

Community Digital Sound Programme (C-DSP) licence

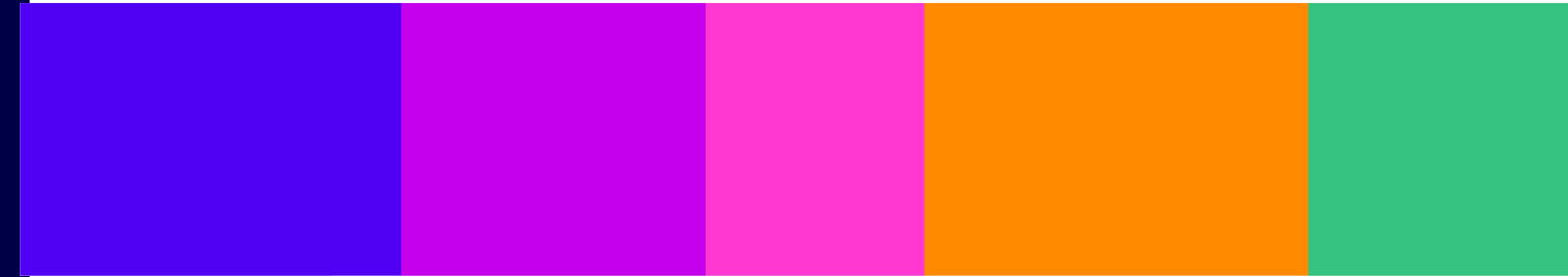
Application form – Part A (public)

Name of applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Proposed service name:

Radio multiplex service(s) on which the proposed C-DSP service is to be provided (note this must be a small-scale multiplex area either previously advertised or currently being advertised by Ofcom as shown in the multiplex licence advertisement)

Public contact details (i.e. Contact name and/or company name, company address, telephone number(s) and email):



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1. Overview

You should complete this form if you are applying for a community digital sound programme licence (“C-DSP”). You can find further information about C-DSP services in the [guidance notes for licensees and applicants](#).

This application form is divided into two parts – **Part A** (which we will publish on our website) and **Part B** (which will be kept confidential). This document constitutes Part A; [Part B of the application form](#) is available on our website.

If you encounter any issues using these forms, please contact broadcast.licensing@ofcom.org.uk.

The purpose of this form

You should complete this form if you are applying for a Community Digital Sound Programme (C-DSP) licence.

A digital sound programme service intended for broadcast by means of a local or small-scale radio multiplex service requires either a C-DSP licence or a local DSP licence. Ofcom’s published guidance notes set out some of the key issues that potential applicants need to consider in deciding which type of licence is suitable for them. In summary, C-DSP services are not run for financial gain and are required to provide social gain. C-DSP licences therefore include strict conditions to ensure that happens, and provide less flexibility than a local DSP licence. However, they do provide access to capacity that small-scale radio multiplex service providers are required to reserve solely for C-DSP services.

A C-DSP licence will be required even if the same programme service is also provided on any other platforms (e.g. FM, satellite), as separate licences are required for those.

As noted above, small-scale radio multiplex services will have reserved capacity for C-DSP services. Issue of a C-DSP licence does not, however, guarantee carriage on a small-scale (or local) radio multiplex service. That is a matter for agreement between the C-DSP licensee and the multiplex service provider, and there may be more C-DSP licences issued in a locality than there are reserved slots on the small-scale radio multiplex service. Note that a C-DSP service does not necessarily have to broadcast using reserved capacity. It can use unreserved capacity on a small-scale radio multiplex service or capacity on a local radio multiplex service, again subject to agreement with the multiplex service provider.

An application for a C-DSP licence will be accepted only once Ofcom has advertised the licence for the small-scale radio multiplex service upon which the proposed C-DSP service is intended to be provided. There is no closing-date by which an application for a C-DSP licence must be submitted (i.e. it can be submitted at any time after the licence for the relevant small-scale radio multiplex licence has been advertised).

You can find further information about how to determine if a service requires a C-DSP licence in Section 2 of the [guidance notes for applicants and licensees](#).

Provision of information

Ofcom requires complete and accurate information to assess applications. This is so that we can assess your application against statutory criteria, consider whether those involved in the body applying for a licence are 'fit and proper' to hold a licence, and determine whether their involvement with other organisations disqualifies them from participation in a licence.

It is an offence under the Broadcasting Act 1996 (as amended) to provide false information or withhold relevant information during the application process, and may be grounds for revocation of a licence subsequently granted.

Publication of information about applications and licensed services

Information provided in **Part A** of the application form will typically be published by Ofcom in our Monthly Radio Update publication the month following the submission of your application. This may take longer if the application is received late in the month. Information provided in **Part B** will not be published.

In submitting this application you agree that, should a licence be granted, Ofcom may publish contact details for the licensee (specified in Section 2 of Part B of the application form), which may include personal data, on the Ofcom website and/or in other relevant publications. If you have any questions about the information that we publish, or there are any changes to this information, you should contact the Broadcast Licensing team by email (broadcast.licensing@ofcom.org.uk).

Ofcom considers issued C-DSP licences to be public documents and copies of licences will be made available to third parties on request albeit, other than the Key Commitments which are tailored to the service, C-DSP licences are standard form documents. A brief description of the licensed service will be published on the Ofcom website, along with the Key Commitments which form part of the licence.

Ofcom publishes a [monthly radio licensing update](#) which lists new services licensed, new applications, licences revoked, licence transfers, and changes to licensed services during the past month.

Data protection

We require the information requested in this form in order to carry out our licensing duties under the Broadcasting Act 1990, Broadcasting Act 1996 and Communications Act 2003. Please see Ofcom's [General Privacy Statement](#) for further information about how Ofcom handles your personal information and your corresponding rights.

Keeping up to date with broadcasting matters

We strongly recommend that the appropriate person at the applicant body signs up to receive Ofcom's regular email updates on broadcasting matters including notification when the Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin is published.

To sign up to receive these communications, you must visit the [email updates](#) area of our website and select 'Broadcasting.'

2. Applicant's details

About this section

In this section we are asking you for details about the applicant company. This must be a body corporate which is not profit distributing.

In the first part of this section, we are asking for basic details about the applicant. These include company registration number and contact information.

In the second part of this section we are asking for details of the applicant's officers (directors or, in the case of LLPs, designated members), its shareholders and participants. Where applicable, we are also asking for details of the officers of the applicant's parent and associated companies or LLPs etc.

If any of the individuals named in your responses are known by more than one name/version of their name, all names must be provided.

Certain persons are disqualified from holding a C-DSP licence. This section asks the questions which enable us to consider this for those types of disqualification which apply specifically to bodies corporate. It also asks questions which are relevant to our assessment of the applicant's fitness and propriety to hold a C-DSP licence.

Before completing this section of the form, you should read [Ofcom's guidance on the definition of 'control' of media companies](#). Throughout this section, "control" has the meaning it is given in Part I of Schedule 2 of the Broadcasting Act 1990.

The response boxes and tables should be expanded or repeated where necessary, or provided in a separate annex.

'Officerships' in this section refers to: directorships of bodies corporate, designated memberships of LLPs, or membership of a governing body of an unincorporated association (including partnerships).

Applicant information and contact details

2.1 Name of applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

University of Sunderland

2.2 Company registration number stated on Companies House:

The University is a Higher Education Corporation

2.3 For UK registered companies, the address of the applicant's registered office stated on Companies House.

For non-UK registered companies, the principal office address:

2.4 If a UK registered company, is the current Memorandum and Articles of Association document available on the Companies House website?

Yes No

If no, please submit the up to date document and indicate you have done so in the checklist in Section 4 of Part B.

2.5 Contact details of the individual duly authorised by the applicant for the purposes of making this application. This individual should be the company secretary, a director or (if an LLP) designated member.

(If you are an agent completing the form on behalf of the applicant please do not enter your details here – see paragraph 2.25 of the [guidance notes](#)).

Full name	Andrea Walters
Job title	Deputy Vice Chancellor Operations
Address	University of Sunderland, Floor 4, Edinburgh Building, Chester Road, Sunderland SR1 3SD
Telephone	0191 515 2000
Mobile	N/A
Email	Andrea.walters@sunderland.ac.uk

2.6 If the proposed Licensed Service has/will have a website, please provide the website address below.

<https://sparksunderland.com>

2.7 How will the service be financed? If the applicant is receiving, or is likely to receive, any form of funding and/or financial assistance to establish and maintain the service, please provide details of who is providing that funding/financial assistance and the extent of it.

If you are receiving funding from, or on behalf of, a source that could be considered a political organisation or a religious body, you must set out the nature of that organisation here.

Core funding will come from the University of Sunderland, with the option to explore grant funding, project funding, or commercial revenue.

Ownership and control of the company which will hold the licence

Details of officers, participants and shareholders of the applicant

2.8 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to provide the following details for each director or designated member of the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Full name of individual	Correspondence address ¹	Country of residence	Other officerships held (and nature of the business concerned)	Other employment
Sir David Bell KCB	University of Sunderland, Floor 4, Edinburgh Building, Chester Road, Sunderland SR1 3SD	England	Chair of Karbon Homes (Housing)	Trustee and Advisory Board Member – Higher Education Policy Institute Governor – Royal Shakespeare Company Member – Aldridge Multi-Academy Trust Deputy Lieutenant – Tyne and Wear Member – North East Academic Health Sciences Network Board Member – North East Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Advisory Board Chair of Samling Institute for Young Artists

¹ This should be the same address as is held and published by Companies House.

Andrea Walters	University of Sunderland, Floor 4, Edinburgh Building, Chester Road, Sunderland SR1 3SD	England	Learning North East Limited Learning World Limited Sunderland Learning Malaysia Sdn Bhd University of Sunderland in Hong Kong Limited University of Sunderland Hong Kong Campus Limited	Co-opted member of Remuneration Committee, Sheffield Hallam University Member of Sunderland NSPCC Board
Ben Dale	University of Sunderland, Floor 4, Edinburgh Building, Chester Road, Sunderland SR1 3SD	England	Learning North East Limited Learning World Limited Sunderland Intern Factory Limited University of Sunderland London Campus Limited University of Sunderland Enterprises Limited Sunderland Learning Malaysia Sdn Bhd University of Sunderland in Hong Kong Limited University of Sunderland Hong Kong Campus Limited Learning World Hong Kong Limited Rawminds Recruitment and Marketing Private India Limited	
Helen Driscoll	University of Sunderland, Floor 4, Edinburgh Building, Chester Road, Sunderland SR1 3SD			

2.9 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list all bodies which hold or are beneficially entitled to shares, or who possess voting powers, amounting to more than 5% in the applicant (“participants”). If you are unable to provide a complete answer to this question in relation to beneficial owners, please state whether you have any reason to suspect the existence of any beneficial owners.

Full name of >5% participant (existing and pro-posed)	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
Comments				
The University does not have shareholders. It is governed by a Board of Governors				

2.10 Complete the following table, expanding if necessary, to identify any entities with which the applicant is affiliated. By affiliated, we mean companies that are related through ownership, either with one company being a minority shareholder in the other, or through multiple companies being owned by a third party.

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of the entity	Address

2.11 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list any bodies corporate which are controlled by the applicant, and their affiliates:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of the entity	Address	Affiliates
N/A		

Details of persons who control the applicant

2.12 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list all persons who control the applicant, together with their affiliates. If any persons or bodies control the applicant jointly because they act together in concert (e.g. because of a shareholder’s agreement), each such person must be identified here:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of individual or body	Address	Affiliates
N/A		

2.13 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list all officerships in other bodies that are held by any individual listed in response to question 2.12, and any affiliates of those bodies. An “officership” refers to being a director of a body corporate, designated member

of a limited liability partnership, or member of the governing body of an unincorporated association:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond "N/A" in the table)

Full name of individual	Name of body in which officership held	Affiliates of that body
N/A		

2.14 Complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list all bodies corporate which are controlled by any body corporate listed in response to question 2.12, and their affiliates:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond "N/A" in the table)

Full name of body corporate listed in 2.11	Body corporate controlled	Affiliates of body corporate controlled
N/A		

2.15 In relation to each body corporate identified in response to question 2.12, complete the following table, expanding it if necessary, to list all bodies which hold or are beneficially entitled to shares, or who possess voting powers, amounting to more than 5% in the body corporate concerned (i.e. "participants"). You may, but are not required to, exclude from this table any bodies listed in response to question 2.12. If you are unable to provide a complete answer to this question in relation to beneficial owners, please state whether you have any reason to suspect the existence of any beneficial owners.

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond "N/A" in the table)

Name of body corporate identified in response to question 2.11				
Full name of >5% participant	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
N/A				
Comments				

Involvement of the applicant in specified activities

2.16 Please state below whether the applicant, or any of the directors, shareholders or other individuals named above, including their associates (i.e. directors of their associates and other group companies), is, or is involved in, any of the below, and the extent of that interest.

Activity/involvement	Yes / No	Please state who is involved; the name of the body/individual/agency they are involved with; and the extent of their involvement
a) A local authority	No	
b) A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a political nature, or which is affiliated to such a body	No	
c) A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a religious nature; ²	No	
d) An individual who is an officer of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	
e) A body corporate which is an associate (as defined in paragraphs 1(1) and 1(1A) of Part I of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990) of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	
f) An advertising agency or an associate of an advertising agency	No	

² Please refer to Sections 3 to 5 of [Ofcom's religious guidance note](#) for details on how we determine the eligibility of religious bodies to hold certain broadcasting licences.

Details of applications, licences and sanctions

2.17 Is the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence) a current licensee of Ofcom?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the licence details expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number	Name of multiplex
CR000143	Spark FM – Analogue FM Sunderland

2.18 Has the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence) held an Ofcom broadcasting licence before?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the details expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number	Name of service or multiplex
CR000143	Spark
Various	Utopia FM (RSL Services 1997 – 2009)
Unknown	Opportunity FM (1996)

2.19 Has anyone involved in the proposed service held an Ofcom broadcasting licence or been involved in an Ofcom-licensed broadcast service before?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the details expanding the table if necessary:

Dates licence was held or dates of involvement	Licence number (if known)	Name of service or multiplex
2021 - Present	DP104209BA/1	Dance Revolution (Tynemouth, Newcastle, South Durham)
2009-Present	CR000143	Spark
1997-2009		Utopia FM RSL's

2.20 Does the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence) control an existing Ofcom licensee?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the licence details expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number	Name of service or multiplex
CR000143	Spark FM

2.21 Is the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence) controlled by an existing licensee or by any person who is connected (within the meaning of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990) with an existing licensee (i.e. as a “participant”)?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the following information, expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number	Name of service or multiplex

2.22 Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant - made any other application to Ofcom (or its predecessor broadcast regulators – the Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority) for any licence which has since been surrendered by the licensee or revoked by Ofcom (or one of its predecessor regulators)?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the following information, expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number	Name of service or multiplex

2.23 Is the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant - subject to any current or pending investigation by any statutory regulatory or government body in the United Kingdom or abroad in respect of any broadcast-related matter?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the following details expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number (or equivalent)	Name of service or multiplex	Details of the investigation

2.24 Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – ever been subject to a statutory sanction for contravening a condition of a broadcasting licence in the UK or any other jurisdiction?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the following details relating to each sanction expanding the table if necessary:

Licence number (or equivalent)	Name of service or multiplex	Nature of the breach	Sanction imposed	Date sanction imposed

2.25 Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – ever been convicted of an unlicensed broadcasting offence?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the following details:

Full name	Date of conviction/action (dd/mm/yy)	Penalty

2.26 Please provide any further information you hold, relating to the past conduct of the applicant or those individuals listed, in regulatory matters or in matters going to honesty and/or compliance, which may be relevant to Ofcom's consideration of whether or not the applicant is fit and proper to hold a broadcast licence. If the applicant or the form signatory fails without reasonable excuse at this point to declare any matter of which Ofcom subsequently becomes aware, and which we do consider to be relevant to the applicant's eligibility to hold a licence, we will take it into account in determining the question of whether the applicant/licensee remains fit and proper to hold a licence.

If you have no information to provide, please respond "N/A".

N/A

3. The proposed service

About this section

This section asks you to describe your proposed service, including the Key Commitments you propose to include in your licence. This includes your service name, multiplex name and character of service, in addition to standard commitments that all C-DSP licensees need to abide by. Holders of an existing analogue community radio licence to be a simul-cast on the proposed C-DSP service can replicate the existing analogue key commitments as it is our expectation that the key commitments for simulcast services are to be in keeping with one another. If a licence is granted, the information you provide in this section will be used to form the basis of the annex to your licence. You will only be authorised to broadcast what is detailed in the annex of the licence.

In this section, you will also need to set out how your service will provide social gain, community participation and how you will be accountable to the target community. This is in line with statutory requirements for the granting of C-DSP licences. **The information provided in this section is also the basis on which decisions are made.**

If you hold, or intend to hold, multiple C-DSP licences, the answers given in this section and the intended delivery of your Key Commitments must apply to the locality in which your proposed service will broadcast (as set out in the Draft Key Commitments in this application form).

Your proposed service and target community

3.1 What is the proposed service name?

Spark

3.2 On which radio multiplex service do you intend to broadcast? If the relevant radio multiplex licence has not yet been awarded, please state the name of the area that the multiplex service is intended to cover, as defined in the multiplex licence advertisement.

Sunderland

3.3 Where is your proposed studio located? Please note that this must be located within the coverage area of the small-scale radio multiplex service identified in answer to 3.2 (or the advertised area for a small-scale radio multiplex service that has not yet been awarded).³

The studios are located at:
The David Puttnam Centre,
Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St Peters,
St Peters Way,
Sunderland. SR60 0DD

³ If you propose to provide your service on a local, rather than a small-scale, radio multiplex service, there is no requirement for your studio to be located within the licensed area of that local radio multiplex service.

- 3.4 If the proposed service is a simulcast or corresponding service of an existing licensed radio service, please list that below and provide the licence number.

Simulcast with CR00143

- 3.5 What is the target community of the service? Please include the geographical area that you wish to serve in addition to the interests or characteristics that define your target community. The area you wish to serve must be geographically located within the coverage area of the radio multiplex service on which you intend to broadcast. **Answer in fewer than 400 words.**

The proposed CDSP service will be a relay of our FM service for Sunderland. The current coverage of the Multiplex aligns with our current broadcast area.

Spark serves young people locally with a focus on students at the University of Sunderland. However, we are open to all young people, the wider community and cater for a range of interests through our speech and music programmes.

- 3.6 How will you ensure that your proposed C-DSP service is run on a not-for-profit basis? Please give details of specific measures or arrangements in place to ensure this, and how any profit will be wholly and exclusively used for securing or improving the future provision of the service, or for the delivery of social gain. **Answer in fewer than 400 words.**

Our analogue service is currently wholly funded by the University of Sunderland, and we would anticipate that would be our approach in the future. However, any income that we do generate is used to support the service and to secure and enhance the operation. The University is a Higher Education Corporation that operates in a not-for-profit capacity.

Social gain

- 3.7 What community benefits will your service bring to your target community(ies) and, if applicable, the general public. Please include summaries of evidence to support your answer, including details about other organisations you intend to work with. **Answer in fewer than 500 words.** Please do not provide names of individuals in your answer.

Our service has several key social gain aims. Firstly, we as a locally operated radio service for young people we provide a radio station that is locally engaged and relevant to the audience. We attend local events, such as Sunderland Expo and the City Runs, often as the only broadcaster in attendance. Across our whole schedule we support the local music industry, by playing local artists through our daytime

schedule and via weekly shows made up exclusively of local artists. Our programmes facilitate interviews with people from the city and wider region, across a range of topics. We also work in partnership with the University Students Union, to support their work in supporting the student community. We operate a scheme for local schools and engage with local colleges facilitating taster experiences.

As a University operated station, we also facilitate the career development of media and journalism students, offering them extra-curricular experience in presentation, production, and management.

- 3.8 Please summarise how your service will facilitate discussion and the expression of opinion. **Answer in fewer than 200 words.**

After undergoing mandatory compliance training, our team are encouraged to engage in current debates and topics within their programmes and social media.

We encourage and support programmes that explore social issues as they affect young people, including politics, mental health, cultural matters, and issues around gender and sexuality. We aim to operate a reflexive service that can pick up on topics through our main schedule, or via special events such International Women's Day, or Mental Health Awareness Week. Our telephone number and social media contacts are publicly available with contact information on our website and app. We also operate a weekly 'phone-in show and can take listener calls into any live show.

We have broadcast overnight programmes at every general election since 2010, offering young people the chance to engage in political broadcasting.

- 3.9 How will you ensure that members of your target community(ies) can gain access to the facilities used to provide your service, and receive training in using these? In particular, please set out how this will be done practically, formally and/or informally. **Answer in fewer than 400 words.**

We have an application form on our website that allows for potential volunteers to register their interest with us. We respond to these enquiries and meet potential volunteers to explore their interests. We also work with the university student recruitment team to facilitate tasters, demonstrations, and experiences to encourage participation in higher education – tasters which often result in the young person joining our team.

In operating this service since 2009 we've always made our facilities accessible to our volunteers. We have a dedicated on-air studio that is live 24/7 and we do not

permit remote broadcasting from home. We have voicetracking facilities, and this allows presenters to have the flexibility to pre-record programmes. All volunteers are trained in both the facilities and the practicalities of broadcasting, including content production and compliance.

Our shared resource in the University's media centre allows for access to studios for training and production and these can be booked online. The building can be accessed during broadcast hours via an access card that all volunteers are eligible for.

We are committed to maintaining an accessible space in the broadcast area.

Training needs are tracked once a volunteer has been engaged and support is offered where required via peer training and mentoring.

- 3.10 How will your service provide better understanding of your target community and the strengthening of links within it? **Answer in fewer than 200 words.**

We work to ensure that our schedule is inclusive, balanced and meets the needs of our audience. Our programmes encourage students to engage in local communities and local events and to create a service that has broad appeal. We seek to build bridges between social groups and offer programmes that bring people together through shared interests.

- 3.11 Please summarise the relevant experience of the group or its members in activities related to the provision of social gain or other relevant non-broadcast areas (such as third sector, training or education). **Answer in fewer than 200 words.**

We have been successfully operating radio services in this faculty since 1996, with current manager leading these services for the majority of this time. As a Higher Education provider, the leadership and executive team of the University are highly experienced in a range of industries, but all with a clear focus on education and social gain.

Two members of staff are directly associated with the radio station, who between them have experience of working in commercial radio, the BBC and community radio and have been part of this radio station since launch. We can also draw on guidance from colleagues in journalism and radio who have significant experience and sector knowledge.

Participation

- 3.12 How do you propose to ensure that members of your target community(ies) are given opportunities to participate in the operation and management of the service? **Answer in fewer than 400 words.**

We described Spark as a 'student-led, staff supported community radio station' As such, although we have currently 2 members of staff with direct responsibilities for the service, all day-to-day operational decisions are made our team of the volunteer managers.

This includes our regularly changing programme schedule and our daytime music playlist. Each programme team has flexibility in what they do within their programmes, and although we deploy music scheduling software to manage our daytime our output, individual producers and presenters can self-select their own content. This regular volunteer churn ensures that our station team reflects the audience as it is constantly refreshed. Our average volunteer spends around 2-3 years with us before moving on.

We hold open internal calls for new programmes throughout the year, allowing for new volunteers to participate in the output of the service. We also use peer mentoring and events such as International Women's Day to create additional opportunities for participation

Accountability

- 3.13 How will members of your target community contact your service and influence its operation? **Answer in fewer than 300 words.**

As a campus-based station our production and management team is constantly changing, therefore our volunteers remain fully grounded in the target community. We meet our audience at events and outside broadcasts where we readily accept feedback and suggestions.

Our contact details are posted on our website, including direct addresses for the management team. We can also receive emails and messages via our mobile app.

3.14 How will suggestions and/or criticisms from members of your target community(ies) be considered and acted upon? **Answer in fewer than 300 words.**

As noted above we accept comments via email and social media, which are then reviewed by a member of the paid staff. Where relevant, these can be taken to the weekly meeting of the management group, or individual volunteer managers for action. Where relevant, we will reply to such comments to acknowledge receipt and any actions we have taken in response.

Draft Key Commitments

Below is an example of the licence annex where the Key Commitments appear. Should a licence be awarded, the entries you provide below will form the Key Commitments section of your licence. Holders of a community radio analogue licence that is to be simulcast, or a corresponding service, are expected to provide key commitments that are in line with their existing service(s). As such, applicants may refer to the existing key commitments of the relevant simulcast or corresponding service(s) to ensure that the draft below is in line with those of the existing service(s).

Please provide entries where specified in **BOLD** below. The information you enter here should reflect your answers to Sections 3 and 4 of the Part A of your completed Application Form. This will form the basis of your Key Commitments alongside the mandatory text in italics. Do not amend the text in italics as every service is required to comply with these requirements, but the details of how each service does so do not need to be included in the Key Commitments.

ANNEX TO LICENCE

LICENSED SERVICE NO tbc

Licensed Service	Spark
Service Description	<p>Spark FM a radio service intended to serve young people aged 15-30 in Sunderland and University of Sunderland students.</p> <p>The station broadcasts a mixture of relevant music and speech programming and provides opportunities to participate in radio broadcasting and production.</p> <p>The studio of the Licensed Service is located within the coverage area of the Small-Scale Radio Multiplex Service identified above.</p> <p>The Licensed Service shall have the characteristics of a Community Digital Sound Programme Service as set out in the 2019 Order and, in so doing, shall achieve the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion, • the provision (whether by means of programmes included in the service or otherwise) of education or training to individuals not employed by the person providing the service, and • the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of links within it. <p>Members of the target community shall contribute to the operation and management of the service.</p> <p>The service shall have mechanisms in place to ensure it is accountable to its target community in the specific area or locality.</p>

Transmission Schedule	24 Hours
Multiplex	Sunderland

4. Compliance of the service

About this section

This section asks you to describe the compliance arrangements for the proposed licensed service, i.e. the arrangements which the applicant will put in place to ensure that the content it proposes to broadcast will comply with the relevant regulatory codes and rules for programming and advertising. These include:

- The Ofcom Broadcasting Code
- The BCAP Code: the UK Code of Broadcast Advertising
- The Regulation of Premium Rate Services Order

Condition 17 of a C-DSP licence requires that you have compliance procedures in place, and this section asks that you demonstrate your ability to meet this licence condition.

Before completing this section of the form you should read Section 4 of the [C-DSP guidance notes](#), where you will also find links to the codes and rules listed above.

- 4.1 Please give details of all compliance training (including dates) the person named in response to either question 2.3 or 2.5 in Part B (i.e. the individual who holds overall responsibility for compliance of the service) has received in the relevant codes and rules (for example, those referred to in the box at the start of this section).

As experienced radio professionals and licence they are well versed in all relevant codes and have both added election workshops at Ofcom (2017 & 2025). We are open to attending specific sector training and development. We are supported by colleagues with NCTJ Media Law colleagues, including academic staff who lead this training nationally.

- 4.2 Please give details of any practical compliance experience (including dates) the person named in response to either question 2.3 or 2.5 in Part B (i.e the individual who holds overall responsibility for compliance of the service) has with respect to the relevant codes and rules.

The University employs members of staff to oversee compliance and operation of the radio station. Information about this is listed below:

Station Manager – Dr Richard Berry
Compliance Manager – Scott McGerty

Richard Berry completed the initial application for Spark and has been part of the operational team since 2009. Scott McGerty has worked for Bauer Radio, Amazing Radio and is a DSP licence holder in his own right. They are supported by colleagues who deliver NCTJ media law training.

The team ensures that a robust process for compliance exists and that regular updates are shared with the programming team.

- 4.3 For each role within your compliance team please provide job title and a brief description of the functions of the role specific to ensuring compliance of the proposed service. Please do not give names of individual members of staff – this question relates to job roles rather than currently employed individuals.

Compliance Manager – this role supports volunteers in the broadcast of all materials, and to ensure our teams are aware of all sections of broadcast code and the BCAP code. This role supports the training and development of our team from recruitment to upskilling. The support ranges from 1-2-1 coaching, open book training to formal testing. We liaise with Media Law academics at the University of Sunderland and cross collaborate on knowledge, practices and cases within the media industry. The role holder supports management with their knowledge and skills too, so we have ears all over our output. Most importantly they're skilled at how to pre-empt a potential issue and to manage the situation successfully.

Station Manager – this role supports strategic leadership, including the submission of this application and licence extensions. The Station Manager also ensures that updates to codes and examples from the Broadcast Bulletin are shared internally to support development and effective management.

- 4.4 How does the applicant intend to formally train staff in compliance procedures? Please include details of the compliance training that will be given to those responsible for live programming, including compliance staff, presenters and producers.

All volunteer applicants must undertake an online compliance open book test that explores their understanding of the broadcasting code. We operate a volunteer agreement that outlines the requirement to understand and apply compliance issues. This supported through our training programme, mentoring, and discussions about potential issues on a one-to-one basis.

This is reinforced through regular compliance updates sent to the whole team. These include breakdowns from the broadcast bulletins, explaining what decisions mean and the lessons we should draw from the examples.

Additionally, some team members will hold the NCTJ media law qualifications, and all volunteers have access to academic staff and a newsroom manager with media law experience.

- 4.5 Will the training described in response to question 4.5 be mandatory for all staff and volunteers? If not, outline who will receive it.

Compliance training is mandatory for all.

An open-book screening test is taken on sign-up to establish contextual awareness. This is then used to triage understanding of the codes, which are then the subject of ongoing training and information sharing.

We are very clear with participants about our commitment to good compliance and we ensure that only volunteers capable of dealing with complex programming are permitted to do so through a clear and established progression pathway.

- 4.6 It is a licence requirement that a licensee must ensure that all programming on its service (broadcast at any time of the day or night) complies with Ofcom's codes and rules (e.g. Ofcom's Broadcasting Code, which sets requirements on standards to be observed in programme content for the protection of the public).

- a) Set out in detail below the systems the applicant intends to have in place to ensure it will be able to comply with the codes and rules when the service is broadcasting live content. Your response should include details of what you will do to prepare presenters and guests pre-broadcast and the process for ensuring that any non-complaint content is dealt with swiftly during the broadcast.

To take part in live programmes all volunteers must sign our volunteer agreement, which outlines their practical and legal responsibilities as broadcasters. We support this with ongoing training, mentoring, and open communication through our compliance manager. All programmes are subject to approval by our management team, a process which has compliance built in. This ensures that any potential risks are addressed prior to commencement. This includes processes for screening music and content, as well as options to record material ahead of time to allow for checking.

The presence of a compliance manager in our open plan office, ensures we have a strong compliance culture where programme teams feel able to discuss concerns ahead of production and support each other. This means hosts are vigilant about content and context. All guests are reminded about the need to exercise care over language.

We also maintain a compliance thread on our internal communication system, so possible issues and questions can be posed. This typically includes queries about language in music, or whether certain topics might be suitable for broadcast. This open dialogue allows for development and a robust process for addressing issues prior to broadcast. In the unlikely event of an issue, our team understand the need to work openly and quickly to address issues.

Our internal communications system means that in the event that non-compliant material is broadcast that managers are aware and can recommend action and offer support. In the case of live programmes this is normally an apology within the same hour, or as soon as practically possible.

We ensure that all output is logged, both locally and in the cloud for redundancy.

- b) Set out in detail below how the applicant intends to ensure that pre-recorded material will comply with Ofcom's codes and rules. Pre-recorded content could include, for example, material obtained from, or streamed from, third party sources as well as content produced by the licensee.

Our team are reminded about the importance of carefully checking recorded sequences before broadcast and ensuring that even music marked as 'safe' has been checked prior to uploading into the playout system.

Prerecorded interviews are checked prior to broadcast, with specific vigilance exercised over externally produced material.

- 4.7 Please set out how you will ensure the ongoing delivery/compliance of the **on-air** character of service as set out in the Key Commitments. This should be focused on the content you will broadcast on the station.

In your answer, please ensure you include details on each of the following points:

- a) How you will monitor that the character of service is being delivered;
- b) who will be responsible for monitoring this;
- c) how often will they monitor it;
- d) how you ensure this information is published; and
- e) where the information will be published/made publicly available.

Key Commitments are monitored by the Compliance Manager and the Station Manager, with support from the volunteer team. We do regular checks as standing items in our weekly management meetings, with follow-ups where necessary.

A check on weekly hours and content is an agenda item at these meetings. We ask presenters to share examples of content with the team via a form linked to a QR code in the studio. This is discussed weekly with overview assessments conducted regularly across the year.

We are able to publish this information on our website, which will be monitored by station staff.

4.8 Please set out how you will ensure the ongoing delivery/compliance of the **off-air** social gain activities as set out in the Key Commitments.

In your answer, please ensure you include details on each of the following points:

- a) How you will monitor that off-air social gain activities are being delivered;
- b) who will be responsible for monitoring this;
- c) how often will they monitor it;
- d) how you ensure this information is published; and
- e) where the information will be published/made publicly available.

Key Commitments are monitored by the Compliance Manager and the Station Manager, with support from the volunteer team. All commitments are established objectives, and we work hard to ensure that we meet them.

We work as a team to ensure that volunteers receive appropriate training and monitor recruitment. We also work internally with the University student recruitment team to support open days and taster days and capture this information internally.

We are able to publish this information on our website.

4.9 What language(s) does the applicant intend to broadcast in?

English

4.10 For each language listed in response to question 4.9 please provide details of how many compliance team member(s) are fluent in each language and will be responsible for ensuring that content broadcast in that language complies with the Ofcom’s code and rules. **Please do not give names of individual members of staff.**

N/A

5. Declaration

About this section

This form must be submitted by the applicant named in response to question 2.2. An agent may not sign the form.

The person authorised to make the declaration on behalf of the applicant must print their name and must be one of the following :

- A director of the company or the company secretary where the applicant is a company.
- A designated member where the applicant is a Limited Liability Partnership.

The declaration must also be dated.

- 5.1 I hereby apply to Ofcom for the grant of a licence for the community digital sound programme service described above and declare that the information given in this application form is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct.
- 5.2 I further declare and warrant:
- a) that I am not a disqualified person within the meaning of that expression as defined in Part II of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990, as amended, or as a result of a disqualification order under Section 145 of the Broadcasting Act 1996;
 - b) that having made all reasonable enquiries neither the applicant nor any person controlling the applicant, as a result of the grant to me of the licence, breach any requirement of Schedule 14 to the Communications Act 2003 with regard to the accumulation of interests in broadcasting services or to the restrictions on cross-media interests; and
 - c) that the applicant is not disqualified by virtue of the provisions of section 143 (5) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 in relation to political objects and the provisions of section 144 (3) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 in relation to the provision of false information or through the withholding of information with the intention of misleading Ofcom; and
 - d) that no director or person concerned directly or indirectly in the management of the applicant is subject to a disqualification order as defined by section 145 (1) of the Broadcasting Act 1996.
- 5.3 I understand that Ofcom reserves the right to revoke the licence (if granted) if at any time any material statement made to Ofcom is found to be false and to have been by the applicant or any member or officer thereof knowing it to be false. I also understand that under sections 144 and 145 of the Broadcasting Act 1996, the provision of false information could incur a criminal conviction and a disqualification from the holding of a Broadcasting Act licence. I further certify that, to the best of my knowledge, any matters which might influence Ofcom's judgement as to whether the directors and any other individuals and/or bodies corporate with substantial involvement in this application are fit and proper persons to participate in a radio licence, have been made known to Ofcom.

Full name (BLOCK CAPITALS) of the applicant or person authorised to make the application of behalf of the applicant:

ANDREA WALTERS

Date of application:

1/4/26

I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the applicant in my capacity as **(delete as appropriate)**:

Company secretary / company director / designated member (in the case of a Limited Liability Partnership)

You also need to complete the [confidential section \(Part B\) of the application form](#).