

Student Trustee

As a member of the Board of Trustees, you have the ultimate legal responsibility for the Association's affairs, and the board exercises its powers subject to relevant legislation in addition to our Articles of Association and Bye-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 Chief Executive.

The Student Trustees:

- Attend initial onboarding sessions, the four official quarterly BoT meetings each year, including any relevant sub-committees and the Association's biennial conference.
- Effectively communicate with fellow Trustees, relevant SLT members and the staff team who work in collaboration. This involves the regular use of official spaces and emails.
- Ensure that the Association acts in accordance with its Articles of Association, charitable objects and other guiding documents.
- Ensure that the Association complies with all relevant legislation and regulations, including relevant Education Acts and Charity Acts where applicable.
- Where possible, take an active part in Student Voice Week, Conference and Student Consultations and other events to gain a greater understanding of the student experience, and to inform decision making.
- Safeguard the effective administration of the Association, including maintaining its financial viability and avoiding activities which could result in an unacceptable level of risk to our reputation, sustainability or students.
- Be actively involved in the Association's strategy, annual budget, any submission to the University concerning funding or our subvention and the Association's annual financial statements. To consider funding proposals and applications as per our schedule of delegation.
- Make an active contribution to the Board of Trustees, working together to reach sound decisions by respectfully challenging when appropriate and being involved in discussions. Read and scrutinise all papers; attend and participate in meetings and on the Trustee official online spaces; 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 constructively with other Trustees and support the senior staff team to create a positive, hard-working, inclusive, supportive and successful culture which reflects our organisational values of equality and inclusivity, openness, kindness and compassion, integrity, and collaboration.
- Seek to empower and support the student voice at all levels of the organisation, including recognising the important role of the Student Elected Officers.
- Recognise and value the difference between the Student Leaderships Team, Staff team 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 Articles of Association for submission to a vote of Conference.
- Appoint, establish the job description, agree the remuneration and annually appraise the performance of the Association's Chief Executive.

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.
- August: Officially start in elected post.
- July to September: Onboarding commences with training and support to build confidence in your role.

Key skills and attributes

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

- An understanding of basic finance, to support scrutiny of our accounts and budgets.
- Committee skills, including challenging appropriately and close reading of papers.
- The ability to consider issues from a strategic perspective, question intelligently, debate constructively and decide dispassionately.
- 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 voluntary role which requires on average 5 hours a week but is busier at some times.

Large parts of this role can be completed remotely, there may be occasions when a face-to-face presence at meetings is required.

You will be required to complete the duties of a Trustee for the OU Students Association; you must therefore be eligible to act as a [Charity Trustee](#).

All volunteers are expected to follow the Volunteer policy and agreement, the Values and behaviour policy and code of conduct given to them on taking up a role with the Association.

All volunteers are required to have their own IT equipment and internet connectivity sufficient to fulfil their remits. In exceptional circumstances, and for a period not exceeding six months, the Association may be able to provide the loan of a laptop.