

Student Trustee Role

Student Trustee Role Summary

The role of the Board of Trustees is to scrutinise how the organisation is run and how we make key decisions to set the direction of future work. The Trustees ensure that Arts SU work towards enhancing the student experience for students now and in the future by ensuring our work is sustainable and adaptable. This includes developing our strategy, monitoring our progress and engaging with our members (all students) to ensure that we are led by the needs of students alongside ensuring legal and financial compliance.

The Board is made up of a mix of students, external people and elected full time student officers who offer a range of expertise, knowledge and experience to inform the work of the students' union.

As a student-led organisation, it is important that the majority of our Board is made up of current and former UAL students, so we have three student trustee roles up for grabs alongside the student officer team.

The role is a voluntary position (reasonable expenses will be covered) and trustees will be expected to attend each of the 5 Board meetings, plus a whole day strategy meeting and 2 socials (after the June and November Boards). Efforts will be made to schedule meetings around Trustee availability where possible, but dates are usually set annually to allow Board members to know the dates well in advance.

You can hold this position for as long as you are a student here at UAL, for a maximum of two years. All you have to be is a current student at UAL when you apply and to meet the eligibility requirements set out by UK law (below).

About the Students' Union

Arts SU is both a registered charity and a registered company limited by guarantee which is regulated as an organisation by both the Charity Commission and Companies House in the UK. Company Number: 7719030; Charity Number: 1143161. Trustees will be registered with the Charity Commission and Companies House, and you will be asked to confirm your eligibility to be a trustee before interview (more information on eligibility below).

As a registered charity we have a set of charitable objectives which set out what our resources should be used for and the Board of Trustees work to hold us to account on these. Our charitable objectives are the advancement of education of students at University of the Arts London for the public benefit by:

- promoting the interests and welfare of Students at University of the Arts London during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising Students;
- being the recognised representative channel between Students and University of the Arts London and any other external bodies; and
- providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students.

Values needed to be a Trustee

The Union is a values-led organisation and we want Trustees with the following principles:

- A desire to help the students' union to improve the lives of students at UAL and give them opportunities to lead activities within their Union.
- A desire to act, taking an active role in board meetings and between formal Board sessions including, but not limited to engagement in committees, forums and working groups.
- Those with a passion for education, including their own learning needs. Trustees should be keen to enhance their own skills and engage in development opportunities.
- A strong sense of integrity and transparency, owning the decisions they make and willing to explain them to students as our beneficiaries.

- A commitment to the collective decision-making principles of the Board and accepting the decisions of that body.
- A dedication to diversity is a core value and a desire to work towards equity and inclusion throughout our programmes and ways of working.

Skills you will develop as a Student Trustee

While Trustees are expected to have personal responsibility and act to their best ability, it is the board as a whole which makes decisions. The following skills are expected from the Board as whole.

- Gain experience in understanding, leading and contributing to organisational strategy
- Reading and analysing high level reports
- Understanding how organisations are run and how decisions are made with regards to structure, budget assignment and priority work
- The ability to challenge the status quo, test perceived wisdom and question authority
- A good understanding of issues within the Higher Education and the Arts and Culture sectors
- The ability to think strategically, handle competing priorities and make informed decisions
- The opportunity to work effectively in a team and work with people outside your immediate peer group
- An ability to critique the students' union's policies and procedures and ensure any issues or concerns are addressed
- An awareness of the effective governance of organisations

Support you will receive as a Student Trustee

- Trustees will receive induction support from the Chair, Board Secretary & Chief Executive Officer.
- Ongoing Trustee Development will be guided by trustee skill reviews ensuring that it is relevant to individuals on the Board.
- Trustees will be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses.

Trustee Responsibilities

Trustees are responsible for

- Ensuring the organisation is focused on its charitable objectives
- Ensuring the organisation is financially viable, balancing income and expenditure and considering the long term resourcing needs of the Charity alongside requirements to support shorter term projects.
- Supporting the staff team of the Charity through scrutiny and guidance of senior management, principally through the appraisal and direction of the Chief Executive Officer but also through putting in place appropriate training and development measures for staff where necessary.
- Making sure good governance principles are followed and that the Charity's constitution and rules are followed and, where needed, reviewed and enhanced.
- Ensuring the organisation meets all legal obligations and that policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and scrutinised to keep up to date with legislation including, but not exclusive to, charity law and HR regulation.
- A specific consideration of Safeguarding principles and practice.
- Making themselves accountable and transparent to the beneficiaries, a role led by the Officer Trustees but that all members of the board should be prepared to respond to.
- Ensuring that board members, as a group and individually, are working in the best interests of the charity as a whole.

Eligibility to be a Student Trustee

- You must be a UAL student
- You must be over the age of 18
- You must not have previously been removed from the Board of any charity by Court or the Charity Commission
- You must not be under a disqualification order under the Company Directors' Disqualification Act 1986

- You must not have been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (unless the conviction is spent)
- You must not have any financial interests in conflict with those of Arts SU (either in person or through family or business connections).

Want to apply?

Complete the application form here: [Student Trustee Application Form – Fill in form](#)

Application timeline:

Closing date: 9am, 24th September 2026

Intended interview date: 19th October 2026