launched our new strategy, *From Manchester for the world*, setting out what it means to be a great civic university in the 21st century, creating knowledge for the public good, locally and globally.

We look forward to meeting you.

Patrick Hackett
Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer





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About the University



The University of Manchester is recognised globally for our pioneering research, breadth of teaching and learning and for our commitment to social responsibility.

The world's big challenges demand urgent action – we're working across boundaries and disciplines to create healthier, more equal futures; helping to eradicate poverty; ensuring energy supply for future generations; and protecting our planet for the years to come.



Our history

The University of Manchester was England's first civic university, built for an industrial age. We trace our roots to 1824 with the Manchester Mechanics' Institution and the Manchester Royal School of Medicine. The modern university was formed in 2004 through the merger of the Victoria University of Manchester and UMIST.

We have a rich history of attracting brilliant minds, with 26 Nobel laureates among our current and former staff and students, including Ernest Rutherford, Arthur Lewis, and most recently, Andre Geim, Kostya Novoselov and Simon Johnson.



The present

Part of the Russell Group, The University of Manchester is one of the UK's largest single site universities, spanning STEM, the arts and social sciences. With a £1.35bn turnover, major capital investment and more than 500,000 alumni, we are a global institution recognised for excellence in education and innovation.

Our strategy to 2035, launched in 2025, focuses on five areas to go further and faster, driving innovation, skills and good jobs in the region and country, while addressing global challenges. These priorities build on our firm foundations of teaching and research excellence, values-led social responsibility, deep civic roots with global reach, and a culture with equity, diversity and inclusion at its heart.

Manchester and the region

Manchester is the original modern city, birthplace of industrial and social movements that shaped the world. The University is a proud civic institution, central to the region's economic, social and cultural life, and a partner in Greater Manchester's Civic University Agreement.

We contribute to the city's rich cultural landscape through institutions such as Manchester Museum, the Whitworth and Jodrell Bank.

Manchester, ranked in the top three of *Time Out*'s World's Best Cities, is a cosmopolitan, globally recognised cultural centre, home to leading theatres, orchestras and major developments like MediaCityUK, Aviva Studios and HOME.



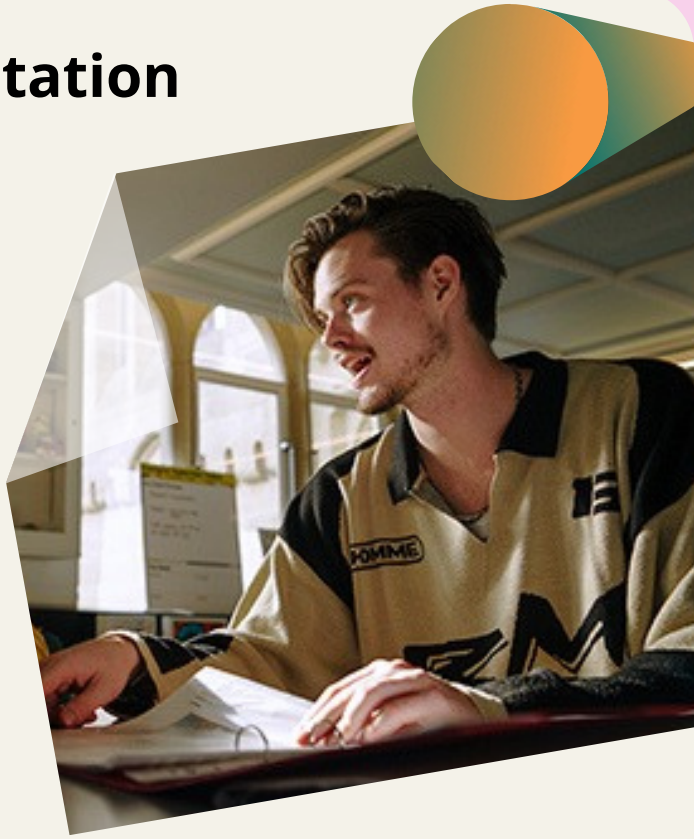
Global rankings and reputation

The University has a global reputation for excellence in research, teaching and civic engagement. We rank 40th in the world (QS 2026), with 93% of our research rated world leading or internationally excellent (REF 2021).

We are first in the UK and Europe, and second globally, for social and environmental impact (*Times Higer Education* Impact Rankings 2025) – the only university to place consistently in the global top ten since the rankings began.

Manchester's expertise supports partners worldwide and our campus brings together students from more than 170 nationalities, making us one of the world's most international universities.

Learn more about our rankings and reputation: manchester.ac.uk/about/rankings



From Manchester for the world

***From Manchester for the world* is our strategy to 2035, defining our ambition to be a great civic university for the 21st century.**

Our strategy focuses on five priorities: flexible, digitally enabled learning; accelerating research impact; driving innovation; strengthening partnerships; and modern, data driven services.

Realising the ambitions of our strategy will define our next decade and beyond, and work to achieve this is already underway. In 2026, we partnered with Microsoft, becoming the first university in the world to provide Microsoft 365 Copilot access and training to all students and staff.

Read our full strategy – *From Manchester for the world:* manchester.ac.uk/about/manchester-2035/full-strategy

"As we enter our third century, we stand at a pivotal moment. *From Manchester for the world* means working with our city and region deeply, to develop the ideas and solutions our communities and the world urgently need."

Professor Duncan Ivison
Manchester's President and Vice-Chancellor.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

From our earliest days, we've worked to break down barriers and improve lives. Today we are committed to building a truly inclusive university where equity, access and belonging shape our work. We invest in leadership, programmes and data to support this ambition and report our progress annually.

We are committed to meeting and exceeding our obligations under current legislation and by doing more, we build on Manchester's existing reputation for rich diversity. Recognising, embracing and valuing difference leads to improvements for all.

University leadership



Professor Duncan Ivison
President and Vice-Chancellor

Professor Ashley Blom
Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

Professor Fiona Devine
Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

Professor Colette Fagan
Vice-President for Research

Patrick Hackett
Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer

Professor Jenn Hallam
Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students

Professor John Holden
Vice-President for Civic Engagement and Innovation

Ele Morrissey
Executive Director of People

Professor Sarah Sharples
Vice-President and Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering

Professor Nalin Thakkar
Vice-President for Social Responsibility

George Whalley
Interim Chief Financial Officer

Read detailed biographies of the University's senior officers:
www.manchester.ac.uk/about/people/university-executive-team/

Governance

The University of Manchester's governance structure reflects the principles of good governance in higher education. Responsibility is held by the following bodies:

Board

The University's governing body, chaired by Philippa Hird. Its 23 mostly lay members hold ultimate responsibility for strategic direction and financial oversight.

General Assembly

A two-way forum through which the University shares achievements and receives feedback from its wider constituencies. It has around 100 members.

Senate

The University's principal academic authority, responsible to the Board for promoting research and maintaining academic standards in teaching.

About Professional Services



Professional Services (PS) play a critical role in ensuring The University of Manchester can achieve its strategic goals, with more than 5,000 PS colleagues providing vital support across a great range of services.

PS colleagues are crucial in ensuring the highest standards of teaching and research take place at the University, and key to the successful delivery of our strategy to 2035, *From Manchester for the world.*

They work to make a consistent, positive difference to our entire University community – from students to alumni and partners – both within our central Directorates and as non-academic colleagues across our Faculties and Schools.

Our PS comprise:

- Compliance and Risk
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Estates and Facilities
- Finance
- Governance Office
- History and Heritage Office
- People
- Learning and Organisational Development
- Legal Affairs
- Library
- IT Services
- Research and Business Engagement
- Student Experience
- Communications, Marketing and Engagement
- Planning
- Development and Alumni Relations
- Social Responsibility

PS colleagues lead and facilitate negotiations with partner organisations and key stakeholders, act as the strategic lead in many areas, and provide specialist advice and support across a variety of different functions.

They span a vast range of services and comprise a swathe of professions, from accountants, IT specialists, administrators and technicians to marketers, careers advisers and manual support colleagues.

The role

This is an opportunity to shape how The University of Manchester designs and delivers services that support our people, students and wider University community. As Senior Business Service Designer, you will play a key role in improving how services work, making them more accessible, connected and responsive to the needs of those who use them.

You will bring together user insight, service design expertise and a practical understanding of organisational change to identify opportunities for improvement. Working across people, processes and technology, you will help translate complex challenges into clear, effective solutions that deliver meaningful improvements to the University experience.

Working within our Enterprise and Business Architecture function, you will collaborate with colleagues across the University to understand existing services, challenge established ways of working and develop innovative approaches to service delivery. From mapping user journeys and designing future services to testing new ideas and supporting their implementation, you will help ensure improvements are grounded in evidence and deliver lasting value.

You will have the opportunity to influence how service design is embedded across Manchester, helping to establish consistent approaches, share best practice and build capability across teams. Through collaboration, creativity and a focus on continuous improvement, you will contribute to a more joined-up, efficient and user-centred University.

Key accountabilities

You will play an important role in shaping how The University of Manchester designs, improves and delivers services across the organisation. Combining user-centred design with a practical understanding of organisational change, you will work with colleagues to understand challenges, identify opportunities and develop services that are more connected, accessible and effective. Working across academic and professional services, you will translate research, insight and collaboration into meaningful improvements that support the University's ambitions and deliver better experiences for our community.

In this role, you will:

Design services around the needs of our community.
Use research, user insight and service data to understand how people experience our services, identify unmet needs and develop inclusive, accessible solutions that improve the experience of students, colleagues and other service users.

Translate complex challenges into effective service designs.
Map existing services, identify gaps and opportunities, and develop future service models that bring together people, processes, technology and governance to deliver more joined-up services.

Turn ideas into practical, measurable improvements.
Develop, prototype and test new service concepts, working with delivery teams to evaluate solutions, incorporate feedback and support improvements that deliver lasting value.

Build collaboration across the University.
Bring together academic and professional services colleagues, facilitate workshops and engage stakeholders to develop shared understanding, challenge assumptions and build support for service improvements.

Use evidence and insight to inform better decisions.
Combine qualitative research, service performance data and stakeholder feedback to identify patterns, challenge assumptions and ensure service improvements are grounded in a clear understanding of user needs and organisational priorities.

Person specification

You will be an experienced service design professional with the creativity, analytical skills and collaborative approach to make an impact in a large, complex organisation. You will bring experience in service design, user research, service mapping and improvement, alongside an understanding of how people, processes and technology come together to deliver effective services.

Your track record will demonstrate an ability to understand complex challenges, identify opportunities for improvement and translate user needs into practical, evidence-led solutions. You will be confident developing service blueprints, user journeys and future service models, using research and insight to inform decisions and deliver meaningful improvements.

An effective communicator and relationship builder, you will be comfortable working across different disciplines, facilitating workshops and engaging stakeholders with competing priorities. You will have the confidence to challenge established approaches, influence decisions and build support for change across organisational boundaries.

You will understand that successful service design goes beyond recommendations, bringing experience of testing ideas, evaluating outcomes and working with delivery teams to implement sustainable improvements. You will also recognise the importance of accessibility and inclusive design in creating services that meet the diverse needs of our University community.

Comfortable navigating ambiguity, you will be adaptable, curious and confident collaborating with business analysts, architects, researchers and change specialists. You will be keen to share your expertise, strengthen service design capability and contribute to continuous improvement across the University.

Above all, you will demonstrate a commitment to collaboration, user-centred design and the University's values, bringing a practical approach to creating services that make a lasting difference.

Key behaviours

One University

A ‘One University’ approach, whereby we break down silos and work collaboratively towards furthering the University’s strategic goals, vision and values.

Service excellence

Committed to prioritising service excellence and high performance to deliver great people-centred experiences.

Agility

Demonstrate a commitment to agility and continuous improvement by embracing change, championing innovation, and being flexible and forward thinking to adapt.

Sustainability

A sustainable approach that safeguards our future university by championing environmental practices, advancing digital capability, and supporting financial stability and philanthropic initiatives.

Inclusion

A commitment to furthering equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing to create a positive work environment and culture.

Social responsibility

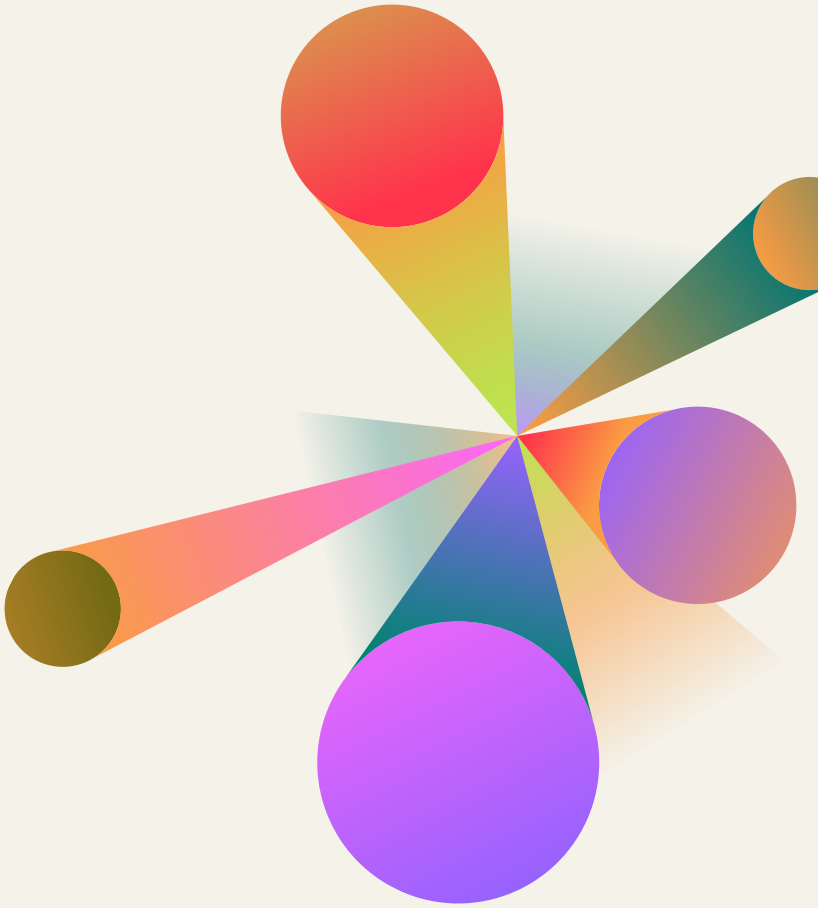
Promote and champion the University’s social responsibility ambitions to advance social inclusion, prosperous communities, better health and cultural engagement.

Freedom of speech and academic freedom

Support the University’s commitment to securing and actively promoting the importance of free speech and academic freedom within our community.

People leadership

Demonstrate effective leadership by empowering, motivating and developing teams to achieve high performance. Build a collaborative and inclusive work environment and provide clear direction, support and feedback.



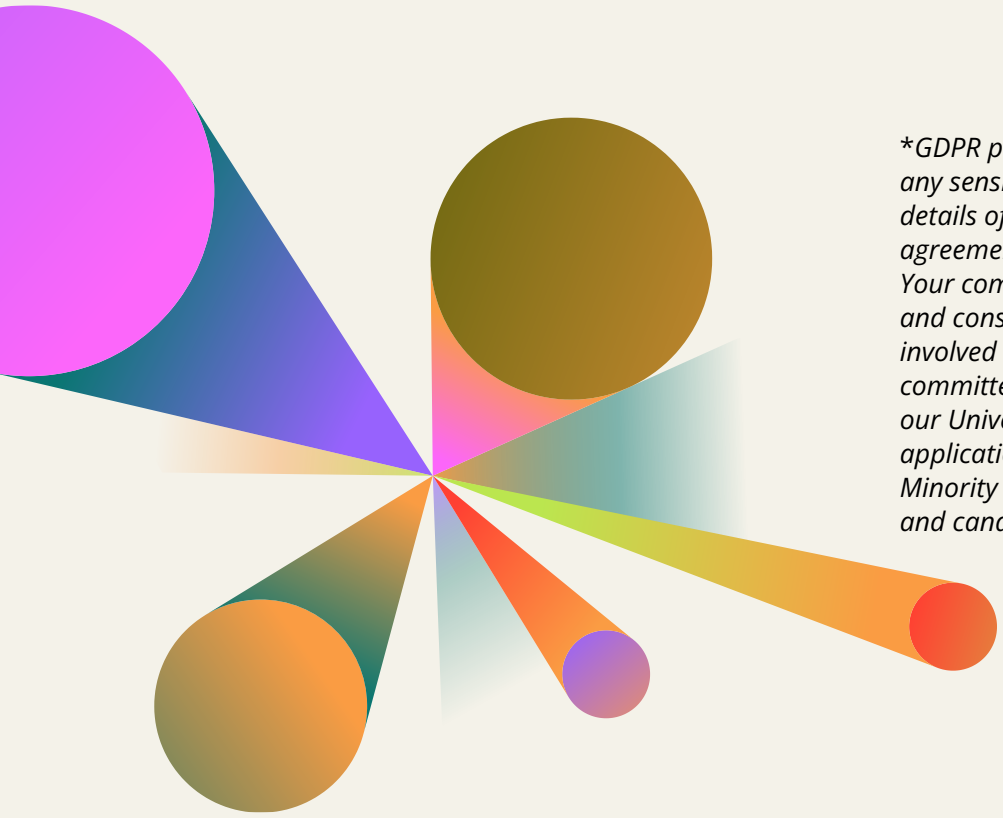
How to apply

Candidates should apply for this role via the job advert on the University website, reference PSX-032763

The closing date for applications is 3rd January 2027 at midnight.

For informal enquiries please contact Lewis Burne: talent.attraction@manchester.ac.uk

In accordance with GDPR guidelines*, we are only able to process your sensitive personal data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life or sexual orientation) with your express consent.



**GDPR personal data notice – please do not include any sensitive personal data, including the contact details of your chosen referees (without prior agreement), within your CV and covering letter. Your completed 'equal opportunities monitoring and consent form' will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. We are committed to further enhancing the diversity of our University Executive and particularly welcome applications from women, Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority candidates, candidates with disabilities and candidates with other protected characteristics.*



We are an open place of enquiry and challenge. We embrace and celebrate difference, diversity and debate, and we pride ourselves on being a place of education, learning and community where we are able, within the law, to question and test received wisdom, express new ideas and explore controversial or unpopular topics and opinions. Find out more from our Policy on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.

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