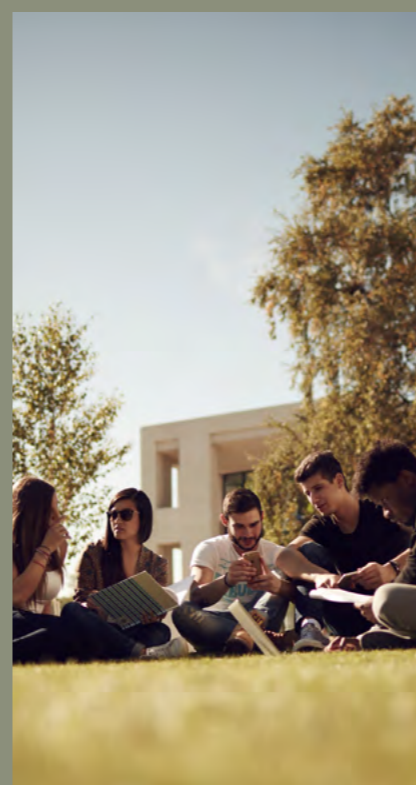




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 **University of Sunderland**

Appointment of
Assistant Director
Student Journey:
Student Support
Services

July 2021



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Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the role of Assistant Director, Student Journey with responsibility for Student Support Services at the University of Sunderland.

I am pleased and excited to be able to recruit to this **new** role. You will be joining us at a key moment in Student Journey's development, and indeed that of the University.

Student Journey (SJ) was created to have a principle and key focus on student engagement, personalised support and an individual student's experience. SJ embraces the student from application/enrolment and supports their academic and personal progression and development through to graduation and beyond. We pride ourselves on our innovative, interconnected services – working across our internal boundaries and often advocating for students within the University and external agencies.

Working directly with our students and indirectly through colleagues we aim to deliver a comprehensive, supported experience to the individual student. As part of the leadership team, you will join us in delivering a fulfilling, developmental and enterprising environment in which all of us in SJ can thrive.

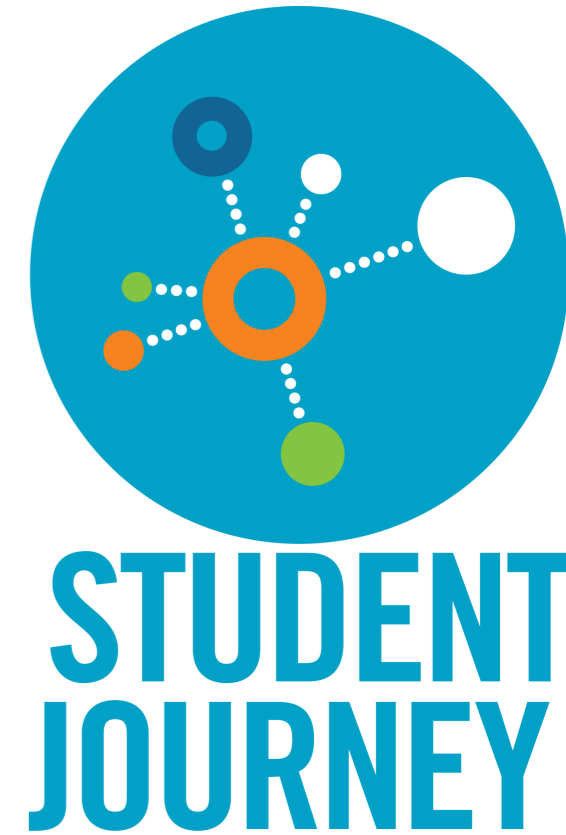
Our mission to be a **life-changing** university remains front and centre in our strategic plan. We recently repositioned that plan to be supported by the clear ambitions for us to be **student-focused, professions-facing and society-shaping**. These are the watchwords that drive university business and our own service developments.

This role has been created to take the **strategic and management lead** in that wide range of matters connected to our **Student Support Services** portfolio, and the support of staff and students therein. You will be a member of the **SJ leadership team** and participate widely across the University's agendas, committees and operations. There is ample opportunity for the successful candidate to make significant, strategic contributions within SJ and across the University.

In joining the SJ leadership team you will be working alongside myself, Deputy Director Oliver Pritchard, and Assistant Director Ivan Whitfield. The University's values are key to how we work and what's important to us. We are looking for a like-minded colleague who will bring significant, enduring energy and commitment to the role, who will thrive as part of a shared senior leadership team in a key and strategically important department. You will bring experience, vision and challenge. You will enjoy responding to the same as we build a post-Covid service with the leadership capacity to serve the needs of an ambitious, evolving University and an increasingly diverse student body.

If you have these qualities, are motivated by making a difference and are inspired by the potential of this new leadership role in Student Journey, then I look forward to receiving your application.

Kirsten Black
Director, Student Journey








About the University of Sunderland

The University's **Strategic Plan** sets out our purpose: **We are a life-changing University**. Our **ambitions** guide what we do:



Our values guide our behaviours

-  **Inspiring** – we provide a supportive, empowering and enriching experience for our staff and students
-  **Innovative** – we value people for their creativity and update our knowledge and practice to enhance the student experience
-  **Collaborative** – we work together as a community with our partners and build lasting relationships to achieve our shared ambitions
-  **Inclusive** – we celebrate our diverse culture, which welcomes and values everyone's contribution
-  **Seeking excellence** – we strive for the highest quality in academic delivery, research and service standards

This **University Student Success Plan 2020-2025** ('the Plan') sets out what we will do to achieve our ambitions and how we will measure our performance.

Context

We have about 19,000 students based in our University of Sunderland campuses on the north east coast, in London and Hong Kong and with our international partners in 15 countries across the world.

We are proud of our long-established commitment to widening participation, world-leading and relevant research, and strong public and private sector collaborations. We have a track-record in providing graduates valued by employers and society. Our values are explicit in our Strategic Plan and set out the kind of organisation we are, including the principles that guide our activities, decisions and behaviours.

At Sunderland, we believe that universities have a role to play in a fair and democratic society, and we measure success not just by our awards and league table results but by the contribution we make to society.

Our campuses

In Sunderland we operate from two campuses – the Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St Peter's on the banks of the River Wear and our City Campus.

Significant and ongoing capital investment has transformed the City Campus, which includes CitySpace, a sports and social facility, and our new Sciences Complex supporting areas such as pharmacy, psychology, pharmaceutical science, nursing, paramedic practice and sports sciences. Our new School of Medicine, which opened in September 2019, is also located here.

Living Lab is a unique, purpose-built environment where university researchers, staff, students and healthcare partners can test and collaborate on new technologies and treatments in real world settings, raising the quality of care and improving patient safety.

Our award-winning Sir Tom Cowie Campus is adjacent to St Peter's Church – a seat of learning since 674AD – and is now host to our extensive facilities in media, film production, engineering, computing, business and law. We recently made a significant investment in our new student Gateway located at our City Campus, our one-stop-shop for student support and advice. In addition we have transformed our catering offer with modern, stylish food outlets at both St Peter's and at City Campus.

The University has a ten-year 'One Campus' vision to integrate the two campus sites in Sunderland with a series of strategically placed capital projects.

Over £4m has been invested in our University of Sunderland in London – situated at Canary Wharf in the heart of the City's business and financial district.

Our Hong Kong operation is located at the heart of the Central trading district overlooking Victoria Harbour. It delivers business, finance and tourism programmes as well as operating as the University's South East Asia Hub for recruitment and partnership development in the region. The University has almost 6,000 active alumni in Hong Kong and over 20 years experience in South-East Asia.

Our global reach

We are acknowledged as one of the UK's top providers of transnational education with almost 5,000 students studying for University of Sunderland academic awards with 21 quality-assured partners across the world including in Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Trinidad, Uzbekistan, and Tashkent.

About Student Journey

Being the key student-focused service in the University we have a huge range of services on offer. These are packaged into 3 broad areas: student management; student life; and student opportunities & skills. We have 154 FTE amounting to a workforce of 182 people, plus our many contracted and seconded staff. Our budget is c£9.5million.

Student management comprises our *Student Administration* team who deal with admissions, enrolment and maintain the student record.

The Gateway is our one-stop-shop which has been the University's front door for students during recent times of restricted access. Staff there take pride in answering anything. We also support and advise our international students with immigration and related enquiries. The Student Progression team seek out and support students who are not engaging in their studies to offer support, give guidance and do what they can to get the student back on track.

Student life has a focus on the individual's wellbeing and wellness and belonging to the University community, all of which make for an impactful student experience. This includes our fitness and sports facilities in *CitySpace* where the team work alongside the *Sports Development* team to offer student-led sports clubs, BUCS, community engagement. These teams are on a mission to encourage our students to get active and develop their wellness through a wide range of Team Sunderland on-campus / online opportunities and activities. *Student Support Services* teams naturally complement much of this so these teams work together frequently.

Student Opportunities and skills is home to our *University Library & Study Skills* service - we have two campus libraries in Sunderland with an active project to move the bulk of the service to St Peter's.

Sunderland Futures is our Careers & Employability service with access points on each Sunderland campus.

Each of these services is fully engaged with the academy, delivering within and alongside the curriculum as well as contributing to various University strategies and plans.

Student Support Services

Each of our high performing teams in this portfolio is led by an experienced manager. Our staff are creative, passionate and committed. They work together and across the University on a diverse range of groups, initiatives and contribute at University level e.g. delivering on our Access & Participation and Student Success plans.

Our **Disability Support team** are expert in providing learning support and engage applicants and students. They have been enthusiastic champions of the University's ongoing transition to UDL and are supporting developments related to our APP. Their expertise extends into assessments by virtue of our long-standing and success assessment centre (NERAC).

Our **Student Financial Guidance team** also engage with applicants and students. The team is expert in all aspects of SFE, budgeting, with an admirable ability to get students back on track, financially. They are the proud developers of our Panda app.

Our **Student Support Funds team** create the rules and run our support funds, and ensure funds are promoted and applications are assessed in good time.

Our **Wellbeing team** comprises counsellors, mental health practitioners, wellbeing practitioners and student advisers. Within Wellbeing our **Chaplaincy team** has a base at the Interfaith Chaplaincy Centre at St Peter's although being our most mobile team they are often out and about on-campus.

Teams deliver services at both Sunderland campuses and online.

Teams work extensively across the academy and with each other. This extends out into their respective professional networks, local agencies and the local community. Our multi-disciplinary approach to case work and the recent introduction of a digital case management system offer a platform for exploring new ways of working.

The SMT is actively engaged with University teaching and learning initiatives as well as their respective sector organisations.

Teams comprise:

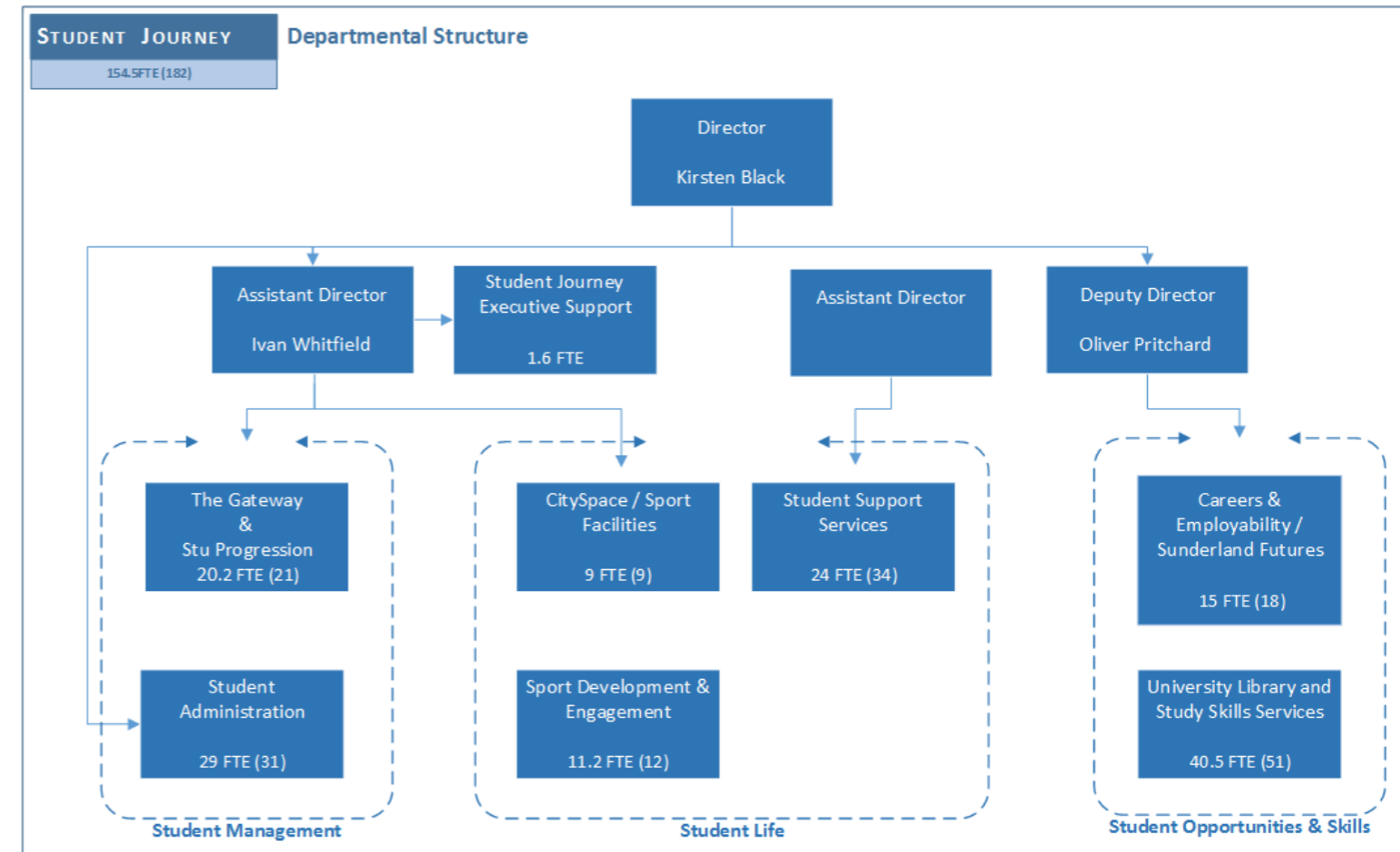
Disability Support Team, inc NERAC 8 FTE (9 headcount)

Student Financial Guidance 4 FTE (5 headcount)

Student Support Funds 2FTE

Wellbeing 10 FTE (18 headcount)

Additionally we have members of staff who work with us on a sessional and/or a seconded basis.



Further information

- Please apply at <https://jobs.sunderland.ac.uk/>
- Reference number is 0312-21
- Applications will close on 23 August 2021
- Interviews and presentations will be on 16 and 17 September 2021, likely to be via Teams. Shortlisted candidates will be expected to arrange a short call with the Chief Operating Officer prior to the interview date.
- Campus tours can be arranged.
- Salary is £63,360 - £73,921
- Annual leave is 36 days per year, plus closure days.

To arrange an informal discussion please email the SJ business support office at sj.admin@sunderland.ac.uk

Assistant Director: Student Support Services

In this role you will lead, manage and continuously develop the University's Student Support services and cognate activity including Prevent, safeguarding, mental health and incident management/response, within the Student Journey directorate. You will take the lead in the planning, developing, delivery and evaluation of innovative, high quality and relevant professional services, underpinned by best practice and in-line with University strategy. You will ensure that service delivery complies with relevant legislative and sector regulations/expectations. In addition, as part of the Student Journey executive team, you will contribute effectively to the overall leadership, management and development of Student Journey (SJ) as the University's key and principal student-facing converged service.

Key accountabilities and responsibilities

Leadership & Management

- Ensure the provision of a robust, resilient, reliable and relevant portfolio of services to students and where appropriate, staff and other stakeholders. Maintain a key focus on: continuous improvement; the development and use of KPIs; the assessment of value and impact of the services. Ensure services are marketed, promoted and communicated effectively across the student body and to University colleagues as necessary. Ensure and maintain appropriate compliance, risk, business continuity and crisis management arrangements.
- Provide direct lead to and management of the Student Support Services SMT as a group and individually. In particular: setting clear objectives and expectations, monitoring performance, providing feedback, recognition and development opportunities; encouraging creativity and their ability to develop services across the spectrum of the Service.
- Provide operational leadership, management and inspiration to SJ managers.
- Lead and be accountable for the performance of your portfolio in terms of University KPIs, Service Plan objectives and other performance measures.
- Assist the Director by contributing to and participating in its overall leadership, management and development; realising the synergies and value of the convergence and integration of services.

Liaison

- Advise the Director and the University Executive, as appropriate, on matters pertaining to your portfolio.
- Take a proactive approach to making the Director, Deputy Director and/or Chief Operating Officer aware of developments which will affect the delivery of the University's strategic plan or the Service's key functions in your areas of responsibility.

Advocacy & Relationship Management

- Advocate for and champion SJ within and across the University, ensuring a responsive posture to University agendas, and influencing and determining agendas where SJ services can add value.
- Represent the Service, in its entirety, on internal boards, committees and other fora, ensuring that the Service's strategic interests are represented effectively.
- Build and pro-actively develop on-going relationships with key internal stakeholders to optimise the delivery of SJ services to the student body.
- Promote and represent the University and SJ regionally and nationally as appropriate; developing and maintaining positive relationships with relevant professional bodies and other stakeholders.

Continuous Improvement

- Develop strategies, policies and processes appropriate to your portfolio and ensure their consistent application across the University.
- Through engagement with sector, professional and HE bodies, maintain an in-depth understanding and knowledge of best practice, developing agendas and standards and reflect these in service, team and personal development.

Special circumstances

- Occasional weekend and evening working as required to fulfil demands on the service and other requirements.
- Attendance at Open Days and other events as required.
- Work at any University campus, as required.
- Work across and with teams as required.

Key competencies

This is a key appointment for Student Journey. These competencies describe the ways you will be expected to work, and the attributes and skills you will need to be successful in the role.

University senior management competencies

- Demonstrates a visible commitment to the University's vision, values and supporting strategies.
- Demonstrates honesty, loyalty and integrity.
- Takes ownership and displays resolve to be accountable for delivering against objectives.
- Excellent communication, influencing and interpersonal skills with an ability to engage effectively and positively across a range of stakeholders.
- Displays self-confidence, demonstrating a 'can do' approach.
- Develops positive and innovative approaches to challenges and emerging issues.
- Thinks creatively and champions new ideas, even when these may be contentious.
- Is resilient and shows resourcefulness in coping with a high workload, conflicting priorities and competing deadlines.

Role specific competencies

- Displays strong leadership and consistent management skills, motivating others and developing their confidence to achieve their potential.
- Understands complex student lifecycle services and issues at a conceptual level and is able to make positive contributions to the leadership team.
- Demonstrates clear and strategic thinking with the ability to plan and deliver from concept to outcome.
- Flexible and creative approach to problem solving, combining rational analysis with experience to make and influence timely, complex and critical decisions.
- Demonstrates emotional intelligence, political sensitivity and cultural awareness in dealing with colleagues and complex cases/situations.
- Consultative and collaborative approach: able to actively engage with management teams across the Service to achieve consistency of service and develop consensus within disparate views, with due attention to the needs of others.
- Demonstrates personal resilience and the ability to be calm and self-contained under pressure.
- Ability to embrace and manage change and share vision with enthusiasm.
- Understands and is passionate about the value and impact of delivering excellent and highly relevant services in student success and achievement – with the ability to measure, articulate and advocate this to a variety of stakeholders.

Essential criteria

To meet the requirements of the role, you will need the following knowledge and experience which we will assess in the recruitment process:

Qualifications and professional memberships

- A relevant first degree / equivalent professional qualification.
- Evidence of continuing professional development.

Knowledge and experience

- Proven, substantial record of senior management experience acquired from a similar or a number of different specialist roles in Student Support services.
- Experience of and demonstrable commitment to high quality student services and delivering an exceptional student experience.
- Deep and comprehensive understanding of statutory requirements, the key drivers and emerging issues in student support in HE, and how these drive and shape service delivery.
- Knowledge of approaches to student safeguarding and Prevent.
- Proven record of project management and successful delivery of key objectives/outcomes in an area relevant to the Service portfolio.
- Demonstrable record of applying leadership and management knowledge to complex business challenges in a similar, or number of different specialist roles.
- Leading and/or managing change, successfully.
- Experience of budget and/or resource management.

Desirable criteria

Qualifications and professional memberships

- A higher degree or relevant professional qualification.
- A teaching qualification or fellowship of Advance HE.

Knowledge and experience

- Proven record of senior leadership in a similar role.
- Proven record of leading or managing expert staff across a diverse range of activity.
- Experience of leading or managing successful cross-organisational change.

Welcome to Sunderland

Our city by the sea

Sunderland is a welcoming coastal city, offering an excellent quality of life...

Sitting on the beautiful north east coast at the mouth of the River Wear, our warm and friendly people are proud of their rich history - that stretches back to Anglo-Saxon times - and positive about the future.

Sunderland's wide sandy beaches with their big-sky views attract walkers, surfers, runners and cyclists to enjoy the fresh sea air; while the Marina Complex provides top-class facilities and friendly service all year round.

Our city boasts acres of green space and is close to wide, open countryside and urban attractions, with Newcastle, Durham and the North Yorkshire Moors on the doorstep. Over £1 billion is being invested in exciting projects across the city, from the spectacular new Northern Spire bridge across the Wear and development of a vibrant cultural quarter near City Campus, to attractive new spaces for enjoying leisure time at the seafront. With more investment and ambitious plans in the pipeline, Sunderland is attracting (and enjoying) plenty of attention!

The former Chair of Arts Council England described the University of Sunderland as the "poster child" for driving economic regeneration through creativity and nowadays opportunities to enjoy culture are plentiful in Sunderland too.

With our Sunderland Culture partners we recently launched an ambitious seven-year, £60m project to build on the momentum and positive support generated through over the last few years around culture, incorporating themes of Light, Friendship and Inventiveness.

Last year the Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art relocated to its new home at National Glass Centre - and last summer the city welcomed the Tall Ships Races to the Wear, with the Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St Peter's being one of the key sites to welcome the majestic ships and many thousands of visitors.

Our busy retail centre offers plenty of places to eat and drink, including cosy pubs serving hearty food and cask ale, alongside independent restaurants, coffee shops and bars.

Sunderland is an affordable place to live and offers a great quality of life. It's a friendly city with ambition and a bright future - join us and be part of our story.



Getting here

Set on the north east coast, right where the River Wear joins the North Sea, Sunderland is connected to the rest of the UK by excellent road and rail links; and accessible by major airlines through nearby Newcastle International and Durham Tees Valley airports. Once you arrive, getting around is easy with plenty of local buses and the Tyne and Wear light rail, as well as a good network of cycle routes and public footpaths.

- 1 Seaburn Beach
- 2 Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens
- 3 New Northern Spire Bridge
- 4 Penshaw Monument
- 5 Tall Ships Races Sunderland



Our University community



“Here at the University of Sunderland our ethos is that of inclusivity, giving people the chance to reach their full potential. We want our graduates to go on and be a force for change.”

Emeli Sandé MBE
Our University Chancellor (from July 2019)

“The principal reason I jumped at the chance to become Chancellor was because the University clearly shared the same fundamental belief in extending opportunities by widening access to university education.

“What the University of Sunderland has achieved in offering thousands upon thousands of people - who almost certainly would not have had (or in many cases sought) the chance - a truly life-changing experience - cannot adequately be put into words. I’m enormously proud to have played a small part in this achievement.”

David Puttnam - Lord Puttnam of Queensgate
Chancellor, University of Sunderland 1997-2007

“I’ve been lucky enough to do a job that I love and to feel like I’ve made an impact. We’ve made incredible progress in diseases like Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s, and I am now more sure than ever that we will find a cure. I am increasingly thankful to the University of Sunderland for helping me start my journey. I love this place.”

Dr Andrew Singleton
Chief of the Laboratory of Neurogenetics at the National Institute on Aging, in Maryland, USA



“The University has clear plans to further enrich its impactful research and its innovative teaching and learning practice. Having seen it operate in these areas at close quarters for over a decade I am in no doubt whatsoever it will achieve its ambitions.”

Baroness Morris of Yardley
Pro-Chancellor

“I had a brilliant time at Sunderland and the support from the University was really helpful.”

Katy McLean
BSc Sports Studies
World Cup winning England Women’s Rugby Captain, Olympian and former primary school teacher



“Sunderland have excellent links with industry and their mix of purely academic lecturers, who can explain difficult and complex tasks and the importance of research, coupled with lecturers and staff more focused on real-world application, makes you feel ready and comfortable when you get into industry.”

Blaine Huntington
BEng (Hons) Electronic and Electrical Engineering
Hitachi Rail Europe



“I love my job and I know none of it would have been possible without Sunderland.”

Tolu Oyebanji
BSc Biomedical Science
Biomedical Scientist at Scarborough General Hospital



“I’m really proud of what I have achieved so far, and I can’t thank Sunderland enough for getting me off to a great start.”

Matt Riggs
BA Sports Journalism
Content Producer
West Ham FC



“I’m not afraid to say I’ve worked hard to get where I am. To know that the University of Sunderland recognises that hard work shows how supportive they are.”

Charlotte Knill
BSc (Hons) Computer Forensics
Digital Forensics Investigator and Alumni Achiever of the Year 2017



“The best four years of my life, Sunderland really prepared me for the real world.”

Amy Orange
LLB Law
Family Paralegal