



## EXTERNAL TRUSTEE

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**Voluntary Role (unpaid), four year position**

**Hours:** 2 - 4 hours a month

**Based:** Aberdeen

**Closing Date:** 27th January 2025, 9am



## I. ABOUT US

Aberdeen University Students' Association is a student-run charity that supports, empowers, and represents all students (around 15,000) at the University of Aberdeen and has a turnover of over £1 million. You might have heard of it referred to as the "Students' Union" – that's us! When any student joins the University, they automatically become a member of the Students' Union and can access all the services and events we offer.

Our purpose is to make students' lives better and our values are to be helpful, inclusive, and student focused at all times.

The Students' Union is led by five elected full-time officers. While they work as a team, each has a specific focus to represent and support students in different areas. They also work together to bring positive changes at the University and beyond, both locally and nationally.

We offer student representation at different levels: Class Reps for courses, School Conveners for schools, and Sabbatical Officers and the Student Council for the University as a whole. We also run forums for students from specific groups, helping to organise events and promote their interests.

Our Students' Union Advice service gives free, unbiased advice to students. We have two advisors who can help with academic concerns, health, wellbeing, housing, and more. If they can't answer your question, they'll point you in the right direction.

The Students' Union also supports a vibrant student community with over 55 sports clubs and more than 200 societies and student groups. Joining these is a great way to meet new people, try new things, and build new skills. We also support student charity fundraising and offer many volunteering opportunities.

It's an exciting time in the development of the Students Union with a brand-new strategic plan just completed and full reviews of how we deliver student sport and representation about to take place.



## 2. COULD YOU BE ONE OF OUR FUTURE EXTERNAL TRUSTEES?

### WHAT IS THE TRUSTEE BOARD?

The Trustee Board is the group in charge of making sure the Students' Union runs smoothly, both legally and financially. They decide how the Association spends its money and set its overall strategic direction. The Board is made up of students, Sabbatical Officers, and external members to bring in different skills and knowledge.

### WHAT DOES A EXTERNAL TRUSTEE DO?

As an External Trustee, you'll help guide the Students' Union's big decisions, like where it should focus its resources and how it should be managed. You'll also make sure the Association follows legal and charity rules for student unions and employment. Plus, you'll offer your unique perspective and skill set, ensuring decisions are made with students' best interests in mind. The role lasts for four years.

### WHAT WILL I GET OUT OF ROLE?

Although it's a voluntary position, the Students' Union will cover any expenses you have related to the role. More importantly, however, you'll get a behind-the-scenes look at how a charity operates and develop valuable skills that could help in your future career.

### DO I NEED ANY PARTICULAR SKILLS?

First and foremost, you need to care about making the Students' Union the best it can be for students. We are also very keen to find external trustees with financial knowledge and expertise, health & safety experience, or understanding of income generation. If you have any familiarity working with charities or know about charity law, that is a bonus as well. We certainly don't expect you to have all these skills, but at least one would be beneficial.

We also ask that you follow Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

### HOW MUCH TIME WILL IT TAKE?

You'll attend an induction session to learn about your legal responsibilities and current issues the Board is handling. The Board meets 4-5 times a year, and each meeting usually lasts 2-4 hours. Before meetings, you'll need to read through materials to understand the issues being discussed. Occasionally, you may need to make decisions outside of these meetings. There are also some formal or social events during the year that you can attend if you're available as well as sub-committees you will have the chance to join.

## 3. ROLE DESCRIPTION

### PURPOSE

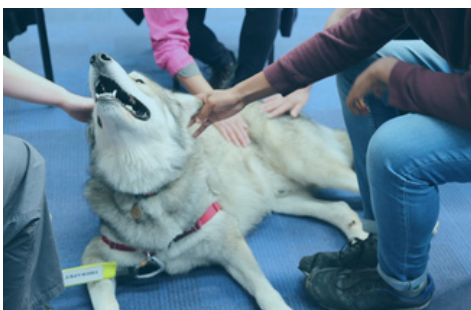
The Trustees are ultimately responsible, individually and collectively, for all activity within Aberdeen University Students' Association (the Students' Union). The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the vision and values of the organisation and for ensuring the delivery of organisational purpose. The Trustees ensure the development of, and agree, a long-term strategy and approve and monitor plans to deliver the strategy.

### KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Other Trustees and staff, elected student officers and University stakeholders.

### AS A TRUSTEE, YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Making sure the Union stays true to its goals, values, and charitable purpose as outlined in its governing documents.
- Ensuring the Union follows all relevant laws and regulations, including charity and company law, and stays financially stable.
- Actively contributing to the Board by providing strategic direction, setting high-level policies, defining goals, and tracking progress.
- Protecting the Union's reputation and avoiding activities that could put its members or resources at risk.
- Safeguarding the Union's property, intellectual assets, and resources, ensuring they're used wisely and invested properly.
- Hiring and monitoring the performance of the Chief Executive.
- Identifying and addressing conflicts of interest, acting with integrity, and avoiding misuse of Union assets.
- Fully participating in Board meetings and seeking external advice when needed, especially in high-risk situations.
- Helping the Union achieve its goals and improve the lives of its members.





## 4. PERSON SPECIFICATION

External trustees are selected based on their values, skills and experience. This time around we are looking for people with strategic and financial insight, commercial or charity law experience or health & safety.

We have two vacancies and don't expect any single candidate to have all of the above skills.

The Union is a strongly values-led organisation. In addition to demonstrating our values of being helpful, inclusive, and student focused, successful applicants will be able to demonstrate:

- Commitment to and experience in delivering equality of opportunity and reducing barriers to participation.
- Commitment to the ethos and values of the Union and a genuine interest in the empowerment of students.
- The highest standards of personal honesty and integrity and the ability to act with discretion.

The Board of Trustees is only as strong as its members and you should be able:

- To communicate effectively and appropriately with a wide range of people
- To demonstrate the ability to think rationally and strategically around complex issues
- Be able to fully participate in all board conversations



## 5. HOW TO APPLY

The Union is committed to providing equality of opportunity, treatment and dignity in appointments. We will not allow discrimination in any form in advertising, interviewing, selection or eligibility for roles, and will therefore select individuals on the grounds of their ability and suitability for the vacancy based on genuinely required criteria.

In order to be considered, you must be able to confirm that you are not:

- Someone with an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or an offence under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.
- Someone who is an undischarged bankrupt or has a Protected Trust Deed.
- Someone who has been removed under either Scottish or English Law or the courts from being a charity trustee.
- Someone who is disqualified from being a company director.
- Under 18 years old

Informal enquiries should be made to [ausa-hr@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:ausa-hr@abdn.ac.uk)

To apply for this position, please send a CV and cover letter to [ausa-hr@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:ausa-hr@abdn.ac.uk) with 'External Trustee' in the subject of the email.

