

External Trustee Recruitment Pack

Queen Mary Students' Union
January 2026

Voluntary (reasonable expenses paid)



External Trustee Recruitment Pack

Help us to build for the future while navigating the challenges of today

What would I possibly have to offer to a Students' Union, you may ask? What even is a Students' Union and why do they need Trustees?

We live in challenging times - cost of living increases mean many students are balancing work and study, higher education funding is under pressure, major domestic and international events increasingly concern, or directly impact upon our students. The Students' Union plays a vital role in helping and supporting our diverse student membership and their elected representatives to navigate these challenges.

Queen Mary Students' Union (QMSU) represents the interests of over 31,000 students drawn from over 170 nationalities (approximately 43 per cent are from overseas) at Queen Mary University of London. Queen Mary is a Russell Group university, operating across five campuses in London and at sites across Europe and Asia. Queen Mary describes itself as 'a leading research-intensive university with a difference'.

Of our domestic undergraduate students, 91 per cent are from state schools, 77 per cent are BAME, and 46 per cent are the first in their families to enter into higher education. Queen Mary has the best record of all the Russell Group universities in England for recruiting undergraduate students from state schools and from lower-income families. The Students' Union provides social, cultural, recreational, and sporting opportunities for our students, helping them to develop the skills they need to succeed in life after university.

The Students' Union is a registered charity and is overseen by a Board of Trustees, which includes six external members. This pack will explain more about the role and about the Students' Union. When you have read it, we hope you might consider joining us.

We will provide full training and support on the role and responsibilities of a Trustee and the work of a Students' Union. As a Trustee, you will contribute the benefit of your experience, enthusiasm, and a willingness to both challenge and support us in our work.

Whether you have never considered being a Trustee before, or whether you have already served in this role, we would like to hear from you, particularly if you have experience in any of the following areas: wellbeing, welfare and support; equality, equity, diversity and inclusion; or business, finance and risk, and would like to use it to help us to build for the future. However, these are not essential - we will consider all applications based upon what you feel you can bring to the role.

Further Information

Further information on the Students' Union and its work can be found on our website at: www.qmsu.org .

You can also contact the Students' Union's Secretary, Brad Coales, at: b.coales@qmul.ac.uk or our Chief Executive, Mike Wojcik, at: m.wojcik@qmul.ac.uk .

Recruitment Timetable

Applications Close: Monday 26 January 2026

Shortlisting: w/c 26 January 2026

Notification of candidates for interview: by end of w/c 26 January 2026

Interviews: Thursday 5 February 2026

How to apply

To apply to join us as an External Trustee, please send your CV, together with a covering letter explaining why you are interested and what you would bring to the role, to the Students' Union's Secretary, Brad Coales at: b.coales@qmul.ac.uk by **Monday 26 January 2026**

External Trustee Role Description & Person Specification

Queen Mary Students' Union
January 2026



External Trustee Role Description & Person Specification

Queen Mary, University of London Students' Union

External Trustee/Director Role Description

The role of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the Students' Union's governing body. It has overall responsibility for the management and administration of the Students' Union, including its governance, budget and strategy. It is made up of six elected Officer Trustees, six elected Student Trustees, and six External Trustees.

As the Students' Union is an incorporated charity, Trustees are also appointed as Company Directors.

Collective responsibilities of all Trustees

1. To ensure that the Students' Union works to fulfil its charitable purpose, and that it acts within its constitution.
2. To ensure the Students' Union complies with charity law, company law, and other applicable legislation, regulatory requirements, and best practice.
3. To comply with the provisions of the Students' Union's Articles of Association, and to always act in the best interests of the Union.
4. To ensure the financial stability of the Students' Union, and that its resources are properly managed and only used for the purposes for which they are intended.
5. To ensure that effective strategic planning is in place, that appropriate goals and targets are set, and effective processes for monitoring and evaluating performance are in place.
6. To ensure that effective governance policies and procedures are in place in relation to the Students' Union's activities.
7. To ensure that effective controls are in place to identify and manage risks.
8. To actively contribute to the work and decisions of the Board.
9. To support and constructively challenge the Chief Executive.
10. To uphold the aims and values of the Students' Union and to protect its name and reputation.

11. To adhere to the Nolan Committee's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Additional responsibilities of External Trustees

1. To bring an external perspective to the work of the Board, based on your experience and independent judgement.
2. To use any specific professional skills and experience to assist the Board in reaching sound decisions and, where appropriate, to offer guidance on matters falling within those specific areas.

Time Commitment

The Board meets at least 4 times each year, usually in the early evening, and additional Board meetings may be convened as necessary.

Board members may also be asked to sit on the Audit and Risk Committee, which also normally meets 4 times a year in the early evening, and/or other committees which meet as the need arises such as the Appointments Committee, and the Disciplinary Committee.

You will also need time to prepare for meetings (including reading Board/Committee papers) and to respond to any matters arising between Board/Committee meetings.

External Trustee/Director Person Specification

Essential

All applicants should:

1. Be willing and able to allocate sufficient time to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the role.
2. Have the ability to think strategically and see the bigger picture.
3. Be a 'critical friend' - able to challenge constructively, and exercise sound independent judgment.
4. Have effective communication skills and the ability to relate to, and communicate effectively with, people at all levels.
5. Have experience of working in a leadership, or management role in an organisation (private, public or voluntary) using influencing and negotiating skills.
6. Have experience of working in, or with, an organisation that requires an understanding of the needs of, and engagement with, multiple stakeholders.
7. Have a commitment to our values, and our culture of support, inclusivity and empowerment.
8. Have the enthusiasm to apply your experience, understanding and skills for the benefit of the Students' Union, its members and their educational and personal development, and wellbeing.

Desirable

We are particularly keen to receive applications from people with experience in any of the following areas, but this is not essential - we will consider all applications based upon what **you** feel you can bring to the role of Trustee:

- Wellbeing, welfare and support;
- Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion;
- Business, finance and risk.

Valuing diversity

As an organisation responsible for representing the interests of a diverse body of students, we fully encourage applicants from all demographics and backgrounds so that our Board is as diverse as the students we represent.

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About Queen Mary Students' Union - Information for prospective External Trustees

January 2026



About Queen Mary Students' Union

Information for prospective External Trustees

Queen Mary Students' Union

The Students' Union is a registered charity, with Articles of Association (its 'constitution') as its governing document. In its last accounting year, the Students' Union had a turnover of over £7.8m (including our wholly owned trading subsidiary, QMSU Services Ltd). All profits generated from the Students' Union's trading activities are gift-aided and re-invested in its services and activities for the benefit of its members.

The Students' Union's Mission is: '*We Listen. We Act. We improve students' lives*' and its Vision Statement is: '*Our vision is for every student to feel they belong, in an environment where wellbeing, inclusion and community are at the core of everything we do. We will ensure every student is empowered to grow and thrive throughout their time at University and beyond into their future lives.*'

The Students' Union's Values are to be: *Supportive, Inclusive, Student-Led, and Ethical*.

The Students' Union has over 70 sports clubs, and also provides a programme of recreational and non-competitive sports, whilst its Community Foundation provides opportunities for students to train as coaches to support sport in the wider community. The Students' Union has over 290 student societies, there are circa 8,000 students registered for volunteering opportunities with national charities and community groups, and last year student groups raised circa £75k for charity.

The Students' Union is committed to improving sustainability. Last year, our Re-Use scheme diverted 1.4 tons of items from landfill, over 700 meals were saved from waste through our Too Good To Go partnership, and Our Bring Your Own Cup discount offers students 20% discount.

Governance

Under the Articles, the Board of Trustees is responsible for the management and administration of the Union, including its governance, budget and strategy.

Trustees are appointed for a maximum period of four years, with the opportunity to be re-appointed for a further four-year term. The Articles provide for the appointment of up to 6 Officer Trustees and 6 Student Trustees, elected by secret ballot, and for the appointment of up to 6 External Trustees by an Appointments Committee.

Officer Trustees and Student Trustees receive an induction in the role, responsibilities and duties of Trustees. Officer Trustees also receive an induction and extensive specialist training on their roles as full-time Union officers. External Trustees receive inductions, briefings, and ongoing support to develop them in their role as required.

The Trustees have power to delegate their functions to committees or individuals. Day-to-day management of the operation and administration of the Students' Union is delegated by the Trustees to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive reports to Trustees at each Board of Trustees' meeting, and as necessary in-between meetings. There are 2 standing committees - the Executive Committee, comprising the Officer Trustees (also known as Executive Officers) and the Audit and Risk Committee.

The representational and campaigning policy of the Students' Union is set by our members, through our 'All Students Meetings'. The Student Representative Committee, elected annually from and by the Students' Union's members, then has oversight of the implementation. The Board of Trustees has the power to overrule any decision or policy made by the members, if it is considered there are adverse financial implications, a breach of legal requirements, or a contravention of the Students' Union's charitable aims and objects.

QMSU Services Limited

QMSU Services Limited is the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Students' Union. It carries out significant trading activities in support of the Union's work, including, the Union Shop, the Village Shop, Ground Café, and the Qmotion Health and Fitness Centre on the Mile End campus, and the Griff Bar & Kitchen on the Whitechapel campus. The Students' Union also administers a number of activities at the University's sports ground in Chislehurst.

The Chief Executive of the Students' Union is a member of the Board of Directors of QMSU Services Limited and is the company's Managing Director. The Students' Union President is also a member of the Board of Directors.

Whilst the Students' Union's financial statements include the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of QMSU Services Limited, separate reports and financial statements for both QMSU, and QMSU Services Limited can be viewed on the Students' Union's website. In the last audited financial year QMSU Services had a turnover of circa £3.9m.

Relationship with Queen Mary University of London

The Students' Union works closely with Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). The Union's President is a member of Queen Mary University Council. The Union President, a Vice President, and a student representative from each of QMUL's three faculties are members of the University's Senate.

QMUL provides an annual Block Grant to the Union, which funds the Union's core charitable activities, along with other targeted grant funding.

QMUL provides the premises from which the Students' Union and QMSU Services Limited operate, including the Students' Union Hub at Mile end, and the Garrod Building at Whitechapel. QMUL is responsible for agreed matters relating to the premises, including maintenance of the fabric of the buildings, plant and machinery, fixtures and fittings, and payment of utility and insurance costs. The QMotion premises and Drapers Bar & Kitchen are held by QMSU Services Limited under lease from QMUL.

QMUL also provides support services, including human resources, campus security, health and safety, insurance, buildings work project management, provision of ad hoc space, and the hosting of the Students' Union's and QMSU Services Limited's accounting records on its accounting systems.

Although the Students' Union is an independent organisation, QMUL has oversight of the Students' Union's Articles of Association, financial performance, and certain democratic processes, as is required by legislation.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) sets out the framework for the ongoing mutually supportive and beneficial relationship between the University and the Students' Union. A MOA Review Panel

exists to monitor the agreement. The Panel membership consists of three members of QMUL, a member of College Council, and three members of the Students' Union, including the President, an external member of the Board of Trustees or the Board of Directors of QMSU Services, and the Chief Executive.

Further Information

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