

External Trustee Recruitment Pack



Hello and welcome to Liverpool Guild of Students,



Othman Ibrahim
Guild President

Thank you for your interest in becoming an External Trustee of the Guild. Our purpose as a students' union is to act on behalf of our members to improve their time at the University of Liverpool, and to encourage them to become actively involved in opportunities available within the city of Liverpool.

In this pack you will find all the information you will need to apply for this important role. We are a registered charity and receive most of our funding through a block grant from the University of Liverpool. Any extra money we make comes from our trading activities. Our trustees are collectively responsible for making sure the Guild delivers on its charitable objects and remains fit for purpose and viable for the future.

To compliment the Board's existing skills, we are looking for a trustee:

- With networks within Liverpool and proximity and understanding of the city
- Knowledge of the Higher Education sector and Students' Unions (SUs)
- Experience and understanding of complex organisations, like SUs, that run multiple services, seek to be a democratic voice for members and are run by elected student leadership
- Knowledge and experience of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) best practice

Where these skills are desirable, they are not essential and the Guild is keen to consider applications from individuals with a range of experience to compliment the skills of the Board, we also welcome applications from first-time trustees and aim to have an inclusive Board with diverse perspectives and backgrounds.

We are looking for trustees who are able to think strategically, can critically evaluate complex issues, and have the ability to consider all the details. We hope that our new trustee will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the Board.

It is an exciting time to be involved with the Guild, the Board has a key role in setting, monitoring and evaluating the targets which support the aims and objectives for our plans. The Board will oversee and lead our executive and staff team to deliver activities and services that fit with and inspire our members.



Tricia O'Neill
Chief Executive Officer

**We look forward to
hearing from you.**



Who we are

The charity sector is full of interesting organisations - but many people don't realise that Students' Unions are also registered educational charities, and this could be the perfect place for you to offer your services as a trustee.

There's an independent charitable Students' Union in almost every University in the UK. Once the home of the traditional "Union bar", they're now multi-faceted operations that cover student recreation, clubs and societies, welfare, student representation and student campaigning.

We're Liverpool Guild of Students, the award-winning Students' Union for the University of Liverpool. Our job is to create a home for each of the 32,000 students during their time here, ensuring each student gets the most out of student life beyond their degree.

We like to think of ourselves as home for opportunities - whether that be through joining one of our 200+ societies, taking part in volunteering, coming to a pub quiz or grabbing a matcha from Union Brew. Each student becomes a member of the Guild as soon as they join the University, and being part of the Guild means looking forward to seeing what opportunities students embark on and achieve every year.

Students' Unions have a huge impact - on education and in wider society. The impact on individuals is huge too - every day, we see students undergoing life changing experiences in the activities we offer. Our students deserve the best. We offer:

- **Opportunities to boost their skills**

We have over 200 student-run societies which they can get involved in to learn new things and meet like-minded people, not to mention our super volunteer programmes and student-staff roles.

- **A fun and vibrant place where students can try new things and meet new people**

There's our Give it a Go trips, live music gigs and a whole host of other good quality, affordable services which they can take advantage of.

- **Support whenever they need us**

Whether they need help to settle in or support during their studies, we're here for them and pride ourselves on being a friendly, helpful bunch who are quick and easy to contact.

- **Campaigning for positive change**

We are a democratic organisation and we listen to students to fight for the things which matter most to them. Our democracy structure - Change It and Guild Summit - gives every student the chance to have their say and shape their University experience. As our logo suggests, we fly the flag for all students and provide effective representation, and we make sure we're the University's critical friend.

The thing is, Students' Unions are fun, vibrant, exciting and there's an incredible variety of people. Our membership refreshes naturally and constantly. And it means that as organisations, we're always developing.

If helping an organisation which is membership led, political, vibrant and full of young people who are working hard to deliver change for their members is something that appeals to you, then you should consider becoming part of the trustee Board.

Our strategy

What is the Guild For? (Our Mission)

We will offer excellent opportunities, services and facilities which improve, enrich and develop the lives of all students at the University of Liverpool, from application to graduation.

Where are we going? (Our Vision)

We will ensure that our members have the best experience, be equipped to change the world and be proud of their Guild. We will be one of the leading Students' Unions in the UK.

To do this, we promise to:

- Support our members
- Put members at the heart of decision making
- Ensure that all members benefit from the Guild
- Deliver excellent spaces and services

How we're run

We're run by students, for students, and with students

This is at the heart of everything we do, and our democracy structure is designed to give every student the chance to have their say and shape their university experience.

We're the key link to the University, representing the voice of 30,000 students and helping to improve the quality of their education. If something needs to change, we'll help them to make it happen.

Funding

We receive most of our funding from the University of Liverpool. We get this each year in the form of a block grant. We also raise funds through commercial activity (bars, the shop, Union Brew coffee shop and media sales) and a small amount from donations and other grants. As a charity, we do not generate profits to pay shareholders - every penny that is made is reinvested back into the organisation.

Trustee Board

Our trustees have the ultimate responsibility for everything we do. There are twelve trustees who include four student officers, elected by their peers; four student trustees who are appointed from the student body and must be current students; and four external trustees who are appointed for their skills and experience. External trustees serve four-year terms, renewable for one further four-year term.

Since trustee boards in Students' Unions are made up of student officers and students who are leading their organisation to deliver change for their members, they need support and guidance on things like strategy, risk, financial and legal oversight. You would be forming part of a team that delivers real change for students and helps develop student trustees too. The Board of Trustees is chaired by the Guild President.



Staff Team

We currently employ 77 career staff to provide services for our members, as well as 158 student staff.

Student Representative Officers

There are four – the President, Deputy President and two Vice Presidents – who are elected every year. They work with our staff and volunteers to work out what our priorities are and lead the work of the organisation.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team consists of the Chief Executive Officer, two Department Directors and five Deputy Directors. They work with the elected Student Representative Officers and are responsible for the day to day direction of the organisation and the Chief Executive Officer reports directly to the Board of Trustees.

Student Engagement

Membership Services

Provide representation and advice, support our campaigns, governance and democratic structures, and look after societies, halls student committees and volunteering opportunities.

Facilities

Responsible for the facilities management of the Guild including the building and cleaning functions.

Union Brew Coffee Shop

Responsible for the smooth running of our busy coffee shop, Union Brew, the place on campus to grab an iced latte or matcha.

Business Development

Marketing

Responsible for all marketing and communications across the organisation; including media sales, branding, social media, design and public relations.

Shop, Bars & Reception

Responsible for the smooth running of our bars and events, gigs, food areas and shops, our reception service

Support Services

The Finance, HR, Governance and admin team support our administrative functions.

Student Staff

Support our outlets and departments – working in our bars, Union Brew coffee shop, retail store, technical team, reception, student activities and within our marketing team.



Our Values

Representative & Involving:

Our members lead us and are involved in shaping their own experience at every level.

Fun & Friendly:

Everyone is welcomed here and we create a home away from home for all our members.

Sustainable:

We've been here for over 100 years. We'll be here for hundreds more by being ethically, environmentally and financially sustainable

Professional & Responsible:

We are inclusive, informative, respectful, human and inspiring.

Innovative & Agile:

We are responsive to new ideas.

Ambitious:

Everything we provide is the high quality our members deserve.

Democratic Structure



We are a democratic organisation and our members are able to influence how we are run through standing in elections to become student officers, becoming student trustees or through suggesting policy via our democracy structure, Change It and Guild Summit.

Guild Summit meets four times per year and a group of fifty randomly selected students try to find a consensus on motions submitted by their fellow students. These decisions are collected online and are visible to all students. If consensus cannot be made at the meeting, decisions are put out to preferendum¹; which is a multiple option vote put to all students.

We also gather information from students involved in activity groups, from student representatives across all three faculties, and from the broader student population. Furthermore, the organisation is committed to the use of digital communication in order to create a constant two-way dialogue, which is supplemented by ongoing face-to-face communication with our members. We are an organisation run by students and which acts on their behalf.

¹ <http://www.deborda.org/faq/what-is-a-preferendum>

Relationship with the University

Our relationship with the University of Liverpool can be described in two distinct, although certainly related, ways.

Firstly, in terms of student satisfaction, the most important factor identified by our members is their experience as a student at the institution. This covers areas from teaching quality to service provision in campus accommodation, to graduate employability. As a campaigning and lobbying organisation, it is therefore important that we retain an independent but constructive working relationship with the University. We have representation on almost all University committees, including University Council where the Guild President and another officer are voting members on all non-reserved business. We also work closely with senior University staff, and meet regularly with the Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellors and Departmental Heads.

The other side of our relationship with the University of Liverpool concerns the regulatory role they play under the provision of the Education Act 1994. This legislation identifies the University as the body charged with ensuring the Guild of Students provides good value for money and operates in an effective manner. With our incorporation to become a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity, aspects of this have been taken on by the Charity Commission, although the University still retains oversight over our constitution and budget.



The External

Trustee Role

Trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of a charity, though the day-to-day running of the organisation is devolved to the Chief Executive Officer.

Trustees ensure compliance with charity law and other regulations whilst using reasonable care and skill in your work as trustees, using your personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that the charity is well-run and efficient.

Our Board of Trustees is responsible for making sure the organisation remains fit for purpose, and for setting the strategy of the organisation in consultation with senior staff. It also approves all policy, our annual budget, and monitors organisational performance against agreed key performance indicators (KPIs). The Trustee Board's remit can be summarised as:

1. Formulating, implementing and monitoring strategic plans.
2. Providing effective financial management and oversight, including the formation of budgets.
3. Safeguarding the reputation of the organisation.
4. Monitoring and evaluating the performance of staff, services and activities.
5. Supporting the Chief Executive Officer and reviewing their performance.
6. Providing effective risk management systems.
7. Ensuring comprehensive ongoing member consultation.
8. Promoting the active involvement of members.
9. Ensuring effective election/selection, induction and appraisal of trustee Board members.
10. Considering committee reports.
11. Any other duties required by charity law, the Education Act 1994, the Companies Act 2006 *inter alia*.

Our Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association state that:

“Liverpool Guild of Students is devoted to the educational interests and welfare of its members. These Articles have been structured to give the trustees reasonable authority to manage the affairs of the Guild in a business-like manner to ensure that the Guild complies with charity law and other legal requirements.”

We also have sub-committees of the Board; the membership of each committee has a majority of student representation with at least one student representative officer and student trustee as well as an external trustee making sure that the committees have democratic credibility and organisational accountability. The committees are supported by staff with responsibilities that directly impact the work of the committees. They attend in order to submit papers and to provide progress reports to the committee so that they can effectively monitor performance and make recommendations to the trustee Board.

Commitment

The Board of Trustees will usually meet four times each year, including a Board Away Day in summer to introduce incoming Board members. Other Board meetings are ordinarily held on a Thursday afternoon.

Trustees may also be required to sit on the Board sub-committees (Resources & Audit, People, Culture & EDI and Governance & Appointments) which meet during office hours at set intervals. Board members should be available by email to receive notice of meetings and papers as well as to make urgent decisions which may arise between meetings.

As we are an incorporated company limited by guarantee, our trustees are non-executive directors and registered with Companies House. You must be willing and legally able to become a trustee and Company Director under both charity and company law.

Trustees will be expected to read papers in advance of the meeting and contribute in a constructive and open way. We expect board members to add to the conversation on all strategic decisions we make.

External trustees are appointed for a term of four years, renewable for one further four-year term.

Remuneration

Charity Trustees may not be paid for their work as a trustee however they are entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred during their duties as a trustee in line with Guild policy, such as UK travel and accommodation costs for trustees not based in Liverpool.

Support

We are all committed to ensure our trustees are enabled to carry out their duties to the highest standard. Training is provided to all new members so that the Board is fully inducted and ready to perform its duties. With this in mind, an induction programme will be arranged for successful applicants with additional development opportunities provided when recognised.

Statutory Restrictions

The role of a trustee is an important one and some people are disqualified by law from acting as trustees. This includes:

- Anyone under the age of 16;
- Anyone who has an unspent conviction for an offence involving: deception or dishonesty; terrorist offences; money laundering; bribery; misconduct in public office, perjury, perverting the course of justice; contravention of certain preventative Orders of the Charity Commission; attempting, aiding or abetting the above offences;
- Anyone on the Sex Offenders' Register;
- Anyone convicted of contempt of court;
- Anyone with a designation under specific anti-terrorist legislation;
- Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt;
- Anyone who has entered into a composition or arrangement with their creditors which includes an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA), and is currently on the Insolvency Service Register;
- Anyone who has been removed as a trustee, officer, agent or employee of a charity by the Courts or the Charity Commission or a position of management or control of a charity in Scotland for misconduct or mismanagement;
- Anyone subject to a disqualification order under the Companies Directors Disqualification Act 1986.

In addition, under charity law you may not become a trustee of the Guild if you are employed by the Guild.

As part of the recruitment process we will ask you to sign a declaration that you are legally entitled to become a trustee and commit the required time.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We will ensure all of our students and staff feel they belong and find their place in our diverse and inclusive community.

Ensuring our staff and members all feel equally supported, welcomed and included and that the Guild proactively seeks to remove barriers to participation across all of its activities and areas of work and that our staff team more closely reflects our community.

Goals

Our vision for EDI Excellence will be achieved by delivering the following goals:

- Developing our team and making sure all of our ethnically diverse staff feel supported
- Consistent good EDI practice across all areas of the Guild
- Increasing diversity in our staff teams
- Broadening the student offer

We recognise the value of a diverse board composed of people with the relevant blend of differing skills, experience, perspectives and characteristics. The Board believes that effective leadership and good decision-making is enabled through a diverse board membership, a culture of listening to, and acting on, diverse perspectives and, having board behaviours that embody respect, openness and constructive challenge.

Applicants who may have disabilities are welcomed to contact us at any point during the recruitment process to discuss steps that could be taken to overcome operational difficulties presented by the role, or if any adjustments or support are required regarding the recruitment process.

Person Specification

To compliment the Board's existing **skills**, we are looking for a trustee:

- With networks within Liverpool and proximity and understanding of the city
- Knowledge of the Higher Education sector and Students' Unions (SUs)
- Experience and understanding of complex organisations, like SUs, that run multiple services, seek to be a democratic voice for members and are run by elected student leadership
- Knowledge and experience of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) best practice

Where this experience is desirable it is not essential and the Guild is keen to consider applications from individuals with a range of experience to compliment the skills of the Board, we also welcome applications from first-time trustees and aim to have an inclusive Board with diverse perspectives and backgrounds.

We believe the following **competencies** are vital to being an effective trustee of the Guild; you should be able to provide examples of how you meet these competencies in your supporting statement.

- 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

You should also be aware of and be able to abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

How to Apply

You can apply for the role using Atkinson HR's application portal. You will be asked to submit a CV and complete an application form, where you will be asked to answer three questions:

- Tell us why you'd like to join the Guild as a Trustee and how do your personal values align with the Guild's?
- What knowledge, abilities, and experience can you contribute to our Board's collective skills?
- How would you add value to the Board and our work to support students?

Applications will close at **midday on 7th April 2026**.

Shortlisting will take place on w/c 13th April 2026.

You will need to be available on the dates listed below if you are shortlisted:

- **Interviews** will take place on **Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th April 2026**, in person at Liverpool Guild of Students.
- **Training** will take place in **May/June**, arranged according to the appointed candidate's availability.
- **Appointment** at the Board of Trustees Meeting on **Friday 26th June 2026**.

If you have any questions or would like to arrange an informal conversation about the role, please contact Ellen at ellen@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk.