YOUR Union UWS



STUDENT TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK

We are a Living Wage Employer

www.uwsunion.org.uk

The Students' Union, Storie Street, Paisley, PA1 2HB

recruitment@uwsunion.org.uk

Registered Charity: SC049356



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Student Trustee of the University of the West of Scotland Students' Union (UWS Students' Union).

This is an important moment for our organisation. Over the past year, students have voted to introduce new democratic and governance structures, strengthening how student voice shapes decision-making across the Union. At the same time, we are preparing to develop our next Strategic Plan, which will set our priorities for the years ahead.

We are looking for Student Trustees who want to play an active role in shaping the future of the Students' Union. As a Student Trustee, you will bring your experience as a UWS student into Board discussions and help ensure that decisions reflect the realities of student life across our campuses.

You do not need previous experience of governance or Board roles. We are looking for students who are interested in how decisions are made, willing to contribute their views, and open to developing their skills and confidence.

We welcome applications from all students. A key value of our Students' Union is advancing equality and breaking down barriers in all that we do. Applications are encouraged from individuals regardless of race, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability status or any other characteristic. We are happy to discuss any reasonable adjustments you may require in the recruitment process or once in post.

This pack is designed to give you information on the role of a Student Trustee and our Students' Union. If you would like to find out more, you can contact our Deputy Chief Executive, Romina Scott, by emailing romina.scott@uws.ac.uk to arrange a suitable time to speak.

If you would like to apply, please complete the Application Form, Charity Trustee Declaration and Diversity Monitoring Form and email them to recruitment@uwsunion.org.uk. The **closing date for applications is 6th December 2026.**

We look forward to receiving your application.

About Our Union



We are a democratic charity that is led by students.
UWS Students' Union is a democratic, student-led charity representing over 19,000 students across five campuses: Paisley, Ayr, Lanarkshire, Dumfries and London. All students are automatically members of the Union.

We work in partnership with the University, while remaining an independent charity that is accountable to students. Our role is to represent students' interests, support their wellbeing and success, and create opportunities for connection, leadership and belonging.

A Widening Access University
We are proud to work alongside a university with one of the most diverse student populations in Scotland. Our student body reflects a very different demographic to much of the higher education sector:

- 75% of students are aged over 21
- 45% are the first in their family to attend university
- 30% of new entrants study full-time
- 51% of students are Scottish-domiciled
- 43% are international students

These characteristics shape everything we do as a Students' Union. Our trustees play a critical role in ensuring our strategy, services and governance are responsive to the lived realities of our students.

The Students' Union is a registered Scottish Charity, number SC049356 and Company Limited by Guarantee, number SC631885.

Our Services

WELFARE AND ADVICE

Provides impartial information, advice, representation and advocacy to students.

Fun Fact: 91% of students told us that they felt better after contacting our advice service

REPRESENTATION

We support Student Reps to feel confident in their roles. Student Reps strive to enrich the learning experience of current and future UWS students.

Fun Fact: 97% of Reps who received training found it valuable.

SOCIETIES

We support students to establish and run Student Societies and avail of volunteering opportunities. This helps students to make friends, gain experience, and develop their skills.

Fun Fact: We have 64 societies with over 1,100 members.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Our two events venues in Paisley and Ayr provide a safe and fun space for students to enjoy themselves and make lasting memories.

Fun Fact: We organised 28 welcome events with 1,429 attendees.

Our Achievements



Despite significant pressures across the higher education sector, UWS Students' Union has delivered strong outcomes for students in recent years. These include:

- Record-breaking democratic participation, including a landmark referendum with 93% student support for major democratic reforms
- Sustained high satisfaction with our Advice and Welfare Service, supporting hundreds of students each year through academic, financial and wellbeing challenges
- Growth in societies, representation networks and student-led activity across all campuses, including significant expansion at our London campus
- Strong digital engagement, with our communications recognised across the sector for best practice in reaching and engaging students
- Improved organisational resilience through governance reform, strengthened financial oversight and investment in staff development

Our trustees have played an essential role in providing oversight, assurance and strategic direction through this period of growth and change.

WISE VALUES

WELCOMING

Always friendly and supportive, providing opportunities to meet new people, learn new skills and have fun.

INNOVATIVE

We are an ambitious Union and are unafraid to try new ways of working to ensure students receive the best services and university experience.

STUDENT LED

We are led by students for students and ensure that student voices are at the heart of everything we do.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Advancing equality and breaking down barriers in all that we do.

Our Strategy

Our Democratic Structures

UWS Students' Union is undergoing the most significant democratic reform in its history.

Following a two-year Democracy Review shaped by extensive student consultation, students voted overwhelmingly to approve new democratic and governance arrangements. These changes have now been formally adopted and are embedded within the Union's Memorandum and Articles of Association and Bye-Laws, which together set out the Union's constitutional framework and legal obligations.

In line with these governing documents, the Board of Trustees has been restructured to strengthen student leadership, ensure effective governance, continuity, and external oversight. The Board will comprise:

- The President and Vice President Education, who serve as trustees by virtue of their elected roles
- Up to four Student Trustees, appointed in accordance with the Articles and Bye-Laws
- Up to six External Trustees, appointed for their skills, experience and independence.

This structure reflects the Union's commitment to being student-led while meeting the requirements of charity law, the Education Act 1994 and OSCR guidance. It ensures that student voice remains central to decision-making, supported by a Board with the experience and capacity to provide robust scrutiny and long-term stewardship.

From 2025/26 onwards, the Union is implementing these agreed constitutional arrangements alongside the introduction of new student voice structures, including School and Campus Assemblies, and clearer frameworks for student policy-making. Trustees play a critical role in ensuring these reforms are implemented effectively, reviewed proportionately, and remain aligned with the Union's charitable objectives.

Developing Our Next Strategic Plan

The Students' Union is entering a period of strategic renewal. Our current Strategic Plan concludes in 2025/26, and we will shortly begin the process of developing our next multi-year strategy.

This will be an evidence-led process, informed by student insight, staff experience, external peer review and trustee oversight. As an External Trustee, you will:

- Help shape the long-term vision and priorities of the Union
- Provide constructive challenge and sector insight
- Support the Board in balancing ambition with financial and organisational sustainability

This is a genuine opportunity to influence the future direction of a values-driven, student-centred organisation.

Our vision is to create a better future for UWS students and the world around us.

The Role



Student Trustees are full members of the Board and help ensure the Students' Union remains student-led and responsive to its members.

You will bring your experience as a UWS student into Board discussions, helping ensure student views and priorities shape the Union's strategic direction. You will contribute by preparing for meetings, engaging with papers, asking questions and providing constructive challenge, working alongside External Trustees, Student Officers and staff.

You do not need previous experience of governance or Board roles. We will provide training and support to help you understand your responsibilities and develop your confidence.

The role offers the opportunity to build your skills, gain experience in governance and help shape the future of the Students' Union.

Student Trustees also help maintain a strong connection between the Board and the wider student body.

Eligibility and Legal Responsibilities

UWS Students' Union is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. As a Student Trustee, you will also be a charity trustee and company director, with associated legal responsibilities.

Trustee names are published on the Scottish Charity Register (OSCR) and Companies House.

To be eligible, applicants must not:

- have unspent criminal convictions involving dishonesty or deception
- be an undischarged bankrupt
- be disqualified from acting as a company director

Further guidance is available from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- A current UWS student
- Commitment to UWS Students' Union and its core values
- A strong interest in representing and improving the student experience
- Ability to bring a student perspective to discussions and decision-making
- Willingness to learn and develop an understanding of governance and the role of a charity trustee
- Ability to contribute to discussions, ask questions and provide constructive challenge
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work collaboratively with a diverse group of trustees, officers and staff
- A clear commitment to equality of opportunity and valuing equality, diversity and inclusion
- Willingness to prepare for and attend meetings, and actively participate in the work of the Board

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of being involved in student representation, societies, volunteering or student activities
- An interest in how organisations are run, including decision-making, finance or strategy
- Awareness of issues affecting students at UWS

Commitment

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Time commitment and location

The Board meets quarterly, with meetings normally held midweek in the early evening. Student Trustees may also participate in sub-committees, which meet periodically throughout the year.

Board meetings are usually held at one of our Scottish campuses. Video conferencing facilities are available for those who are unable to attend in person. Sub-committee meetings are typically held online. Trustees may also be invited to attend occasional development or strategic planning sessions.

Term of office

To be eligible for appointment, Student Trustees must be registered students of the University and remain so throughout their term of office. Their term shall be a minimum of one year and a maximum of two years, in accordance with the Union's governing documents. A Student Trustee who ceases to be a registered student shall automatically cease to hold office.

Training and Support

No previous governance or Board experience is required. All Student Trustees receive a structured induction, ongoing support and training opportunities through organisations including NUS, OSCR, SCVO and the University.

External Trustees and staff will also support you in developing your confidence and understanding of governance, recognising that Student Trustees are often new to Board-level roles.

What you will gain from the role

This role is an opportunity to:

- Develop your confidence in decision-making and leadership
- Gain experience of how organisations are governed
- Build skills in communication, critical thinking and teamwork
- Work alongside experienced trustees and senior staff
- Make a real difference to the student experience at UWS

Expenses

Student Trustees are in an unpaid voluntary role; however, all reasonable expenses, such as travel to Board Meetings, will be reimbursed in line with our Expenses Policy.

The Process



Please ensure you send a completed **Application Form by 6th December 2026.** Candidates are also required to read and sign the Trustee Declaration and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, which will be separated from your application prior to shortlisting.

Process

The appointment process is handled by the Nominations Committee – a subcommittee of the Board. If you are selected for an interview, you will be contacted to advise you of the date and time of the interview and the process thereafter. Candidates will be given a tour of the Students' Union as part of their interview process (unless the interview is being conducted remotely).

Guidance on completing the application

As part of our commitment to equal opportunities, candidates for each post are treated equally. We remove all identifying personal information before any applications are passed on to the appointments panel. It is **very** important that your completed form contains both the information we want about your skills and experience, and the information you want to give us.

Questions 4 and 5 are the most important part of your application. This is your chance to explain why you want to be a Trustee and what experience, skills and knowledge you can bring to the role. **Ensure you refer to the Essential and Desirable Criteria outlined on page 5.**

Thank you for your interest in this role, and we look forward to hearing from you.



THANK YOU

We hope you have found this application pack helpful. Please contact recruitment@uwsunion.org.uk if you have any questions.

www.uwsunion.org.uk

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