

solent
students'
union

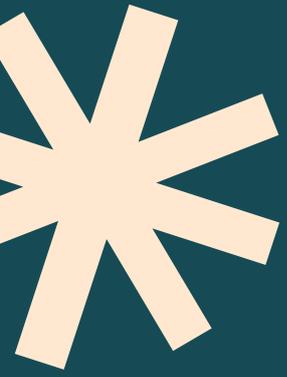
External Trustee

recruitment pack



@solentsu



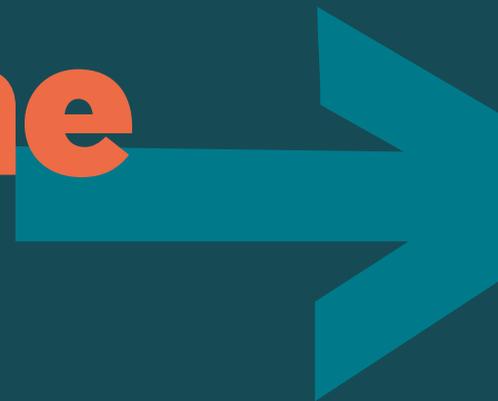


welcome

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Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming an External Trustee at Solent Students' Union. We're currently in an exciting period of transformation, with a new Chief Executive, a refreshed team structure, and the start of a new strategic year — making this a particularly inspiring time to get involved.

Our Board of Trustees plays a vital role in guiding the Students' Union, ensuring we deliver the very best for our members while meeting our statutory responsibilities. As an External Trustee, you would work closely with our full-time Sabbatical Officers and Student Trustees, contributing your skills and experience to strengthen the Board and support the Chief Executive.

External Trustees provide valuable continuity, insight, and expertise. Most importantly, they help create an environment where our student trustees feel empowered to champion the student voice at the heart of everything we do.

We are looking for someone with a genuine enthusiasm for helping to shape a strong, high-performing organisation that truly serves its members. We are particularly interested in individuals with a background in Finance, ideally within Students' Unions or the education sector.

We are proud to have a team that reflects a range of backgrounds and experiences, and we are committed to continuing to grow in diversity and inclusion. We never want anyone to feel that this opportunity isn't for them. If you're considering applying, please don't let self-doubt hold you back.

We know that imposter syndrome is real. It can make you question whether you're "good enough" or whether your achievements truly count. We want to reassure you — they do. If this role interests you and you feel you could contribute, we strongly encourage you to apply.

If you would like to have an informal conversation or ask any questions before applying, you are very welcome to reach out to our Chief Executive Josh Whale (Joshua.whale@solent.ac.uk). He would be happy to chat.

In the following pages, you'll find more information about Solent Students' Union and Southampton Solent University, our values, the role description, and details on how to apply.

We genuinely hope you'll consider joining us in shaping an outstanding experience for all students at Southampton Solent University. If you're interested — please do apply. We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Joshua Whale
Chief Executive Officer

About Solent Students' Union

Solent Students' Union is proud to say we are run by students, for students. We are here to help all Southampton Solent students have the best possible time while at university.

We are here to improve students' education, make campus life fun, look after their wellbeing, make them more employable for after university, and ultimately empower them to change the world around them.

Our students are at the heart of everything we do and our two Sabbatical Officers, who are elected annually, represent the voice for over 6500 students at Southampton Solent University. They are the face of the Union, with a reliable and innovative team working behind the scenes to support them during their time in office, as well as the wider SU.

Although we are a small team, don't let that fool you. The work we do is BIG – from hosting large scale events to working with leading organisations in the area to solve issues that impact our students. We are full of outstanding staff, volunteers, elected officers and trustees, who hold specialist skills and experiences that help our students to grow and flourish during their time with us.

We also offer a wide range of opportunities, services, and support to help students get the most out of their time at university, such as our in-house and invaluable Academic Advice Service (which is completely free and independent from the university), events, volunteering, societies, the SU Exchange, course and school reps, vehicle hire and much more!

To be current and up-to-date, Solent SU needs to be constantly listening, learning, evolving and being accountable. Equality, diversity, and inclusivity, as well as sustainability, are extremely important to us and will be the driving force behind our strategic planning.

We are also a registered charity, which means that any money we generate from our SU shop, advertisements or events is reinvested straight back into our Students' Union to improve the student journey.



our values:

INCLUSIVE

We want you to feel valued and that you belong.

PASSIONATE

We care deeply about people, our community and what we do.

PROGRESSIVE

We build on strengths, encourage new ideas and challenge boundaries of thinking.

TRUST

We trust and establish trust by being open, honest and accountable in everything we do.

BALANCE

We embrace a balanced life which leads to good health and greater chances of success.



About Southampton Solent University

Southampton Solent University is all about creating opportunities: for its students, for its staff, for its partners. It offers expertise and experiences you couldn't get anywhere else, opening doors and making connections.

Offering a range of 140 different courses to almost 6500 students, including undergraduate, postgraduate and apprenticeships, there is something for everyone at Southampton Solent University.

More than anything else, they are staying focused on their key purpose – developing grounded and enterprising students who, whatever their background, leave the university with the skills and confidence employers are looking for.

While we work closely with departments from all across the university, we are a separate organisation. This is important for several reasons, but mainly it means that if students have an academic problem while studying, they can come and talk to us, the Students' Union. They can do this in the confidence that we can take up the issue with the university and help to resolve it.

the board of trustees

The Board of Trustees has oversight of the educational character and mission of the Students' Union with specific responsibilities for financial probity and the effective use of resources. As the Students' Union has charitable status, Trustees of the charity must ensure that we meet our charitable objectives and continues to deliver value.

The Board comprises Lay, Sabbatical, and Student Trustees, all of whom have equal status. Trustees are appointed based on their skills, knowledge, and experience and how well they meet the current requirements of the Board.

being a trustee

We are looking for applicants who can demonstrate an active interest in higher education, and a commitment to:

- The Union's vision.
- Promote equality and diversity.
- Quality and enhancement.
- Promote the Union externally and within the community it serves.
- Work positively with others and to contribute as a member of a team.
- Make reasoned decisions and to act honestly, diligently and in good faith.
- Contribute to establishing performance targets and the monitoring of performance against these.
- Accept collective responsibility.

Salary: This is a voluntary position

Working hours: No set working hours. Various commitments over the year, including Board meetings four times a year.

person specification

Key attributes expected of all Trustees are:

- Strategic awareness.
- Vision and commitment.
- Ability to share and work to common values.
- Critical listening and evaluation skills.
- Ability to ask probing questions.
- Analytical and problem-solving abilities.
- Integrity to act without self-interest and make decisions based on evidence.
- Ability to work within a framework of collective decision-making in the best interests of the Board and the Union.
- Awareness of standards in public life, public accountability and a determination to abide by them.

Solent Students' Union is committed to increasing diversity and maintaining an inclusive culture. If you meet our criteria, we welcome your application regardless of your age, ethnicity, race, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, social demographic or whether you live with a disability.

principal duties

We are particularly interested in candidates with expertise in:

- Finance and income diversification – helping to secure our long-term sustainability through strong financial stewardship, while offering strategic insight into areas such as grant funding, charitable fundraising, and corporate partnerships to support our continued growth and impact.

Role specific activity

- 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.
- Detailed scrutiny of all financial matters and ensuring that we have appropriate risk mitigating strategies in place.
- Always acting in the Students' Union's best interests.
- Understanding and acting within the principles defined in The Charity - Governance Code: www.charitygovernancecode.org/en and the charity governance code specifically for students' unions, approved by the Charity - Commission
<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/quality-students-unions/qsu-resources/governance>
- The Trustees are also the Directors of the Students' Union company limited by guarantee for the purposes of company law. politeness, and professionalism.

our expectations

In common with many other charities, this is a voluntary role, though reasonable travel expenses will be paid.

All Trustees are expected to:

1. Prepare for, and attend, Board meetings. Trustees attend, on average, four meetings per year lasting approximately two hours each, and one half-day session dedicated to strategy and development.
2. Contribute actively and constructively to the work of the Board. Meetings will normally be undertaken online, though may be held in-person. All papers will be circulated via email, and a basic level of digital literacy will be required in order to engage with the role.
3. Commit to induction and ongoing development.
4. Adhere to the Board's values and the Nolan Principles of public life.
5. Continue to be a fit and proper person and declare any conflicts of interests. We will ask you to complete our fit and proper person test once your application has been shortlisted.



how to apply!

To be considered for a three-year appointment to our Board in the first instance, we invite you to submit a CV and covering letter outlining your interest in the role and relevant experience to joshua.whale@solent.ac.uk

Please feel free to reach out to our Chief Executive Josh Whale if you have queries about any aspect of the role, need additional information or wish to organise an informal and confidential discussion.

The Students' Union will respect the privacy of any initial approach or expression of interest in this role, whether formal or informal.

application info

Application deadline:
Tuesday 31st March 2026

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www.solentsu.co.uk