

President

This is a paid full-time position due to the time commitments and responsibilities associated with the role. The President is the elected lead representative of the OU Students Association and is also a Trustee of the Association. You will be responsible for leading Student Leadership Team of the organisation and ensuring the objectives of the Association are met. This includes being a member of the organisation's Trustee board.

You will be a member of the OU Students Association Student Leadership Team (SLT), which is made up of all the successfully elected candidates from the Students Association elections (excluding Student Trustees) and serves as the collective voice of the OU student body. The SLT work together as a team over their two-year term to advocate on behalf of students, and to champion changes that will enhance and improve the OU student experience. Each member of the SLT has an individual portfolio, which determines their area of focus. However, Student Leaders will work together to agree on their team priorities and how they want to pursue them, sharing their challenges and achievements along the way.

Shared responsibilities of all elected Student Leaders

As a member of the Student Leadership Team, you become a crucial part of the Association's Student Leadership Team. Student members elect you to represent them, provide support, create a student community and uphold the mission, vision, and values of the organisation. All elected student leaders have the following shared responsibilities:

- To work as a team to support the [Association's mission, vision and charitable objectives](#).
- To truly harness the Students Association values of equality and inclusivity, openness, kindness and compassion, integrity, and collaboration.
- To attend initial onboarding sessions, the four official quarterly SLT meetings each year, monthly SLT huddles and the Association's biennial conference.
- To effectively communicate with fellow SLT members and the staff team who work in collaboration. This involves the regular use of official spaces and emails.
- Support, connect and work with other Association Volunteers and Representatives who are providing vital activities, services, and events to members.
- To be the public face of the organisation involved in raising awareness, developing promotional materials, delivering presentations and hosting student facing sessions.
- Submit regular reports and blogs regarding your role, showcasing impact and engaging members, including contributing to the production of a biennial SLT report for Conference.
- Where possible, attend at least one Student Consultation meeting to engage with students.

- You will be committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Act openly and responsibly and be prepared to be accountable for your actions.
- Respect confidentiality in any information which has been imparted to you in confidence and recognise the importance of this - if this information relates to a safeguarding matter, you must not keep it to yourself. Speak to a member of the Volunteering and Representation team should you have concerns.

The President's responsibilities

- Takes the lead role in representing the Association to external organisations and within the Open University, supported by a Deputy President.
- Is the public face of the Association to the student body, and is prepared to communicate with students through a range of platforms.
- Chairs Central Executive Committee meetings and, with the Chief Executive, sets the agenda, informed by contributions from the broader Association team.
- Works alongside Deputy President to ensure appropriate support for members of the Central Executive Committee including liaising with appropriate staff teams to recommend training.
- Is a Trustee for the Association and acts as Deputy Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- Has oversight of the Students Association's Research Strategy.
- Oversees the monitoring and evaluation of the Students Association's Strategy.
- Is a member of various Association and University Committees as detailed below.

Key skills and attributes

The post-holder will need to possess, or be prepared to develop rapidly, the following:

- The confidence to chair meetings and make decisions with the support of the Student Leadership Team.
- Leadership, teamworking and teambuilding skills.
- Committee skills, including challenging appropriately and close reading of papers.
- Good communication skills, including readiness to speak in public and on video.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively as part of a team.
- Commitment to develop further skills and knowledge appropriate to the role.
- A broad understanding of the Students Association and the Open University.

Training and support will be offered to any successful candidate.

Role Specific Essential information, including time commitment

This is a paid, full-time role contracted to a minimum of 37 hours per week, usually worked between 7 am and 7 pm with a need for flexibility to meet the requirements of the role. The role is predominantly Monday-Friday, but there is some weekend work to attend meetings or events.

The term for the role is 1st August 2024 – 31st July 2026.

Pay for this role is aligned to the Real Living Wage rate for London and is kept under review to ensure alignment is maintained. The post is currently remunerated at £25,742 per annum for the first year of office. An incremental raise will be due in October of the second year of the term, (currently £26,444). These salaries are based on full-time hours.

The elected role holder will be home-based with travel expenses incurred on Association business reimbursable by the Association in accordance with our Travel and Subsistence policy. Reimbursement of expenditure on OU business will need to be agreed with the relevant member of OU staff in advance and claimed from the OU. A hot desk will be provided in the Milton Keynes office and the Association will provide appropriate equipment to enable home working. Whilst most elements of the role can be undertaken from home, the role holder should expect some travel to fully fulfil the role requirements. Travel averages out at circa 1-2 days per week away from home. Areas of travel may be the OU offices in the nations, graduation ceremonies or meeting at Milton Keynes Campus. Full contractual details are available on request.

- You must have the right to work in the UK and must be eligible to hold paid elected office in accordance with the Education Act 1994 Section 22 on Student Unions which prescribes that a person may not hold paid elected office at a Students Union for more than two years in total.
- You will be required to complete the duties of a Trustee for the OU Students Association, in your own time, on a voluntary basis outside the paid hours; you must therefore be eligible to act as a [Charity Trustee](#).
- A standard [DBS check](#) will be required prior to the commencement of the role.

Examples of meetings attended by President

The nature of the President's role is that there are always additional Association and OU working groups and committees that they will attend, as well as a range of one-off activities. We are therefore providing the most comprehensive list we are currently able to.

The list specifies examples of scheduled meetings; additional work is typically required between these through online discussions and/or reading papers. In general, where there are face to face meetings these often take place in Milton Keynes, however, we are embracing blended working and so most meetings are Hybrid or online.

Items italicised are those where there is a choice which SLT member is assigned; the decision will be made between the postholders once elected.

Association meetings

- **Student Senate Reference Group** – A student group who meets ahead of Senate to discuss views on papers. This group helps inform the six members of Senate. They meet four times a year, ahead of the main Senate meeting.

- **Student Leadership Team meetings** – Formal SLT meetings to agree action taken by the Association on Student-facing issues and to discuss proposals to the Board of Trustees when required. All formal business is covered in these meetings and these are mandatory except for unavoidable circumstances.
- **Monthly Student Leadership Team catch up** – a less formal but regular opportunity for the SLT to get together to discuss current issues, ideas and generally support each other in role. Lead by the President and Deputy President.
- **Appointments Committee** – this committee mostly carry out their decision making online via a dedicated MS Teams space, however, at least once a year over the summer there is often the need for an online meeting to confirm decisions on representative appointments. *Either President or Deputy President are members of Appointments Committee; and either President/Deputy President or VP Representation will chair this.*
- **Conference Steering Committee** – as required in the run up to our biennial Conference.
- **Association Trustee meetings** – four times a year during the working week, with the need to attend occasional extra meetings to address urgent matters.
- **Non-Governance Panel** – Shares attendance with Deputy President
- Chairs the biennial Conference and has final responsibility for the SLT report to Conference.

OU meetings

- **Council** – five times a year. One meeting each year will be face to face outside of Milton Keynes. Members of Council also attend one/two sub-committees which meet up to 4 times a year.
- **Senate** – four times a year after Senate Reference Group, usually Wednesday Afternoons, including a lunch meeting for the six Senate Student Delegates. (First meeting 14 October).
- Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group. The President co-chairs this with Pro Vice Chancellor Students – four times a year.
- EDI Steering Group
- Student Casework Steering Group – twice a year
- Pro Vice Chancellor Students Reference Group – twice a year
- Student Experience Committee – three times a year.
- Student Experience Learning Adjustment Operation and Steering Groups
- Pro Vice Chancellor Students Advisory Group – three times a year
- Exams and Assignment Steering Group

Dates for your diary

Timeline for elections

Please note: if candidates are not engaging in the elections process (including not watching briefings or attending required meetings, responding to emails or providing the required information) then the returning officer is at liberty to remove them from the process.

The next election will be in 2026.

Approximate timeline for onboarding if elected

Please note: if elected role-holders are not engaging in the onboarding process (including not attending training or required meetings, responding to emails or providing the required information) then the returning officer is at liberty to remove them from the process.

- Mid to end of May: Welcome pack sent out with useful information and links to e-learning.
- July: Elected candidate takes up 'Elect' roles and becomes a volunteer with us. During this time, you will have opportunities to find out more and talk to other members of the Student Leadership Team.
- August: Officially start in elected post.
- July to September: Onboarding commences with training and support to build confidence in your role.

SLT quarterly meetings

- Friday 18 - Sunday 20 July 2025 (in person)
- Friday 17 - Sunday 19 October 2025 (online)
- Friday 6 – Sunday 8 February 2026 (in person)
- Friday 24 – Sunday 26 April 2026 (online)
- Friday 17 – Sunday 19 July 2026 (in person)

Further information

These remits are not exhaustive and specify the core responsibilities of Elected Student Leaders. They are subject to change dependant on circumstance and ongoing developments. There may also be items that fall across remits where postholders will work collaboratively.

Remits indicate the normal assignment of responsibilities, however, where both parties are agreed, role descriptions are not intended to prevent the sharing or transfer of relevant work for good reason and in the interest of supporting one another.