

Trustee Board Role Descriptors

The following are template role descriptors for Trustees, Chairs and Vice Chairs.

How to Use:

Trustees roles descriptors are usually used in recruitment and appointment of trustees to ensure that each individual knows what is expected of them in their role. They should be available to anyone wishing to consider a trustee role, applying to be a trustee and on appointment.

Similarly, the Chair and Vice Chair role descriptors fulfil the same purpose in ensuring that role holder understand what is expected of them. They are very helpful during induction into these roles and in conversations about how the two roles interact and work together.

Top tip: When the Chair of a Trustee or Advisor Board is a student officer, it's really helpful to emphasise the role of the Vice Chair as a mentor and advisor. When the Chair is an external/ lay trustee/ advisor, it is important to emphasise their role in helping the Chair to understand the student perspective at that institution.

Trustee Role Descriptor

Main responsibility

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the financial matters and financial procedures of the organisation. It must accept ultimate responsibility for giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-governed, and delivering the objectives for which it has been set up.

The trustees will also annually review how the organisation's aims are to be achieved, which are found in the governing document and include:

- Promoting the interests of our members as effectively as possible at institutional, local and national levels
- Ensuring effective communication between our members, the University and other bodies
- Providing for the educational, cultural, recreational, sporting, social and welfare needs of our members to the best of our ability.
- Operating an effective equality, diversity and inclusion policy while guaranteeing freedom of expression and minimising any adverse environmental impact, therefore providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all

The Board of Trustees has a responsibility not to implement any democratically developed policy which has damaging financial implications if it is passed without a realistic financial plan.

Key duties

- To work collectively and with the Chief Executive/ General Manager/ Union Director and other senior staff to ensure that the organisation has a clear vision that recognises its values and meets the needs of its members.
- To monitor and evaluate the performance of the organisation against targets and to ensure that it is focussed on achieving its vision.
- To ensure that the organisation complies with all legal and regulatory requirements, including its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To agree any delegated authority and ensure such delegated authority is clearly expressed.
- To safeguard the assets of the organisation, taking due care over their security and proper usage, ensuring that they are used exclusively in the pursuit of the agreed objectives.
- To ensure that the governance of the organisation is of the highest standard and that it follows guidance from any relevant bodies.
- To report to General Meeting/ Annual General Meeting, including recommending the auditors and naming the bankers of the organisation.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- To approve and amend the finance regulations, annual budgets and strategic plans of the organisation.
- To appoint and appraise the Chief Executive/General Manager/ Union Director and to appoint the Board of Directors of any direct subsidiary companies of the organisation.
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees, using any specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions involving scrutinising board papers, focusing on key issues, providing guidance.
- Take or seek opportunities to enhance their effectiveness as a Trustee through participation in training and development programmes and by increasing their own knowledge of the organisation.

Term of Office: Detail length of terms of office and maximum number of terms to be served.

Time Commitment: Detail numbers of meetings, length of meetings, approximate commitment per month, expectations outside of meetings.

Remuneration: This role is not remunerated. However, reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Chair Role Descriptor:

Chair of [organisation name]

In addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee, duties of the chair include the following.

- To lead the Trustee Board to meet the needs of its members and ensuring that the Trustee Board fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation, supporting the vision and values of the organisation.
- To set the tone for the Board, role modelling the behaviours outlined in the Nolan Principles of Public Life.
- To work collectively with the President/ Elected Officer/ Vice Chair and Chief Executive Officer/ General Manager/ Union Director, to achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation.
- To provide leadership to the board by ensuring that everyone remains focused on the delivery of the student organisation's charitable purposes to provide greater public benefit.
- To chair and facilitate board meetings to ensure effective decision making.
- To check that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- To bring impartiality and objectivity to decision-making

With the Chief Executive/ General Manager/ Union Director:

- To plan the annual cycle of board meetings and other general meetings where required, and in accordance with the Governing Document
- To set agendas for board and other general meetings
- To ensure the Board of Trustees has appropriate induction, training, appraisal and succession planning unless delegated to a subcommittee.

Where staff are employed:

- To lead the process of supporting and appraising the performance of the Chief Executive/General Manager/ Union Director along with the vice chair
- To act as the key channel of communication between the Trustees and staff & elected officer teams.
- To sit on appointment and disciplinary panels, in accordance with policies

Term of Office: Detail length of terms of office and maximum number of terms to be served.

Time Commitment: Detail numbers of meetings, length of meetings, approximate commitment per month, expectations outside of meetings.

Remuneration: This role is not remunerated. However, reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Vice Chair Role Descriptor

Vice Chair of [organisation name]

In addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee, duties of the vice chair include the following.

- Working with the Chair of the Board to lead the Trustee Board to meet the needs of its members and ensuring that the Trustee Board fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation, supporting the vision and values of the organisation.
- To role model the behaviours outlined in the Nolan Principles of Public Life.
- To work collectively with the President/ Elected Officer/Chair and Chief Executive Officer/ General Manager/ Union Director, to achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation.
- To chair and facilitate board meetings to ensure effective decision making in the absence of the Chair.
- To provide mentoring and guidance to the Chair, either using their experience as a Trustee or their experience of student life to share expertise.

Where staff are employed:

- To be involved in the process of supporting and appraising the performance of the Chief Executive/General Manager/ Union Director along with the chair
- To support the Chair in acting as the key channel of communication between the Trustees and staff & elected officer teams.
- To sit on appointment and disciplinary panels, in accordance with policies.

Term of Office: Detail length of terms of office and maximum number of terms to be served.

Time Commitment: Detail numbers of meetings, length of meetings, approximate commitment per month, expectations outside of meetings.

Remuneration: This role is not remunerated. However, reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.