

Ethos of Post

The Guild exists, as a membership organisation, to represent and support all University of Birmingham students and to ensure they have the best possible university experience.

The role of the Chair is to steward the work of the Guild at the highest level, in accordance with the vision, strategy and values of the organisation, to act as a role model for the Trustee Board and ensure the highest standards of good governance are met. The Chair provides leadership to the Trustee Board, ensuring the Board fulfils its responsibilities in the governance of the Guild of Students and that the organisation meets the needs of its members. The Chair will work closely with the President and Chief Executive Officer and support them to achieve the aims and objectives of the Guild's Strategy.

Remuneration and Time Commitment

This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed, in line with Guild policy.

The role of Chair requires greater time commitment (of roughly 6 hours per month) than an External Trustee and the postholder can expect:

- Six Board meetings per year, generally on a Monday evening between 17:30 and 20:00. Two of these board meetings (usually September and January) include full Away Days.
- Membership of at least one Committee of the Board, as well as the Appointments Panel
- Regular meetings with the Chief Executive Officer and conducting their annual appraisal
- Stakeholder engagement and ad hoc responsibilities/events e.g. Officer Elections

The Chair is appointed, in line with the Guild's Articles of Association, for a three-year term of office, with the option of serving a second term of office (at the discretion of the Appointments Panel).

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Chair cover two areas: those as an External Trustee (see separate role descriptor); and those specifically designated for the Chair, as below:

1. To ensure that the Trustee Board meets its responsibilities for the good governance of the Guild of Students in line with charity law and guidance.
2. To facilitate and guide the Trustee Board in their role of setting the organisation's strategy and provide regular, strategic oversight of the delivery of the strategic plan.
3. To oversee the annual cycle of Trustee Board meetings, Away Days and Trustees' training and development.
4. To oversee agenda setting for Trustee Board meetings, in liaison with the Chief Executive, President, and Guild staff.

5. To chair Trustee Board meetings, ensuring a culture of inclusion, trust, and openness where all Trustees are supported to contribute to discussions constructively and voice their views and expertise.
6. To ensure that decisions of the Board are implemented.
7. To always act in the best interest of the Guild and its beneficiaries and to champion student democracy.
8. To act as a role model for the Trustee Board and represent the Guild of Students at formal events and meetings as requested, subject to availability.
9. To liaise regularly with the Chief Executive Officer and President on high-level decisions, with a focus on strategy, risk, financial and long-term sustainability, maintaining an overview of the Guild activities and providing support and advice.
10. To act as the key channel of communication between the Trustees and Guild Staff team, via the Chief Executive.
11. To oversee the process of appraising the performance of the Chief Executive Officer, on behalf of the Trustee Board.
12. To liaise with university colleagues as required, representing the Trustee Board and Guild at a strategic level.
13. To chair Appointment and Disciplinary Panels, as required.
14. To perform the duties as a Trustee, outlined in the External Trustee role description.

Experience

The Guild is looking for an experienced chair who has a commitment to the student voice and who will support the vision and values of the Guild:

- A leader with experience of facilitating strategic change within organisations.
- A good networker with relationship-building experience.
- A good understanding of the public, third or Higher Education (HE) sector, and current issues.
- A familiarity with and interest in the work of Students' Unions, their importance and role in HE, and the needs of their members.
- Experience and knowledge of charity and governance processes.
- Able to provide direction, leadership and support in a way that inspires confidence in and commitment from others.
- Demonstrates willingness to engage with students and attend high profile events to gain greater understanding of the role of the Guild and foster and encourage strong relationships.
- Knowledge and close association with the West Midlands, preferably as a resident.

Person Specification

You should be able to demonstrate in your application that you have:

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Good general education, A level or beyond	✓	
A degree qualification or equivalent evidence of continuous professional development and / or significant comparable practical experience.	✓	
Knowledge & Experience		
An understanding of the issues facing students in higher education today and the role of a Student Union.	✓	
Experience of operating at a strategic leadership level	✓	
Experience and understanding of charity governance	✓	
Experience of chairing meetings and ensuring collective decision making	✓	
Previous experience as a Chair of a board, a Trustee or Non-Executive Director	✓	
Knowledge of Health and Safety issues/ duty of care principles		✓
Knowledge of Financial Management		✓
Knowledge of Human Resources		✓
Knowledge of Charity Law		✓
Knowledge of Marketing & Communications		✓
Knowledge of Charity Governance	✓	
Skills & Abilities		
Ability to establish strong working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders, elected officers, senior management & external bodies	✓	
Strong leadership and facilitation skills, able to motivate and bring people together	✓	
Ability to work effectively within a democratic structure	✓	
Ability to use judgement to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Guild.	✓	

Personal Qualities		
A team focused approach building culture of openness, collaboration and trust.	✓	
Inclusive – champions equity, diversity and inclusion and encourages others to do the same.	✓	
Diplomatic - uses high levels of tact and diplomacy.	✓	
Self-motivated and confidence to speak openly; communicates clearly and effectively.	✓	
Integrity and Objectivity – Committed to continuous advancement of the Guild of Students, motivated by leading in a student-led, democratic workplace.	✓	
Accountability - to ensure continuity and strategic direction.	✓	
Honesty and a commitment to transparency.	✓	
Flexible and able to commit approximately 6 hours per month.	✓	