

Student Trustee

To run for this role, you must meet the following requirements:

- Be a student at Queen Mary in the academic year 2025/26

Queen Mary Students' Union is a registered charity and has a Board of Trustees who have overall responsibility for the management and administration of the Students' Union. This is delegated on a day-to-day basis to the Chief Executive Officer and the Students' Union staff team.

The role of Trustee is threefold; to provide leadership to the Students' Union through governance, to be the strategic partner for the Students' Union management, and to fulfil their responsibilities under the law in safeguarding the Students' Union's resources. The Trustees have ultimate liability for the Students' Union. Please note that whilst you will be insured by the Union, if something goes seriously wrong you will be financially and legally responsible for the Union.

As a Trustee, you will not be taking a representative role but one of trust, ensuring the Students' Union is following its legal, financial and strategic duties as a Charity. This means that you will not be running campaigns, or lobbying the University on any issues. You will be sitting on the Board of Trustees and its sub-committees, looking at the policies and procedures of the Union and ensuring these are of a high standard and advising on any high-level risk mitigation. As such, the required skill set of a trustee is different to those of the representatives sitting on Student Council.

Queen Mary Students Union is also a registered company and so all Trustees are appointed as Directors of QMSU Students' Union Limited and registered with Companies House.

This is a 2-year post (1 year if you are in your final year).

The Board of Trustees is made up of

- 6 Officer Trustees
- 6 Student Trustees
- 6 External Trustees

Responsibilities (as per the Articles of Association)

- The governance of the Union and ensuring it meets its legal obligations
- The budget of the Union and ensuring it meets its financial obligations
- The strategy of the Union and ensuring it meets its developmental obligations

Meetings you are required to attend

- Board of Trustees x 4 per year (including in July)
- Various sub-committees of the Board of Trustees (e.g. Audit and Risk Committee) - these roles are shared out amongst Board members
- One Student Trustee is appointed to the Board of QMSU Services Limited (the Union's wholly owned trading subsidiary)

Training you will receive

You'll receive full training for your role, including training on:

- How the Students' Union works
- Charity law, governance and the role of a trustee
- Training from the Union's auditors on the Union's finances
- A mentor from the current Trustees

Skills and knowledge you will develop

- Leadership
- Communication
- Negotiation
- Strategy
- Charity governance
- Charity finance
- Charity law

More information about being a Trustee

Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are to:

- Ensure that the Students' Union has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.
- Be responsible for the performance of the Students' Union and for its behaviour.
- Ensure that the Students' Union complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Act as guardians of the Students' Union's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking due care over their security, deployment and proper application.
- Ensure that the Students' Union's governance is of the highest possible standard.

What is a Trustee?

The information below outlines the responsibilities you would have as a Sabbatical or Student Trustee of the Students' Union. To run for any Trustee position you need to complete a Trustee declaration form, this is included with the nomination form.

Charity trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as trustees, directors, board members, governors or committee members. The principles and main duties are the same in all cases.

- Trustees have and must accept ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.

Compliance – Trustees must:

- Ensure that the charity complies with charity law, and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator; in particular ensure that the charity prepares reports on what it has achieved and Annual Returns and accounts as required by law.
- Ensure that the charity does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in its governing document and that it remains true to the charitable purpose and objects set out there.
- Comply with the requirements of other legislation and other regulators (if any) which govern the activities of the charity.
- Act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or misuse of charity funds or assets.

Duty of prudence – Trustees must:

- Ensure that the charity is and will remain solvent.
- Use charitable funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the charity's objects.
- Avoid undertaking activities that might place the charity's endowment, funds, assets or reputation at undue risk.
- Take special care when investing the funds of the charity, or borrowing funds for the charity to use.

Duty of care – Trustees must:

- Use reasonable care and skill in their work as trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that the charity is well-run and efficient.
- Consider getting external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the charity, or where the trustees may be in breach of their duties.

Declaration

Prior to your nomination being approved, you will need to complete the declaration for declaring that you are not subject to anything that would disqualify you from holding a trustee position. This is part on the nominations form and must be completed when you submit your nomination.

For further information on being a Trustee please visit <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk>