

Open University Students Association

Appointments Committee

Terms of Reference

Approved by the Board of Trustees: (18 October 2023)

Purpose

The Appointments Committee is a sub-committee of the Open University Students Association Board of Trustees.

It has delegated authority to consider and make decisions on applications from candidates for appointment as Student Representatives (SR), to Student Senate Reference Group (SSRG), to Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC), Three of the six student members of Senate, Student volunteer for Shop Working Group and the two Student Representative Appointments Committee members.

All appointments must be made in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the committees they are being appointed to.

The Appointments Committee has the authority to appoint Student Representatives and the Board of Trustees may accept, amend or reject recommendations made by the Appointments Committee, providing reasoning and/or recommendations to the Committee via the Chair or Secretary.

The Appointments Committee will report quarterly to the Board of Trustees, sharing recruitment updates, appointments, reasons individuals were unsuccessful and any declarations of interest.

Membership

1. The Appointments Committee will consist of:
 - a. the Vice President Student Representation
 - b. the President (or President's nominee from the Student Leadership Team usually the Deputy President)
 - c. a Member of the Board of Trustees (self-nominated and then elected by simple ballot by the Board)
 - d. a member of the Student Leadership Team (self-nominated and then elected by simple ballot by the Committee)
 - e. two experienced Student Representatives who will be self-nominations and who have at least one year's experience as a Student Representative will be chosen by the outgoing Appointments Committee. The Principles of Appointment specify how we will ensure all Student Representatives are made aware of this opportunity.
 - f. The Associate Director of Projects and Services (Secretary, nonvoting).

All appointments are linked to the role held and any member ceasing to hold the related role will no longer be eligible to be a committee member.

2. The Board of Trustees will approve membership of the panel.
3. Four voting members will constitute quorum. Where quoracy is not met because of declarations of interests from Committee members, the Board of Trustees will be informed of the decision made, as well as actions taken to allow Trustees to ratify the decision.
4. VP Student Representation will chair the Appointments Committee. If the position of VP Student Representation is vacant, the President or Deputy President will assume the position of Chair. The Board will be available to support this decision as required.
5. Members may resign by providing reasonable notice in writing to the Committee Chair. The Board will be kept informed of any resignations. In consultation with the Appointments Committee, the Chair will appoint any mid-term replacements with the approval of the Trustees.

Meetings

1. Committee members will review applications in their private forums, meeting as and when required via remote or face-to-face means to make final decisions. Decision making will be minuted within the private forum. Minutes will be shared with Trustees at their quarterly Board meetings.
2. Any decision making that occurs off the forum because of declarations of interest should include all voting and non-voting members of the Committee and evidence of the discussions should be shared with the Volunteering and Representation team and is to be stored for a period of six months. These declarations of interest will be minuted and observed during decision making. Decisions and declarations will be included in the quarterly report to the Trustees.
3. In large recruitment cases, such as the start of a new governance term, the Committee will come together to discuss and agree the appointment and placement of representatives either face to face or via an appropriate online meeting platform.
4. The Trustees may request the chair of the Appointments Committee to attend Board meetings when review of these Terms of Reference, any other supporting documents and the appointments of any Representatives are to be discussed or approved as part of the agenda.

Duties of the Appointments Committee

1. Operating on behalf of the Board of Trustees, to be responsible for the appointment, training and induction for representative groups named above.
2. To consider all factors which it deems necessary in accordance with the Principles of Appointment and role description whilst ensuring that candidates are treated equitably.
3. To ensure all personal data and details of any specific application are treated confidentially.
4. To refer to the relevant Terms of Reference for committees being appointed to and to adhere to the Principles of Appointments.
5. To consider and follow the Association Volunteer Policy and best practice for volunteer management and recruitment.

6. To support the Chair with the planning of annual training and ongoing development opportunities for Representatives.

Mode of Operation

1. Only members of the Appointments Committee can vote at meetings.
2. Members cannot send a stand-in; however, the Deputy President will receive AC training along with the Committee to allow for deputising for President should the situation occur.
3. Members will be supported by the Secretary and the Volunteering and Representation team, who will be responsible for providing applications for approval and discussion (after administering the appropriate safeguarding and eligibility checks), organising and recording meetings, relaying decisions and enabling and facilitating attendance to meetings where required.
4. All meeting and forum discussions will be entirely confidential, though applications will not be anonymised to the committee to allow for the declaration of any conflict of interest and to allow the Committee to refer to previous experience as a volunteer or representative in accordance with the Principles of Appointment.
5. Decisions will be minuted, with final decisions recorded. Minutes will be shared with the Panel for approval within the private forum before being submitted to the Trustee's monthly meeting.
6. No member or attendee shall be involved in decisions relating to their own appointment should this case arise, individuals will not be involved in discussions about the appointment of representatives to the position they have applied for.
7. Members must be vigilant of their own and each other's conflicts of interest and ensure that these are declared to the Chair as soon as they become aware of such conflicts of interest. This will include any significant personal relationship with the volunteer or nominee in accordance with the processes and principles of appointments.
8. Following approval, these Terms of Reference can only be amended by a decision of the Board of Trustees.

Reporting

1. The Panel shall formally report their meeting minutes quarterly to the Board of Trustees. The Committee shall also report annually its Terms of Reference, Processes and Principles of Appointment and SR, SSRG and CDC role descriptions to the Board along with any recommended changes. The Appointments Committee has the power to make small logistical or informal changes to role descriptions in order to keep them updated and accurate; however, major remit changes will need approval of the Board.
2. The Appointments Committee will meet any other appropriate and relevant requests for information from the Board of Trustees as may occur from time to time; these shall be requested through the Secretary or Chair.

Support

1. Members and their meetings will be supported by the Secretary and the Volunteer and Representation team to capture minutes of the proceedings and to collate any information needed to report to the Board.

2. Members will be required to undertake and engage with an induction process and appropriate training to fulfil the role. The Chair and supporting staff team will ensure this is appropriate to the nature of the role.
3. Where a face-to-face meeting is necessary, the Association will support this with the provision of resources to cover the cost of reasonable expenses for committee members.
4. The Appointments Committee will be provided with a secure private online forum, to which all members will have access.