



STUDENT TRUSTEES: ROLE DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

Introduction

The Board of Trustees is seeking to appoint two student members (the Student Trustees) from 1 July 2026 for one year. The Board is particularly keen to receive applications from postgraduate students and from students who can bring different perspectives based on a range of experiential, demographic and personal attributes.

The Board of Trustees

The governing body of the University, the [Board of Trustees](#), has ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the University. In particular the Board has to ensure that the University is well-run, meeting its aims and working within its legal, regulatory and financial obligations. Student Trustees have just the same rights and responsibilities as the other members of the Board, and all trustees have a duty to act in the broad interests of the University. Other members of the Board include the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, as well as other University staff and members from outside the University. More detail about the current members can be found [here](#).

It is essential that the Board is able to make the best possible decisions, and so members of the Board are chosen to bring a wide range of skills and experience. Trustees make decisions for the benefit of the University as a whole, not just for their particular constituency, and take collective responsibility for Board decision-making.

Student Trustees do not 'represent' student views in the usual sense and should not seek to lobby the Board in respect of student matters. Their role is to use their knowledge and perspective of being a student to help inform the Board's decision-making and to bring perspective rather than partisanship to Board discussions.

Core Responsibilities:

- Attend all meetings.
- Participate fully and proactively in Board of Trustees' debate and discussion, listening to others.
- Make your knowledge and perspective available to the Board as the opportunity arises.
- Along with the other Trustees, to ensure that the University has a clear strategic direction; help to monitor/evaluate the University's delivery of that strategy; and ensure that the University appropriately addresses risks to strategy delivery.
- Attend training as required to carry out your role (the University provides an induction, and both the University and the SU will provide you with ongoing support).
- Along with the other Trustees, to ensure that the University complies with its legal, regulatory and financial obligations.
- Act as an ambassador for the University, promoting its activities in the wider community.

Who would make a good Student Trustee?

This role would suit someone who really cares about the University and is interested in how it is run.

In particular the Board is looking for the following preferred skills:

Essential

- You should be willing to listen to the views of others and able to communicate your own views in a diplomatic way.
- You should have a good understanding of the issues facing our diverse student body.
- You need to be able to attend meetings, and to make sure you prepare properly for them.
- You need to be able to discuss matters and papers that are sensitive and/or confidential.

- You should understand that all Trustees have legal responsibilities and are ultimately responsible for the direction of the whole University.

Desirable

Leadership: You will have experience of leadership roles within Bristol SU, the University and/or your local community. Examples could include representing your course or Faculty, being a member of committees, or governing bodies of University clubs, societies, community groups, local Schools, sports teams or volunteering organisations. Note that experience in leadership is desirable but not essential, however applicants should have the aspiration to lead and be able to demonstrate this aspiration as part of their motivation for joining the Board and to exhibit this if appointed.

The primary responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are set out in [Ordinance 1](#). All Board members are expected to comply with the role description and code of conduct as set out in Ordinance 1 of the [University Constitution](#).

Term of Office:

One year: from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027. Students can hold office for a maximum of three years, but you must continue to be a student or a Full-time Officer.

Support & Development

An existing member of the Board of Trustees will be available to act as mentor for you to enable you to fulfil your role and providing advice and feedback. Induction and ongoing support including opportunities for external training will also be offered. Pre-board meetings are provided to support you to read and understand the paperwork. Other opportunities to engage with elected Students Union representatives and student groups will be sought.

Time Commitment:

You must attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees, and you are expected to prepare for each meeting by reading the paperwork for that meeting (this is sent at least 7 days in advance). Meetings of the Board of Trustees take place over one full day, in person, in Bristol.

The meetings of the Board of Trustees for the year ahead are:

- 3 July 2026
- 2 October 2026
- 20 November 2026
- 29 January 2027
- 1 April & 2 April 2027
- 28 May 2027

A pre-board dinner for members will be held in the evening on Thursday 19 November 2026 and Thursday 1 April 2027. You may also be asked to join one or more of the committees of the Board of Trustees, and will receive invitations to other meetings, briefings and events of relevance to the Board.

Application Deadline: Wednesday 22 April, 5pm

Interview Date: Shortlisted candidates will attend a 25-minute in person interview in Bristol with a panel comprising of members of the University's Nominations Committee in the afternoon of 28 May 2026.