Description of Responsibilities of all Student Trustees 2018-20

Overview of Role

The OU Students Association Board of Trustees has the ultimate responsibility for the Association’s affairs and exercises its powers subject to relevant legislation in addition to our Constitution and By-Laws. This includes oversight of the governance, staffing, finances and strategy of the Association.

The Board of Trustees delegates the day-to-day management of the Association and its staff team to the General Manager.

All members of the Board of Trustees must:

- Ensure that the OU Students Association acts in accordance with its Constitution, charitable objects and other guiding documents.
- Ensure that the OU Students Association complies with all relevant legislation and regulations, including relevant Education Acts and Charity Acts where applicable.
- Safeguard the effective administration of the Association, including maintaining its financial viability and avoiding activities which greatly risk our reputation, sustainability or students.
- Approve the Association’s strategy, annual budget, any submission to the University concerning the subvention and the Association’s annual financial statements. To consider funding proposals and applications during the course of the budget year as and where necessary.
- Make an active contribution to the Board of Trustees reaching sound decisions by challenging when appropriate and being involved in discussions. Read and scrutinise all papers; attend and participate in meetings and on the Trustee online forums; lead discussions and/or meetings where appropriate; maintain a focus on key issues; building an understanding and appreciation of the Association and our membership; offering own skills and experience; exercising a vote on key matters.
- Work with other Trustees and support the Senior Staff team to create a positive, hard-working, inclusive, supportive and successful culture.
- Seek to empower and support the student voice at all levels of the organisation, including recognising the important role of the Student Elected Officers and Central Executive Committee.
- Recognise and value the difference between the Central Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees, working to create a joined-up and constructive governance culture.
- Appoint and receive any reports from the Association’s bankers, HR advisors, solicitors and auditors. To consider proposals for external affiliations where necessary.
• Approve all amendments to the Association Constitution for submission to a vote of Conference.
• Appoint, establish the job description, agree the remuneration and annually appraise the performance of the Association’s General Manager.

Essential Information

Trustees should be aware that they are jointly and severally liable for the affairs of the Association.

This role is a voluntary position with a varying workload across the term of office.

Many commitments within the remit of Trustees are completed during office hours as well as some evenings and weekends as and when required.

You will need to be eligible to take on the role of a Trustee.

You must be a full member of the OU Students Association at the time of election.

Time commitments

Within this role you can expect to spend on average 5 hours per week. This role offers some flexibility as some meetings can be attended remotely, however, this is a busy remit and your attendance on campus would be required for the following:

Association Trustee meetings – The Trustees meet a minimum of four times a year in Milton Keynes. These meetings are held during the work week. At times Trustees come to campus to be involved in interview panels or specific working groups (First handover meeting will take place 20-22 July 2018, future dates will be set by the board and last half a day).

Induction Weekend – All newly elected representatives and trustees are expected to attend 7-9 September 2018.

Association Conference – All newly elected representatives are invited to join us for our biennial conference, held on Milton Keynes Campus 22-24 June 2018.

Please note that meetings often require preparation time outside of the hours mentioned. Travel time to and from meetings has not been included in our estimation of the time commitment for individual roles.

Outside of specific remits, there are often additional opportunities to be involved in meetings, events, working groups and project teams. These can be of personal interest to individuals as well as being fun and a great way to gain experience but are not included within the above time commitments.
You will have

- An understanding of finance issues and how charities operate.
- Attention to detail, with the confidence to raise risks and issues as they arise.
- Passion for the OU Students Association Vision, Mission and Values.
- Willingness to engage with students, volunteers and Association staff in pursuit of our shared objectives.
- Good communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Commitment to develop skills and knowledge appropriate to the role.

What additional support will you receive?

As part of your role you will be supported by the Head of Resources, General Manager and Chair of the Trustees. The Association also recruits External Trustees specifically for their experience in matters relating to finance and law.