


JUNE 2025

# Student Trustee

## Information Pack

 ManchesterSU |  @manchesterSU |  @manchester\_SU

**STUDENTS'  
UNION**  
University of  
Manchester

# Introduction from our Chief Executive & our Chair of the Trustee Board

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Thank you for your interest in The University of Manchester Students' Union and this exciting new opportunity of Student Trustee. We have a place on our Trustee Board specifically for students, alongside our 8 elected Sabbatical Officers and 3 External or Lay Trustees

We regard Student Trustees as extremely important because they have responsibility for supporting the Students' Union in ensuring that our charitable outcomes and strategy benefit all students at Manchester.

Here at the Union we want all students to feel part of the Manchester community where they can develop, prepare for their future and make a difference in the world around them. For 159 years we've been at the heart of student life and provided services and support which makes a real difference where they need it most. We have often been at the heart of social change, pushing the boundaries of values and attitudes.

Having been through a number of key transformation projects during the last few years, we are ready to push ourselves even further to make our students' lives brilliant. A key element of our strategy is to make a positive impact on the life of every student, and we know we need to extend the work further (particularly with Postgraduates and International Students). We also know our digital work needs to catch up and match the expectations of our students, who are our main beneficiaries. This, along with embedding our values in everything we do, will continue to be the focus of our new strategy now being developed.

We are an ambitious and transformative educational charity, working every day to improve the lives of current and future students. We have a long and proud history of campaigning on issues that matter, changing social attitudes and building thousands of active citizens. Our board of trustees is charged with ensuring everything we do is for the benefit of and shaped by our Students.

We're looking for someone who is willing to ensure that student feedback is listened to and that all the decisions the Board makes are in the best interests of students.

We also need the following:

- An appreciation of the way charities are governed:  
[gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3](http://gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3)
- A willingness to gain knowledge about the work of the Students' Union and developments in Higher Education
- Adding perspective about the impact of the Trustee Board's decisions upon the student body at Manchester.

Within the rest of this pack, you will find information about our activities, our vision and mission, our achievements and our structure. You will also find details of the role description & person specification and information on how to apply for this unique opportunity.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for an informal conversation about the position.

Yours Faithfully,



**Ben Ward**  
Chief Executive

**Lexie Baynes**  
Chair of the Trustee  
Board

# Who we are

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## **The Union is a student-led organisation, established in 1861 and represents all students at the University of Manchester.**

Everything we do is driven by students, from leading campaigns which push social attitudes to volunteering in the local community, to helping students have a great social life. We believe in a world where every student is able to shape their own experiences and the world around them to set them up for a great future.

We are an ambitious organisation, working tirelessly every day to improve the lives of current and future students.

We are proud to be the largest students' union in the country, with 48,000 members, at a University ranked 34th best in the world, and 6th best in the UK. The University of Manchester is a prestigious red brick university and is also a member of the Russell Group: a select network of leading research-intensive Universities in the UK.

The Students' Union is at the heart of student life which encompasses representation, welfare, clubs and societies, volunteering and training, along with our commercial activities. We are student life. 'Amplified'.

We have a proud and rich heritage that tracks back to the late 1800's and has its roots at the forefront of civil rights and student activism; you can find out more here: [manchesterstudentsunion.com/ourhistory](http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/ourhistory)

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## **Our Mission**

To be the voice of students at Manchester, effecting change and enriching student life together.

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## **Our Vision**

For all students to feel part of the Manchester community where they can develop, prepare for their future and make a difference in the world around them.

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## **Our Aims**

Ensure that the diversity of its Membership is recognised and that equal access is available to all Members of whatever origin or orientation; Pursue its aims and objectives independent of any political party or religious group; and Pursue equal opportunities by taking positive action within the law to facilitate participation of groups discriminated against by society.

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## **Our Values**

**We put students at the heart of our work:** We believe that student experiences are a priority and that we need to help students make the most of their journey whilst studying at University of Manchester

**We provide a 'great experience' service:** We believe that in order to have a lasting positive experience, we need to provide the best levels of service to students, colleagues and external stakeholders.

**We believe in improvement/progression:** We believe that to be the best we can be as a union we should be striving to develop new ideas and improve existing services to support the diverse and fast-changing needs of our students

**We are a community:** We believe that seeking opportunities to work with students, colleagues, and external stakeholders is necessary to develop ideas and deliver activities as we recognise the passion, knowledge and creativity of Manchester

**We are open and transparent:** We believe that a great union should communicate openly and provide a clear reasoning in its decision making in order to earn the trust from students, staff and stakeholders.

**We are inclusive:** We believe that our work and priorities should reflect the whole of the diverse community we serve in way that recognises and celebrates our differences.

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# Our Trustee Board & Governance Structure

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The full complement of the Board consists of:

## **8 Sabbatical Officer Trustees:**

They are elected by student union members and make up the Executive Team, one of which is the General Secretary, who is also the Trustee Board Chair. (See page 13 for further information)

## **2 Appointed Student Trustees:**

Non-elected; the positions are open to students whilst they are still registered with the University of Manchester. Recruitment is via a formal selection process overseen by the Governance & Appointments Committee who recommends the appointments for approval by the Trustee Board.

## **4 External Trustees: Non-elected:**

External Trustees are appointed to provide specific professional experience via an open recruitment process overseen by the Governance & Appointments Committee.

## **Our Board Committees:**

To help facilitate the work of the Trustee Board, there are 4 main Board Committees and 2 other Board/Panels composed of Trustees, with support from appointed non-trustee members with specific professional experience and expertise. The Committees focus on specialist areas and enable the Trustees to examine these areas in more detail.

### **The Resource & Operations Committee:**

Oversees the areas of finance, risk, people and culture. Responsible for financial oversight, health and safety and legal risk management and the oversight of the external auditing process (appointment of auditors) and shaping the direction of the students' union in these areas.

Responsible for HR matters (staff recruitment, staff-related policies, and staff satisfaction surveys), the remuneration of the Union Chief Officer; Promoting Liberation, Equality and Diversity throughout the organisation and Officer training and development.

### **Trading & Sustainability Committee:**

This Committee is responsible for overall governing the Manchester Academy Venue Company, (a subsidiary company of the Students' Union that oversees the Academy Venues and its operations), and Commercial Board, inclusive of all our other commercial enterprises, including Th1rt3en Ltd, a subsidiary company that is responsible for our media sales portfolio, our bars, catering and retail, in accordance with the directions of the Trustee Board.

### **The Governance & Appointments Panel:**

Responsibilities include: ensuring that all appointed positions to the Trustee Board and its Committees are filled with candidates of sufficient skills and experience, and to ensure that the governance arrangements of the Students' Union as a whole are effective and fit for purpose.

### **Ethics Panel:**

This is convened only when the Trustee Board wishes to consider matters that have ethical considerations that need further scrutiny before a decision may be made.



# Our Strategy / Ambition

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The organisation has come a long way in the last few years. However, we have some clear ambitions to become a leading students' union in the UK and the world. To achieve this, we developed our strategy in 2023 - 'Made in Manchester'. This sets a range of objectives and guide stars for us to focus on in the coming years. The strategy can be found in more detail at:

<https://manchesterstudentsunion.com/strategy>.

Our ambitious strategic plan 'Made in Manchester' is built around a series of promises and commitments to our students. We want to clearly articulate the difference and value we have to their lives here in Manchester and their future. Underpinning all our successes are a series of enabling functions which are the engine room of our organisation.

We have become an evidence-based organisation and spend lots of time examining what we do, how we do it and whether it's any good. We talk to thousands of students every year – the reason why we exist. The insight we developed shapes every part of our plan, and everything we're promising has been shaped by those it will impact the most.. We publish a range of research reports which can be found at <https://manchesterstudentsunion.com/insight>

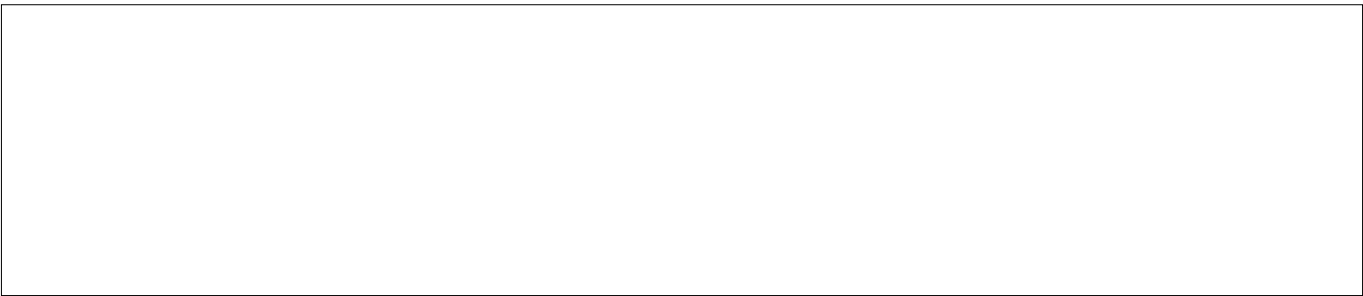
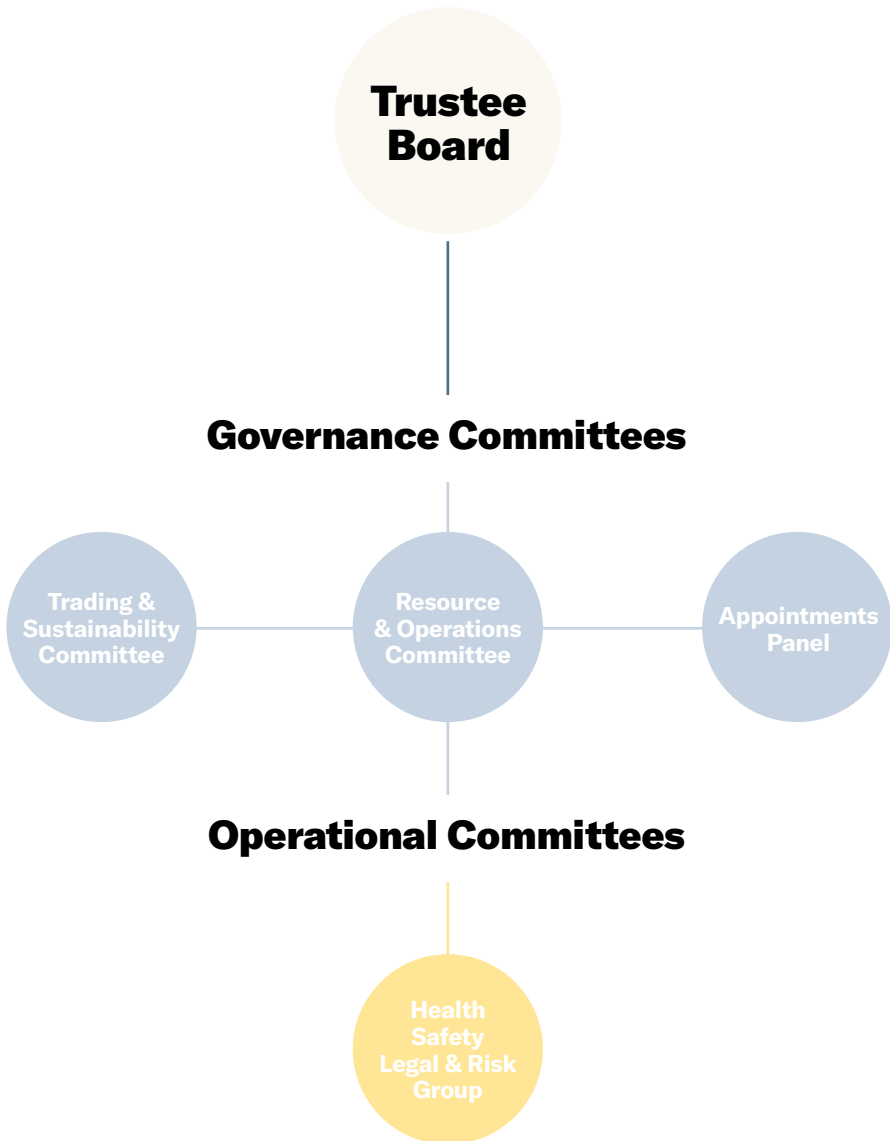
Our strategy map sets out our ambitions and objectives for the next five years.



# Our Charity Governance Structure

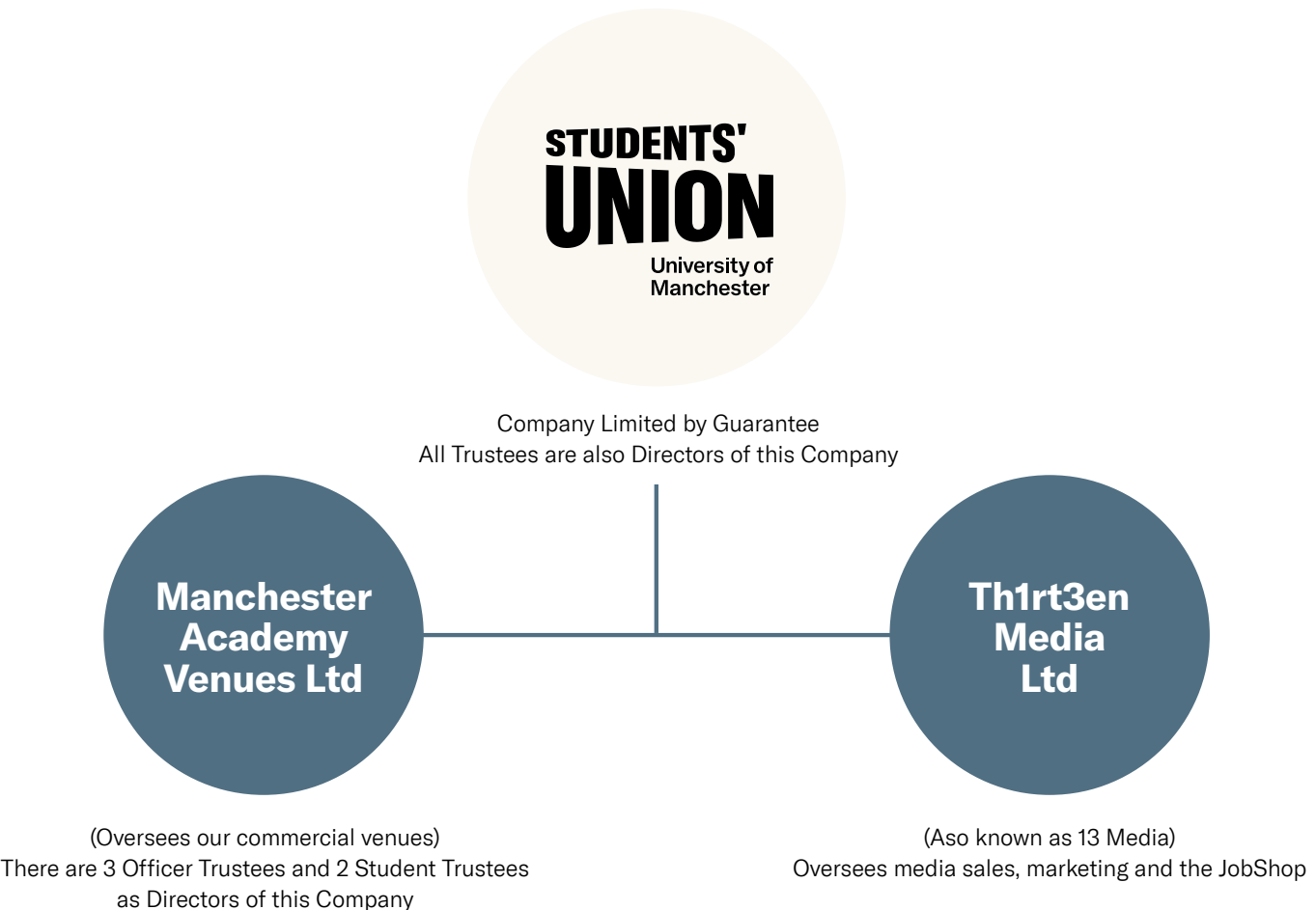
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The Students' Union is a charity, registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission (Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own charity regulators). Here is our current charity governance structure:



# Our Company Structure

The Students' Union is a charity, registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission (Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own charity regulators). Here is our current charity governance structure:



The work of the subsidiary companies and our other commercial services and activities are overseen by the Trading & Sustainability Committee which acts as a Committee of the Trustee Board.

This brings together all aspects of the Students' Union commercial operations under one board for detailed reporting and scrutiny.

Thirteen Media is a student marketing agency specifically tailored to promote and maximise direct marketing opportunities within Students' Unions.

The Trading & Sustainability Committee membership currently consists of: 3 Officer Trustees, 2 Student Trustees, an External Trustee member, the CEO and the Deputy CEO.

# The Trustee Role

## Key Responsibilities

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Trustees have responsibility for:

- Directing the affairs of the Union.
- Ensuring that it is legal, solvent, well-run, and delivering its charitable objectives.
- Ensuring that the charity adheres to charity law and other relevant legislation,
- Always acting in the students union best interests.
- Its governing document and the principles defined in The Charity Governance Code: [charitygovernancecode.org/en](http://charitygovernancecode.org/en)  
There is also a charity governance code specifically for students' unions, approved by the Charity Commission: [nusconnect.org.uk/quality-students-unions/qsu-resources-hub/governance/resources](http://nusconnect.org.uk/quality-students-unions/qsu-resources-hub/governance/resources)
- The Trustees are also the Directors of the Students' Union company limited by guarantee for the purposes of company law and some of the Trustees are also directors of the subsidiary companies

There are 4 External trustees positions and they help to provide continuity and expertise to our beneficiary-led board, and ensure our students are empowered to challenge and shape their organisation. External Trustees are part mentor, part advisor and part ambassador for our organisation.

We wish to appoint a 2 new Student Trustees to join our Trustee Board to help us to ensure that the Board and its Committees understand issues from a student perspective.

The Students' Union has a large portfolio of income generating services, from a set of live music venues to a media sales agency. In common with the rest of the sector and the high street at large, we face many challenges including ensuring our commercial services are financially sustainable and meeting the needs of our members and customers.

We are fortunate to employ over 80 full time staff and we also employ part-time student staff and Interns. We recognise the importance of ensuring our staff are well developed and supported. We aim to be an employer of choice within the voluntary sector and we want to learn from the best out there. We place a great deal of emphasis on Liberation and Diversity and want our staff team to reflect the diverse community we serve.



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I have found the six years as a Trustee at the University of Manchester Students' Union inspirational. I wanted to give something back to the organisation to which I had been elected many years earlier, and which was transformational to my career.

In these six years we have seen the Students' Union start with a challenging turnaround to be fit for purpose, then transform and extend its services and connectivity with its student members through its strategic alliance with the university and others.

Most rewarding has been engaging with the successive teams of officers and student trustees, and the highly committed staff that have been passionate in improving the experiences of students at the University of Manchester. I am sure the new external trustees will find it equally inspirational.

**Testimony from our outgoing External Trustee, Jan Sowa**



# The Trustee Role

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Here are the responsibilities in more detail:

- Develop strategy
- To contribute in giving strategic direction to the Students' Union.
- To define goals and set targets for the Students' Union & evaluate performance against these goals.

## **Compliance & Risk Management**

- To ensure that the Students' Union complies with charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure the Students' Union complies with its governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association/ Constitution) and pursues the charitable objectives for the public benefit.
- Monitor compliance against policies.
- Maintain oversight of the Students' Union risk register and develop strategies to mitigate risk.

## **Financial**

- To ensure the Students' Union complies with its reporting and accounting obligations.
- To maintain proper oversight of income and expenditure and ensure the financial stability of the Students' Union.
- To ensure the Charity uses its assets and resources exclusively to pursue its objectives.
- To ensure Effective board performance and accountability.
- To actively contribute to sound decision-making as a member of the board.
- To communicate effectively with board members and make key decisions collectively.
- To ensure the Students' Union is accountable to stakeholders.
- To collectively ensure the board has the necessary range of expertise and skills to fulfil its legal obligations and duties. Trustees delegate authority for day to day activities to appropriate staff and/or volunteers.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

To avoid any personal conflicts of interest and, where conflicts arise, to ensure that they are declared and managed in accordance with the procedures set out in the Students' Union governing document.

### **What is a conflict of interest?**

Trustees have a duty under common law to act in the best interests of the charities they serve. Trustees, generally, should not benefit from the charity and should not be influenced by their wider interests when making decisions affecting the charity. For charitable companies, trustees have a legal duty to avoid conflicts of interest under s175 of the Companies Act 2006. A conflict of interest can be defined as:

“...any situation in which a trustee's personal interests or responsibilities they owe to another body, may, or may appear to influence the trustee's decision making.”

# What we are looking for

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## **Specific**

Please pay particular attention to the Person Specification on page 14 when applying for this role of Student Trustee.

## **Expected Time Commitment**

The Students' Union are looking for students who are able to commit to the role. The Student Trustee position may be for an initial term of 1 year, with an option to serve for 2 years, subject to an end of year review and so long as you remain a student registered with the University of Manchester for the whole of your term of office. In addition to attending Board and planning meetings, you would represent students on our Board Committees.

## **Board & Committee Meetings**

Trustee Board meetings are held 5 times per year, approximately every 2 months. Two of these are extended full days to incorporate training and induction, usually held in conjunction with the Trustee Board meeting in July, the first board of the cycle of business. Trustees would be expected to make every effort to attend board meetings and to play an active role in relevant Committees. Each Committee meets 4 times per year. On average, Committees meet for 1½ hours per meeting and Trustee board for 2 hours. This may include a pre-meeting of 30 minutes prior to a Board meeting starting. This allows time for preparation.

## **Strategy Development**

We ask that all trustees attend at least one strategic planning day per year and to contribute to the development of the new strategic plan when opportunities arise. We officially recognise the participation and contributions made of all to the development of this plan.

## **Equality & Diversity**

Inclusivity is one of the University of Manchester Students' Union core values and we strive to have a Trustee Board that is representative of the diverse nature of our organisation and its members. We are looking for candidates who want to understand and enhance the culture of diversity and inclusion in the Students' Union and the student body.

As part of your application, you are invited to complete The University of Manchester Students' Union Trustee Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which is included in this pack. The information you provide will be treated with anonymity and as strictly confidential. It will be used by the Students' Union to produce statistics enabling us to evaluate the accessibility of our opportunities to minority and marginalised groups, and help us to deliver positive changes.

Please see the section on 'How to apply'.

# What experience will you gain?

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## What's in it for you?

- A unique position of significant responsibility which will look fantastic on your CV!
- Excellent experience and gaining invaluable transferable skills
- Expert training and support
- As a trustee with oversight of all Union activities, you will be able to review any relevant activity in the best interests of the organisation and students.
- Being a trustee gives you a rare opportunity, potentially very early on in your professional life, to be part of a charity board.
- Being part of the board will give you collective responsibility for overseeing how an organisation is run. People under the age of 25 in particular are underrepresented on trustee boards across the country, but you have a chance to be one of them by becoming one of our student trustees.

## If I was a Student Trustee, what would I have to do?

- Whilst this role is voluntary, you have the responsibility for attending between 6 and 10 meetings per year. It is essential to manage your time to ensure that you attend Board and committee meetings as required. This includes preparation time to read board and committee papers and any legal updates that you may receive from time to time.

# Principles & Standards

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University of Manchester Students' Union Trustees should be willing to adopt and follow the set of principles known as Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life. These are:

**Selflessness:**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

**Integrity:**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity:**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability:**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness:**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

**Honesty:**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership:**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

[gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2](http://gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2)

# Our Sabbatical Officers Explained

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Our 8 Sabbatical Officer Trustees, who work full time for one year, are elected by student union members and make up the Executive Team, one of which is the Union Affairs Officer, who is also the Trustee Board Chair.

The elected trustees' responsibilities on the Board should not conflict with their campaigning role (As described below for your information):

## **Union Affairs Officer:**

The lead representative to the University, responsible for representing students' interests in University strategy, governance and finance. Lead Officer for SU commercial services and democratic services.

## **City & Community Officer:**

Student representative to the local community and authorities, responsible for policy issues including housing, safety, transport, and the environment.

## **Wellbeing & Liberation Officer:**

Responsible for policy and campaigns on health, wellbeing, and equality and diversity. Lead Officer for liberation activity.

## **Activities & Culture Officer:**

Responsible for student activities, employability, and internationalisation. Lead Officer for student activities, including societies, volunteering groups, and student media.

## **Humanities Officer:**

The lead representative to the Faculty of Humanities, responsible for teaching and learning policy. Lead Officer for academic representatives in the Faculty of Humanities.

## **Biology, Medicine & Health Officer:**

The lead representative to the Faculty of Biology, Medicine & Health, responsible for teaching and learning policy. Lead Officer for academic representatives in FBMH.

## **Science & Engineering Officer:**

The lead representative to the Faculty of Science & Engineering, responsible for teaching and learning policy. Lead Officer for academic representatives in FSE.

## **Research Officer:**

Student representative for postgraduate research students, responsible for research policy and the PGR experience, wellbeing, and activities for PGR students.

All Sabbatical Officers have campaign remits based on their manifesto commitments which they are expected to deliver during their terms of office.

# Person Specification

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We are looking for applicants who have students' issues at heart and are willing to help in building a students' union that focuses on solving students' problems and can advocate on students behalf, in addition to the following qualities:

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**Be committed to the Mission, Vision and Values of the Students' Union**

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**Understanding of and commitment to Liberation, Equality and Diversity**

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**Be constructive about others opinions and contributions**

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**Be able to act reasonably and responsibly**

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**Be able to maintain confidentiality**

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**Be ready to contribute in meetings**

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**Understand the difference between strategic and operational involvement**

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**Be inquisitive and able to analyse and challenge information**

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**Be a good team worker and support others**

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**Be able to plan your priorities to fulfil the time commitment of the role**

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**Be able to demonstrate awareness of the issues facing students**

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**Be mindful to ensure a sustainable approach is taken to all working practices**

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**Embodies the Students' Union cultural values**

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**Commitment to student leadership, representation, advocacy and campaigning**

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# How to apply

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To apply for this position:

- Visit our recruitment site here [manchesterstudentsunion.com/jobs/trustee-recruitment](http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/jobs/trustee-recruitment)
- Register with our online recruitment portal and submit your application

Please ensure that your application fully addresses the appointment criteria in the person specification.

If you wish to receive the information in an alternative format please let us know, for example plain text.

We ask that you complete and sign:

1. The Equal Opportunities Form when you submit your application. The information you provide will be treated with anonymity and as strictly confidential. It will be used by the Students' Union to produce statistics enabling us to evaluate the accessibility of our opportunities to minority and marginalised groups, and help us to deliver positive changes.
2. The Trustee Eligibility Form: This will be provided upon successful appointment. By signing this form you confirm that you understand that it's an offence under section 60(1)(b) of the Charities Act 2011 to knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information: New disqualification rules have come in to force through new legislation. Please take time to read the information via this link: [charitycommission.blog.gov.uk/2018/01/17/new-restrictions-on-who-can-run-a-charity-prepare-now-for-the-change/](http://charitycommission.blog.gov.uk/2018/01/17/new-restrictions-on-who-can-run-a-charity-prepare-now-for-the-change/)

We would also be grateful if you could let us know if you will require any special provision as a result of any disability or access need should you be called for interview.

Finally, please ensure that you have included mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the indicative timetable.

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## Recruitment Process:

All applicants will be notified as soon as possible following the shortlisting process for interview, including details of the date, time and venue. The successful appointments are subject to Appointments Panel recommendations to the Students' Union Trustee Board.

## The interview process: Points to note

If you are selected for interview, you will be asked a series of set questions agreed by the Appointments Panel.

The Appointments Panel is made up of Trustees from the current Trustee Board, approved by its members. The Panel may also include a member of staff and an external trustee member.

You will not be asked to do a formal presentation.

There will be opportunities for you to ask questions to clarify anything that you are not sure of.

## Information & Queries:

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or would like to arrange an informal discussion, please contact [jobs.su@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:jobs.su@manchester.ac.uk) or telephone 0161 275 2979.

Please remember to type 'Student Trustee' in the subject box of your emails to us.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER STUDENTS' UNION**

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University of Manchester Students' Union | Oxford Road | Manchester | M13 9PR | Tel: 0161 275 2930

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