

SOAS
STUDENTS' UNION.

TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK













Welcome

Thank you for your interest in volunteering as a Trustee for SOAS Students' Union.

SOAS SU is the official representative body of c.7000 students at SOAS and is an independant charity. We work in partnership with the university to deliver the best outcomes for students. SOAS is the world's leading institution for the study of Asia, Africa and the Middle East offering a global perspective to a range of disciplines. We aim to make the student experience the best that it can be, from delivering a range of Clubs and Societies to representation, events and commercial outlets.

We are a democratic membership-led organisation run by a team of annually elected officers. Our Co-Presidents are full-time representatives who lead the Executive and are our Sabbatical Trustees.

We ensure that students are involved in our decision making through our ideas platform, Union Forums and General Meetings which enable students to have a say over the activities of the SU and hold us to account. We work hard to ensure that students' voices are represented and heard throughout the university.

The Board is comprised of four Sabbatical Trustees, four Student Trustees and Four External Trustees, appointed for their knowledge, skills and experience.

We are at an exciting point in our journey with plans to launch a new strategy and incorporate within the next twelve months.

We wish you the best of luck with your application.

Samson Onwe
Co-President Democracy and Education
Chair of the Board of Trustees

About the SU

Charity

We are a registered charity. Our primary source of income is a block grant from SOAS, University of London and from our commercial outlets. We sit at the heart of the student experience delivering a range of services, events and activities. The Trustees are responsible for the charity, delegating day to day management to the Chief Exec. We employ a small team of permanent staff and key student staff roles, working alongside the elected officers to ensure that every student has the best experience.

Representation

We ensure that students are represented on every level at the university. From facilitating the Student Rep scheme in partnership with the university, through to the elected officers. We also enable members to make change through a range of democratic processes through setting union priorities and electing their representatives.

Societies and Sports Teams

We support students with personal growth through supporting over 100 Societies and Sports Teams which are student led and encompass everything from cultural groups to sports teams.

Venues and Events

We have a common room, bar, shop and coffee shop in the heart of Bloomsbury and our space is growing, with a newly refurbished and expanded spaces. The money we receive through our commercial outlets goes straight back into the services we provide for students.

Support

We support students during their time at university through our Advice Service and the Enough is Enough Consent Scheme.

About The Role

Role Title: External Trustee
Role Type: Voluntary, reasonable expenses covered
Period in Office: Four year term, but may serve up to two terms
Key Relationships: Sabbatical Officers, Student Trustees, External Trustees, CEO
Minimum Time Requirement: 4 main board meetings per year, plus additional sub-committee attendance and time required to read meeting papers.
Dates of upcoming trustee board meetings
Wednesday 9 December 2026
Wednesday 17 March 2027
Thursday 24 June 2027
All trustee board meetings take place on campus at SOAS, University of London between 2pm and 5pm.

Duties and Purpose

Trustees are responsible for the legal, financial and reputational aspects of the Union. Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Union pursues its charitable objectives and strategic purpose. They do this by:

- Ensure that the work of the SU reflects it diverse membership
- Determine the overall strategic direction of the SU and develop the organisation in line with the principles of good governance
- Assist the development of the SU by overseeing clear strategic planning based on a coherent understanding of the environment in which the organisation operates
- Ensure that SU operates in an effective, responsible and accountable manner within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable organisation
- Maintain sound financial oversight and control of funds and resources
- Identify and oversee the management, financial, legal and reputational risk to the SU

About You

Experience and Knowledge:

- Legal, Financial, Strategic or SU experience
- A good understanding of the issues and structures affecting students in the UK and SOAS, University of London
- Understanding of the principles of good governance

Skills:

- Ability to critically evaluate
- Ability to network and influence
- Communications skills
- Attention to detail in the context of strategic decision making
- Ability to make rational and objective decisions

Values and Attitude:

- Demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and able to engage with people from all backgrounds and at all levels
- Passionate about working in a democratic, student led environment

Trustees must:

- Uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity, adhering to the Nolan Principles
- Participate fully in the work of the board, ensuring the collective responsibility of the Board of Trustees
- Attend all board meetings, relevant sub-committees, reading thoroughly in advance of all meeting all papers sent out for discussion and prepare ideas and contributions
- Participate in an induction, any training and other evaluations identified as an individual and as part of the Board of Committee

Eligbility

In order to be eligible to be a Trustee of SOAS SU you will need to meet the following conditions:

1. I am over the age of 18;
2. I am willing to act as a charity trustee and become a member of the Charity;
3. I am capable of managing and administering my own affairs;
4. I understand the Charity's purposes (objects); and
5. I am not disqualified, or otherwise prevented, from acting as a charity trustee and confirm that:
6. I do not have an unspent conviction for any criminal offence;
7. I am not an undischarged bankrupt (or subject to bankruptcy or debt relief restrictions, an interim order, a debt relief order or sequestration in Scotland);
8. I have not entered into a compromise or arrangement with my creditors (such as an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) or deed of arrangement) from which I have not been discharged;
9. I have not been disqualified from being a company director or removed from being in the management or control of any organisation; or disqualified by or removed as a trustee, charity trustee, officer, or employee of a charity by an order of the Charity Commission, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland or the High Court;
10. I am not a designated person under anti-terrorism legislation;
11. I am not on the sex offenders' register;
12. I have not been found in contempt of court for making (or causing to be made) a false statement; or guilty of disobeying an order or direction of the Charity Commission;
13. I am not disqualified or barred from acting as a trustee of this charity under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
14. I do not work for/receive remuneration from SOAS SU

How to Apply

To apply for this role please provide an up to date CV and a cover letter detailing your responses to the following questions:

1. Tell us why you would like to join SOAS Students' Union as a External Trustee
2. What knowledge, skills and experience can you contribute to the Board

Please email your application to SU@soas.ac.uk

Applications close on rolling basis.
Training: TBC

If you have any questions please email IZ4@soas.ac.uk