

# Trustee Recruitment Pack

External Trustee Recruitment  
Pack for 2021/22



**US** UNION OF  
STUDENTS  
*University of Derby*

# Being an External Trustee

## Introduction to Union of Students at the University of Derby

The Union of Students is a value driven organisation. It exists to meet the needs of the members who are students at the University of Derby and associated colleges by upholding the following principles and values: **Vibrant, Ambitious, Supportive, Inclusive and Open**. The Union operates around its student-led decision making governance structure. The Union provides opportunities for its members to take a lead in the organisation, particularly with regards to making the student experience better for students. This can be achieved by becoming a programme representative, a volunteer, a Part-Time Student Officer, Student Trustee or a full time Officer Trustee. We are looking to recruit 1 External Trustee, with a finance background, to join our Trustee Board from November 2021 through to November 2024 and who will help to guide the Union through the final stages of our current strategic journey and oversee the formation of our new strategic plan.

The Trustee Board is made up of a mixture of Officer Trustees, Student Trustees and External Trustees. Student and External Trustees are appointed by the Board (and ratified at Scrutiny Panel) to ensure a balance of skills and experience. Responsibility is cascaded from the Trustee Board and committee structure of the Union to the management and staff team. The Union employs approximately 35 permanent staff and over 65 student staff to ensure effective management of its many activities and to implement the policy decisions made by the Trustees. A clear staff structure is in place and all staff are ultimately accountable to the Chief Executive, who in turn is accountable to the Board of Trustees.

The Union enjoys a positive relationship with the University of Derby which is outlined and reinforced via a Partnership Agreement which is regularly reviewed. The Officers have seats at nearly all University Committees and the University takes seriously the notion of the Union being the voice of students at Derby. Moreover, the University provides the Union with a grant to fund the ongoing development of effective representative structures, volunteering and society activities, sporting provision and advice and support for its members. In addition, the Union generates its own trading income through the operation of a series of retail units, a coffee shop and a bar and entertainment venue. A full copy of our latest annual report and accounts are on the [charity commission website](#).

**Our Future Plans**

In 2017 the Trustee Board developed and approved a strategic plan to develop the organisation over the following five years. The organisation is working towards 5 key strategic themes which are as follows:



The Union agrees an annual operating plan which exists to support the achievement of strategic objectives identified across the five themes. As a Trustee on our board, you will be responsible for supporting the achievement of our strategic plan through the monitoring of our progress towards our key performance indicators, at the same time exploring new projects for development.

## **Role of External Trustee**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Role**

To contribute to the work of the Board of Trustees, bringing a professional perspective, based on experience and independent judgment. To ensure, as a member of the Board, that the Union complies with all charity, company and other relevant regulatory requirements and best practice.

### **1.2 Time Commitment**

The Board normally meets at 4 times each year in July, October, January and March, usually on a Tuesday evening between 5pm-7.30pm, with additional meetings convened as necessary. At the moment, Board meetings take place via Microsoft Teams though we hope to move back to in-person meetings on occasion. Board members are also required to sit on one sub-committee relating to either Finance and HR or Audit and Risk. As we hope to appoint a finance specialist, we are hopeful you can chair our Audit and Risk sub-committee. In addition, time may also be needed for dealing with matters arising between Board meetings, for example attending planning sessions, preparation for meetings, and supporting staff and Officer Trustees.

An External Trustee may serve for up to 3 years and may serve for a maximum of 2 terms which may be either consecutive or non-consecutive, subject to an appointment panel process.

### **1.3 Nature of role**

This is a voluntary role. Reasonable travel and other out of pocket expenses, properly incurred and properly documented, will be reimbursed as per the Trustees Expenses policy.

The appointment is subject to, and may be terminated in accordance with, the provisions of the Union's Memorandum and Articles of Association.

### **1.4 Duties and Responsibilities**

The following key responsibilities apply to all Trustees, in addition to all other duties of charitable trustees:-

- to ensure that the Union pursues its charitable objects and that it acts at all times within its powers;
- to ensure the financial stability of the Union, and that its resources are properly managed and protected;
- to ensure that effective strategic planning is in place, that appropriate goals and targets are set, and that appropriate processes for monitoring and evaluating performance are in place;
- to ensure the Union complies with the provisions of applicable charity law, company law and other applicable legislation;
- to ensure that effective governance policies and procedures are in place in relation to the Union's business and activities;
- to ensure that effective controls are in place for risk identification and management;

The following additional responsibilities also apply to individual Trustees:-

- to actively contribute to the work and decisions of the Board, scrutinising as appropriate all relevant documents;
- to use specific skills and experience to assist the Board in reaching sound decisions and, where appropriate, to lead on matters falling within those specific skills/experience areas;
- to support and constructively challenge the Chief Executive
- to comply with the provisions of the Union's Articles and standing orders.

- to uphold the aims and values of the Union and to protect its name and reputation;
- to uphold high standards of integrity and probity, and to uphold and support appropriate values and behaviour in the boardroom and beyond.

## 2. Person specification

### Essential

- The ability to think corporately and strategically; ability to handle competing priorities and make informed decisions
- A leader on equality of opportunity who values diversity and removes barriers to equality
- An excellent role model who promotes the highest standards of integrity and honesty
- An effective leader who is positive, determined and resilient enough to cope with the demands of the role
- effective communication skills, both written and oral, with the ability to relate to and communicate effectively with people at all levels
- the ability to exercise sound independent judgment, take informed decisions and challenge constructively
- a willingness and capability to devote sufficient time and attention to the duties of the post
- **a particular specialism in finance and accounting, with experience in a management accountant or similar role.**

### Desirable

- An awareness of the effective governance of organisations (public, private or voluntary sector)
- Evidence of successfully working in a leadership or governance role (through work or voluntary experience)
- An understanding of relevant legislation and statutory requirements, including charity law, employment law and health and safety law

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What can you expect from the Union?

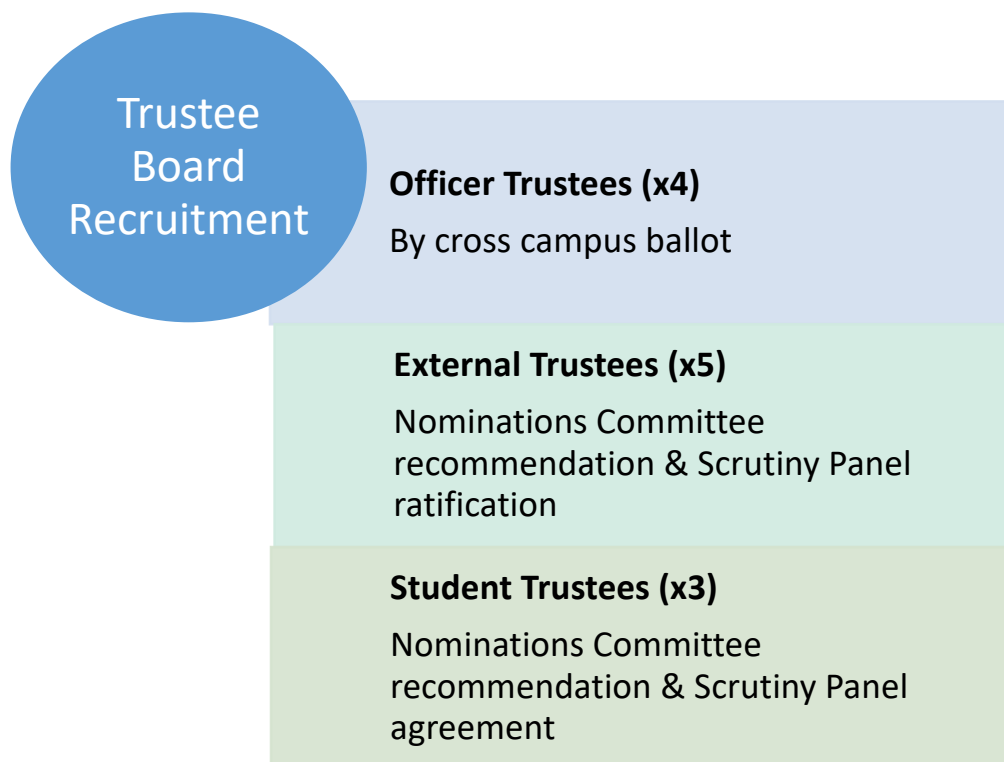
The role of a trustee is a voluntary one, you will not receive any payment for your time supporting the organisation. That said, we do not expect you to have to use any of your own money, all expenses incurred as a result of your trustee responsibilities on behalf of the Union will be reimbursed.

The meetings will be arranged at mutually beneficial times for all of the board as well as meeting the needs of the business. You will receive papers and documents for the meetings in good time, which we ask are read in advance.

An induction into the Union and training events will be made available to all new trustees to support them into the role. Ongoing opportunities to network with other charity and Union trustees will also offered throughout your term. Twice a year in January and July we will hold strategic planning days where plans for the future of the Union and organisation wide projects will be discussed.

### How is our Board structured and appointed?

The following diagram is a summary of the make-up of the trustee board



### Is there a reason why I might not be able to be a trustee?

The Charity Commission has a set of clear guidelines in terms of those unable to take on such a role and as a trustee at the Union you will be asked to sign a declaration form with regard to the following:

I declare that I am not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee and that:

- I do not have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
- I am not currently declared bankrupt (or subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order)
- I do not have an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) to pay off debts with creditors
- I am not disqualified from being a company director
- I have not previously been removed as a trustee by us or the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement
- I am not disqualified or barred from acting as a trustee of this charity under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

## What are the next steps?

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If you want an informal chat regarding this role please contact Victoria Hossack, Chief Executive on 01332 591 520 or email [Victoria.hossack@derbyunion.co.uk](mailto:Victoria.hossack@derbyunion.co.uk)

If you would like to be considered for a position please email your CV to [Victoria.Hossack@derbyunion.co.uk](mailto:Victoria.Hossack@derbyunion.co.uk) by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021. If shortlisted, you will then be invited to attend a nomination panel interview.