

Unlock Your Potential

Chief Digital & Data Officer (CDDO)

Location Glasgow, Darlington or Llandudno

Candidate Briefing Pack | Nov 2025

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Confidentiality Notice

As with every Executive Search assignment, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of confidentiality in relation to all matters discussed and shared regarding this opportunity.

This Assignment Brief contains supporting information regarding this position. These details are provided on the understanding that you will treat them as strictly confidential and that none of this information will be disclosed to, or discussed with, any other person without prior permission.

Similarly, any information regarding yourself which we provide during the course of the assignment is supplied on the same understanding, and we will not contact referees without your prior permission.

Personal Data

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we are committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal data throughout the recruitment process.

By submitting your application, you consent to the processing of your personal data by Harvey Nash and our end client, the Student Loans Company, for the purposes of assessing your suitability for the role, communicating with you during the recruitment process, and fulfilling legal and contractual obligations.

Your data will be handled confidentially and will not be shared with third parties without your explicit consent, except where required by law. We will retain your data only for as long as necessary to complete the recruitment process and in accordance with our data retention policies. You have the right to access, rectify, or erase your personal data, and to withdraw your consent at any time.



Introduction from Chris Larmer, our Chief Executive Officer

At the Student Loans Company (SLC), we are proud to support over 1.5 million students each year in pursuing further and higher education. Our purpose is to empower individuals to invest in their futures by delivering student finance services that are trusted, transparent, flexible, and accessible. We are on an exciting transformation journey to become a simpler, modern, digital organisation and the appointment of our first ever Chief Digital & Data Officer (CDDO) role will be critical to SLC's future success.

The CDDO will lead the creation and execution of SLC's digital and data strategies to support the transformation of the organisation into a modern, customer-focused, and data-driven enterprise. As a key member of the Executive Leadership Team, the CDDO will oversee digital platforms, data governance, analytics, and the ethical use of AI to improve decision-making, automate processes, and enhance customer experiences.

We have made great strides in our customer service, but we are committed to going even further. By introducing greater digital functionality, we are now guiding customers to the right channel depending on their circumstances. Our focus is now on enabling and promoting self-service for customers, and the Chief Digital and Data Officer will have a key role in delivering our customer strategy. Data shows that most of our customers prefer to self-serve, so we are working on new systems to allow people to use our services without having to contact us, freeing up resources to support our customers who need us most.

We're looking for an exceptional digital and data leader to shape the future of our organisation. As CDDO, you'll play a pivotal role in transforming a complex, high-impact organisation into a data-centric, customer focused enterprise. You'll have the influence, autonomy, and resources to deliver cutting edge digital solutions, harness the power of data and AI, and lead enterprise-wide cultural change. This is your opportunity to make a measurable difference to millions of customers, lead innovation on a national stage, and leave a lasting legacy in public service.

If you have the vision, skills and experience to ensure the SLC continues to support the ambitions of millions of students, while ensuring we are widely regarded as a fulfilling place to work, we would be delighted to hear from you. I look forward to your application.

Chris Larmer, Chief Executive.



About Student Loans Company

The Student Loans Company (SLC) is a non-profit making Government-owned organisation providing loans and grants to students in universities and colleges in the UK. Since 1989, we have enabled our customers to invest in their futures through further and higher education by providing trusted, transparent, flexible and accessible student finance services.

We play a critical role in the UK economy by:

- Supporting 9.6 million customers
- Paying more than £23 billion in maintenance loans and tuition fee loans
- Managing a total loan book of £294.1 billion

That is why we are a trusted partner to our shareholders, made up of the UK Government and the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We have more than 3,000 employees based across four sites in Glasgow, nearby Hillington, Darlington and Llandudno Junction in Wales.

This includes our new purpose-built six-storey office on the banks of the Clyde, which supports our net zero ambitions and increases our technology resilience.

Our Mission and Vision

To enable people to invest in their futures through further and higher education by providing trusted, transparent, flexible and accessible student finance services. Our vision is to ensure the SLC is widely recognised as enabling student opportunity and delivering an outstanding customer experience in the efficient delivery of the four UK Governments' further and higher education finance policies.

Our Transformation Journey

Our vision for 2030 is the transformation of our organisation from the old to the new – embracing modern digital technologies to drive efficiencies and simplify processes for all. This appointment marks the first step in turning our vision into action to build a future-ready organisation with best-practice ways of working.

Our goal: a simpler, modern, digital SLC that delivers better outcomes for customers, colleagues, and shareholders, building on the strong foundations already in place. As an organisation we will continue to be trusted delivery partners, playing a critical role for the education sector and economy through safe delivery of student finance and repayments.



The Digital and Data Directorate

The CDDO will lead a newly established Digital & Data Directorate, supporting SLC's ambition to become a simpler, modern digital organisation. The Directorate will retain executive accountability for the strategic direction design, and delivery of digital services and data capabilities.

The Directorate is responsible for shaping and executing SLC's Data and Digital Strategy, driving forward its data aspirations to unlock insight, enable informed decision-making, and embed data as a strategic asset across the organisation, unlocking insight, enabling smarter decisions, and embedding data as a strategic asset.

The Directorate will hold executive accountability for the strategic direction, design, and delivery across digital services and data capabilities.

The below outlines four key benefits of SLC's future Service-Centric Operational Model:

1. **Driving Efficiency Through Collaboration** - Breaking down silos to empower teams to solve challenges faster, together.
2. **Sustainable Capacity** - Simplifying and automating to free up time for what matters most.
3. **Putting Customers, Colleagues and Shareholders First** - Designing around what matters most - services that optimises outcomes for customers, shareholders and colleagues.
4. **Accelerating Delivery** - Data-led decisions and clear priorities mean faster, smarter delivery.



The Role

Chief Digital & Data Officer (CDDO)

Salary up to £145k basic plus Civil Service Pension

This role can be based in Glasgow, Darlington or Llandudno, however regular travel to Glasgow is required for the latter two locations.

The Opportunity

The CDDO will play a critical role in SLC's ambition to become a simpler, modern and digital organisation and retains the overarching executive accountability for all aspects of SLC's strategy specific to digital services and data capabilities. Through user centred design, agile delivery, and ethical data use, the CDDO will foster a culture of continuous improvement in the delivery of digital and data services. By driving innovation, automation, enhancing performance and digital investments, the CDDO will deliver measurable value across SLC.

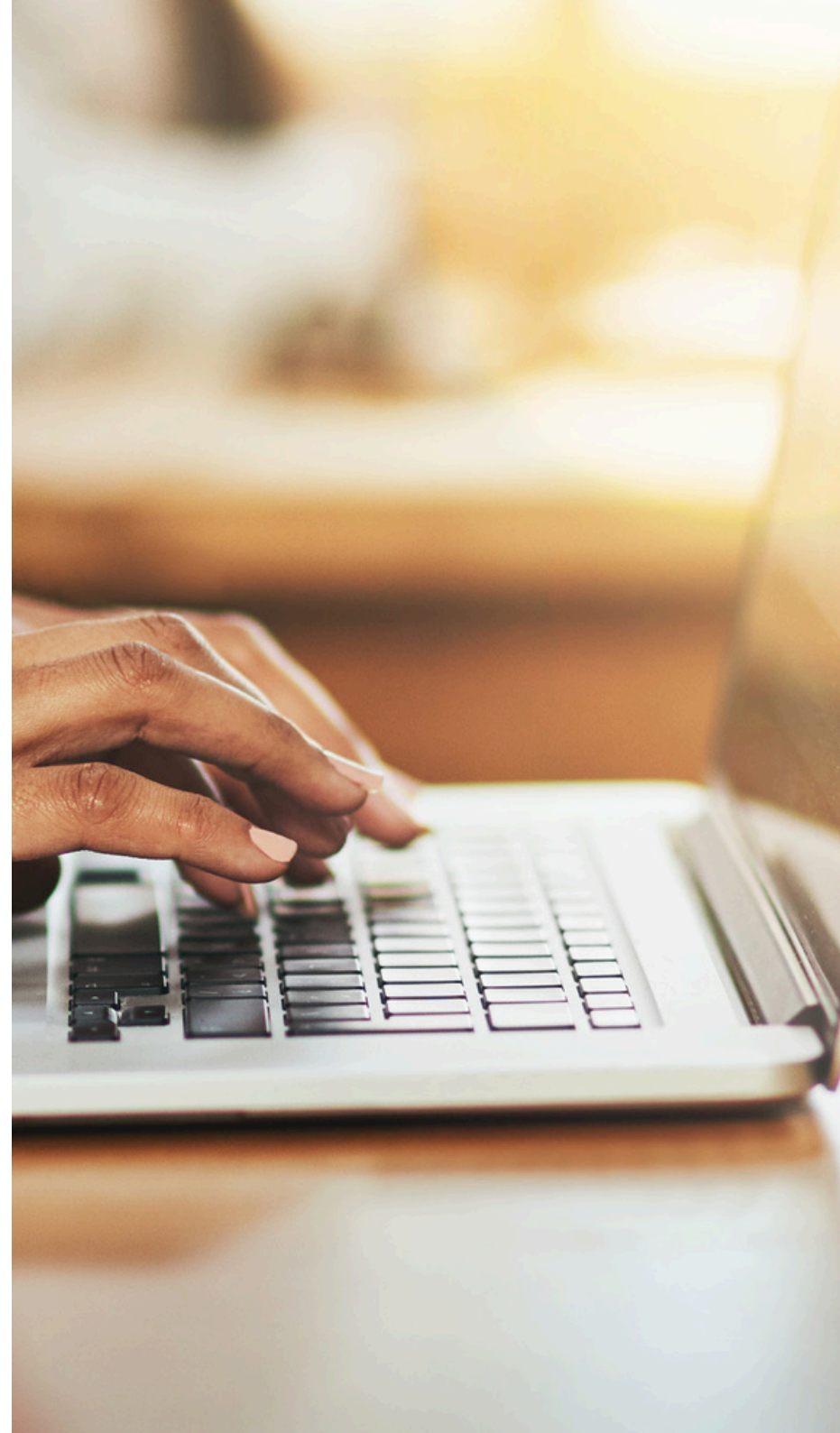
The CDDO will lead the development and delivery of SLC's digital and data strategies, supporting its ambition to become a simpler, modern digital organisation. The role includes delivering a digital-first channel strategy, increasing self-service and digital containment, and embedding a data - and insight-driven approach to service design, operational optimisation, and performance improvement. The CDDO is accountable for the delivery and evolution of digital platforms, data infrastructure, and advanced analytics capabilities - including the ethical and effective use of artificial intelligence to enhance decision-making, automate processes, and personalise customer experiences. Working closely with the wider Executive Leadership Team and our customers, and maximizing the use of multi-disciplinary teams, the CDDO drives transformation, to improve customer experience, and reduces cost-to-serve - ensuring digital and data investments deliver measurable value across the organisation. At a holistic level you will oversee the below:

- **Shaping Digital & Data Strategy:** The CDDO will lead our digital and data strategies, partnering across SLC to advance our ambition for simpler, modern, and digital services.
- **Enabling Digital-Focused & Customer-Led Services:** Collaborate to expand self-service options and enhance customer journeys.
- **Service Design Delivery:** Delivering effective services that are user-centred and meet the requirements of our customers
- **Strengthening Digital Delivery:** Work to maintain and evolve core systems and data platforms.
- **Advancing Analytics & AI:** Supporting ethical use of AI to improve decisions and automate processes in partnership with teams.
- **Driving digital collaboration:** Building connections across directorates to enhance user experience and optimise efficiency.



In turn, as CDDO you will have specific responsibility to:

- Define and lead the implementation of SLC's digital and data strategies, aligned with the cross-government digital strategy and SLC's corporate objectives.
- Provide strategic leadership and accountability for SLC's core digital platforms, ensuring they are resilient, scalable and user-centred, and that they effectively enable delivery of corporate strategy, transformation priorities and exceptional customer and employee experiences.
- Collaborate with other areas of the organisation to ensure technology solutions are scalable, interoperable and aligned with business needs. All of which support the reduction of legacy systems and technical debt through modernisation initiatives.
- Drive the design, development, and continuous improvement of digital services, ensuring they are accessible, inclusive, and meet the needs of users.
- Lead and promote agile, product-centric delivery models and multi-disciplinary team structures. Ensuring services are iteratively improved using performance data, user feedback, and research.
- Lead the multidisciplinary service-aligned teams responsible for owning and optimising products and services ensuring key data sets are used to drive channel strategy, digital channel management, self-service and digital containment.
- Own and lead the development & implementation of SLC's data strategy, including data governance, architecture, quality and engineering.
- Ensure that the value of SLC's data is understood and treated as a strategic asset; enabling insight, innovation and improved service delivery whilst ensuring adherence to policies and standards that guarantee the integrity of data.
- Establish and maintain a governance and management framework for digital and data activities, ensuring compliance with GovS 005 and other relevant functional standards.
- Maintain close and effective relationships with GDS and CDDO and any relevant broader Government stakeholders including within the Department for Education, HMRC, DWP and other relevant bodies.
- Champion the Government's long-term vision for digital public services and use of the cross government digital product and services such as the Gov App and One Login.
- Adhere to the principles of Managing Public Money and the specific regulatory principles relating to commercial and financial governance as set out in the Framework Document between SLC and UK Government.
- Build and maintain a high-performing digital and data function, fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration and continuous learning.
- Lead workforce planning and capability development in line with the Digital, Data and Technology Profession Capability Framework; and drive enterprise-wide digital culture change throughout SLC.
- Contribute fully to the Executive Leadership Team in respect of all management issues in the running of the business, taking collective accountability for material business decisions to ensure that immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered and align with SLC's strategy.
- Champion and embed SLC's values and culture, fostering a resilient, inclusive, and high-performing environment that promotes innovation, agility and strong employee engagement.



Skills & Experience

The CDDO role is a business-critical strategic hire for SLC, operating as a key member of the Executive Leadership Team and reporting directly to our Chief Executive, Chris Larmer. This is a position for a highly visible leader and agent for change who provides corporate leadership and is a relentless promoter of organisational values. The successful candidate will help embed new ways of working, drive innovation, and ensure digital and data investments benefit customers, colleagues, and shareholders hence we are looking for candidates with an extensive background in delivering digital and data change at scale. The CDDO is a new executive leader, joining the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to lead a new Digital & Data Directorate (launching April 2026). The CDDO brings clear leadership, focus, and accountability to how we design, build, and improve digital services - helping us move faster, work more securely, and deliver joined-up, user-centred services that meet government standards and deliver better outcomes for all.

The core skills required for this role are included below in the following two sections, with our essential requirements outlined first:

Essential Experience

- Deep understanding of user-centred design, agile delivery and digital best practice in a comparable context, which drives greater customer centricity at an organisational level and delivers exceptional customer outcomes.
- Proven experience at the most senior level within a digital, data, and technology leadership role within a complex organisation.
- Experience of implementing, owning and optimising modern digital technology platforms.
- Expert ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues and customers, by actively listening, delivering quality information and providing timely and professional support that upholds public service.
- Demonstrable leadership in developing and implementing data strategies that enhance organisational performance, drive innovation and support evidence-based decision-making.
- Proven ability to embed data governance, quality and architecture practices that enable secure, ethical, and effective use of data across complex service delivery environments.
- A track record demonstrating readiness for new ways of working and remain effective in ambiguous situations while identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.
- Extensive experience in accurately managing, interpreting, and utilising data to support decision making and drive effective outcomes.
- Expert ability to confidently use digital tools and technologies to communicate, access information and solve problems efficiently.
- Relevant scale of experience to include managing teams in excess of 100 employees.
- Individual budget management experience in excess of £10 million.
- Experience in proactively identifying, assessing and managing risks to minimise potential impacts to either customer or colleagues.
- Extensive 3rd party supplier management experience.
- Highly motivated and resilient individual who enjoys the challenge of working in a fast paced, multi-stakeholder environment and has a strong track record of delivering digital transformation and data strategies at scale.
- Excellent engagement and leadership skills, a sophisticated communicator, with the ability to influence at board level.

Desirable Experience

- Experience in public sector service delivery or education/financial services.
- Familiarity with Government Functional Standards (particularly GovS 005) & DDaT Playbook, the National Data Strategy and associated procurement practices.
- Experience driving digital organisational changes, including the successful design and implementation of new operating models that align digital and data capabilities.
- Experience leading teams working on enterprise cloud-based software platforms such as Salesforce, Workday etc.



Package Details

Salary up to £145k

We provide an excellent benefit and rewards package that includes:

- Civil Service Pension – up to 28.97%
- Digitally enabled blended working
- 28 days annual leave plus 8 public holidays, and extra day's leave if you are moving home
- Opportunity to buy or sell holidays
- Flexi-time available
- Flexible working contracts
- Family friendly leave - including 52 weeks maternity/ adoption leave with six months at full pay and the option to share leave with a partner
- Life insurance cover providing protection equivalent to four times basic salary
- Recognition of success through performance related pay awards
- Opportunity to give back to the community through annual volunteering day



Our values

As previously referenced in our introduction to the skills and experience for this role, our corporate values are of utmost importance to our business. As part of our organisational transformation, we have worked to align these to our new strategic vision and are delighted to share these with you now.

	Living this value means...	It is not...
Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing information openly and honestly, and asking thoughtful questions to show curiosity Acknowledging challenges and addressing them with courage and care Ensuring clarity in decisions and actions to promote alignment and accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hoarding or selectively sharing information Avoiding difficult conversations Using honesty as a blunt tool to criticise people
Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making decisions and taking actions within our control, in line with our shared goals Continuously learning, adapting and growing Offering support, guidance and resources to help others succeed Recognising and celebrating people for their contributions and taking the initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micromanaging tasks Failing to provide appropriate support Using 'Empowerment' to take actions that have not been thought through or negatively impact others
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering on commitments, follow actions through and own both successes and mistakes Striving for quality outcomes and take pride in doing what's right for customers, colleagues and communities Giving and receiving meaningful feedback and fostering open conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making excuses, blaming others or deflecting responsibility Tolerance for mistakes without learning Walking past problems or opportunities to improve
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listening and giving others space to share their views Fostering an inclusive environment where people feel like they belong and feel safe Appreciating and celebrating the diversity of experiences and ideas and valuing each person's unique contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismissing different views or dominating conversations Criticising the person rather than understanding/solving the problem Excluding individuals or undervaluing diverse experiences and contributions
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborating across teams to break down silos and work as one, seeing the bigger picture implications of decisions Upholding ethical behaviours and inspiring trust through actions, not just words Caring for customers, colleagues and communities and building relationships that are grounded in dependability, reliability, kindness and respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritising individual goals over collective success Tolerating unethical or disrespectful behaviours Saying one thing, and doing another



How to Apply

To apply for this post, please send your tailored CV and a cover letter no longer than two pages to our recruitment partner Kirsteen Bell at Harvey Nash. Please email your application to:

HNScotlandExecutive@harveynash.com by **Midnight on Thursday 27th November 2025.**

Please note that successful applicants would be expected to attend an in-person panel interview on Wednesday 17th December in Glasgow.

If you would like a confidential, informal discussion about the role then please contact **Kirsteen Bell on +44 (0) 141 343 3284** or send an email to the above-mentioned address.

SLC is committed to equality of opportunity and to no discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, age, sex, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, transgender status, pregnancy or maternity. We are constantly reviewing our approach to ensuring equality and diversity in our applications and would be pleased if you could complete the attached Equalities Monitoring Form. Should you require any adjustments or wish to speak with a member of our team to discuss any particular circumstances, please email the above address.





Harvey Nash Executive Search

Harvey Nash Executive Search is one of the world's most trusted Search Partners for C-Level and executive-level Digital, Data, Technology, Product and Transformation professionals. Through our unparalleled market knowledge, global networks and robust search processes, we deliver talented leaders to a range of organisations across the private, public and third sectors. A major strength is our breadth and depth of relationship with Technology and Business Leaders which we have built up over the last 35 years.

At Harvey Nash we have grown our Global IT Leadership community for over three decades, and during that time we've established the industry's foremost Digital Leadership Report Survey which presents the views of more than 3,500 technology leaders across 20 countries.

We are deeply committed to equal opportunities in our own employment policies and in our approach to search on behalf of our clients. We have a long history of championing diversity and were early signatories of the 30% Club Voluntary Code of Conduct for Executive Search firms and are actively involved in the next iteration of the Code. Additionally, Harvey Nash UK is the first recruitment business to receive the EY National Equality Standard (NES) accreditation.

How we work with you

Harvey Nash understands the importance of ensuring a positive candidate experience from initial application through to onboarding. Establishing candidate relationships based on trust is the foundation of a successful Executive Search practice. We understand that we have a duty to yourself as our candidate as well as our end client and will strive to ensure that we work with you in an open and honest manner at all times. As part of our commitment to you we will support you in the following areas:

- Work with you to clarify the opportunity & how that may relate to you own specific skill set
- Partner with you to create as strong an application as possible for the role
- Retain confidentiality throughout our engagement
- Ensure all information is collated correctly and presented appropriately to the end client
- Remain in regular communication with you through the process
- Offer support at all stages of the process from initial application, through interview stages, psychometric assessment (if used) through to offer coordination, resignation and onboarding
- Remain transparent throughout the process, regardless of outcome

**Harvey
Nash.**