

Student Trustee – Role Description

Location: Oxford (with some hybrid/remote options available)

Type: Volunteer (unpaid, but expenses covered)

Time commitment: Around 2-4 hours per week, this will vary across the year and hours will reduce during vacation periods.

Term length: Student Trustees are elected to serve for up to 2 years, from 1st July*. Student trustees may run for re-election to serve for a 2nd two-year term, subject to continued eligibility criteria. Students may not serve for more than 4 years as a trustee.



About the role

As a Student Trustee, you'll sit on the Oxford SU Trustee Board – the group responsible for making sure the Students' Union is well-run, financially secure, legally compliant, and always acting in students' best interests.

You don't need to have any prior trustee experience, a specific background, course, or college affiliation, or a deep knowledge of charity law or finance (we'll train you!)

You'll work alongside other Student Trustees, Sabbatical Officers, and External Trustees to help guide the SU's long-term strategy and ensure student voices stay at the heart of decision-making.

Key responsibilities

- Attend board meetings (usually once per term, plus reading, researching if necessary and, preparing your comments and questions)
- Attend Conference of Common Rooms meetings (twice a term, plus reading, researching if necessary, and preparing your comments and questions)
- Help oversee the SU's finances, governance, and long-term strategy
- Ensure the SU is acting legally, ethically, and in-line with its purpose
- Challenge and support Sabbatical Officers and senior staff in their work
- Bring the perspective of a current student to Board discussions
- Help the SU to stay student-led and inclusive

What you'll learn / gain

- Real experience in governance, leadership, and decision-making
- Insight into how charities and non-profits operate
- Confidence in speaking-up and making your voice heard
- Experience of governance, organisational development, organisational risk management, strategic finance and building organisational culture
- A strong addition to your CV, with training and mentoring provided

- A chance to make a real difference to the Oxford student experience



Person specification:

We're looking for students who:

- Are current student members of Oxford SU (undergraduate or postgraduate)
- Care about fairness, inclusion, and student voice
- Are willing to learn, listen, ask questions, and challenge where needed
- Can commit to the term of office and attend regular meetings as well as email correspondence
- Can represent the diversity of lived experience of Oxford SU – we would particularly welcome students with experience of one or more of the following:
 - Oxford University's common rooms and collegiate structure
 - Divisional and departmental experience
 - Students from marginalised and minoritised backgrounds
 - A mix of postgraduate (both taught and research) and undergraduate students
 - A mix of Home and International Students

Legal & eligibility requirements:

- You must not be disqualified from being a Trustee under UK charity law
- You must remain a student at Oxford for the duration of your term.
 - Students with less than 2 years remaining on their course of study may still run for and hold student trustee positions but will be expected to vacate the role once their student status ceases for whatever reason.

Desirable

We recognise that the student body of Oxford SU is diverse, with many levels of skills and experience.: We appreciate that many students may not have had the opportunity to gain a wealth of experience just yet, and we would encourage **anyone** who is passionate about the student voice to run. We are keen to have candidates with a wide range of skills and experiences – so make sure to include anything relevant in your personal statement.

Here are some of the skills and experiences that can be useful on a Trustee Board. You might have developed some of these through school or uni like, part-time work, volunteering, or other activities (such as being part of a society):

- Comfortable thinking through tricky or fast-changing situations, especially where lots of different stakeholders are involved
- Interest in and foundational understanding of how organisations work, including things like budgets and planning



- An awareness of rules and responsibilities (i.e., understanding that decisions can impact others, even if unintentionally, and that as a charity the SU has certain responsibilities)
- Experience working with others – maybe through leading a group project, being part of a committee, or helping organise events
- An understanding of key issues and topics in universities and higher education, particularly those facing students
- Good at helping people work together – bringing out different views and helping a group make decisions
- Willing to share your own views in a constructive and respectful way, even when they might be different to others in the group
- Encouraging and supportive – able to help others feel confident and included
- Experience being part of a committee, board or decision-making group (this is helpful, but not essential!) An interest in how charities are run and ideas for how structure or governance can be improved

Recruitment & selection

You'll be elected via cross-campus ballot in line with SU elections (see Bye-Law 4). To run, you'll need to submit a nomination to the website here, with a personal statement of up to 500 words. You can also include a smaller summary of 100 words which will appear on the landing page of the voting site. Your statement should:

- outline your relevant skills and experience,
- your motivation for wanting to serve as a trustee,
- describe how you will support the Oxford SU's board to continue to work for students' best interests.

If you are successfully elected, someone will be in touch with some dates for training and the Board dates.

Want to help shape the future of Oxford SU and represent student voice at the highest level?

Run to be a Student Trustee.