

Open University Students Association

Appointments Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Appointments Committee is a sub-committee of the OU Students Association Board of Trustees. It has delegated authority to consider and make decisions on applications related to:

- Student Representatives (including Student Senate Reference Group members)
- Central Disciplinary Committee Volunteers
- Non-ex-officio Student Members of Senate
- Non-ex-officio members of Appointments Committee
- The non-ex-officio member of the OU Student Shop Working Group.

It may also consider appointments to other volunteer roles at the Students Association, if requested by the Board of Trustees. All appointments must be made in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the group or committee they are being appointed to.

Membership

Voting Members

The Appointments Committee will ordinarily consist of:

- Vice President Student Representation
- President
- A member of the Board of Trustees – elected by the Trustees
- A member of the Student Leadership Team – elected by the Student Leadership Team
- Two Student Representatives with a minimum of one year's experience as a Student Representative (Student Representatives will be made aware of this opportunity and can choose to apply).

Other Members

Additionally, the Deputy President and the Vice President Student Voice receives the same training as other members of the Appointments Committee, to allow them to act as a designated alternates for all members of Appointments Committee, when necessary. The Committee Secretary (non-voting) is the Head of Student Voice, with the Student Voice Team supporting the Committee on a day-to-day basis.

Membership of the Appointments Committee will cease at the end of the term in their main role, or if they step down from their main role. The Board of Trustees will have final decision on the membership of the Appointments Committee.

Chair

The Vice President Student Representation will ordinarily chair the Appointments Committee. If due to a vacancy in the role, or any other reason meaning that they cannot fill the role of chair, the President will usually chair Appointments Committee. If neither can chair, then the Appointments Committee may choose a temporary chair from their membership.

Quoracy

Four voting members of Appointments Committee will constitute quorum. Where a voting member is not available to take part in a decision, a designated alternate may temporarily become a voting member to ensure the Appointments Committee is quorate. If the Appointments Committee is unable to be quorate, the Board of Trustees will be informed of any recommendations and asked to ratify any decision.

Mode of Operation

Discussions and Decisions

The Appointments Committee will have access to a private, online space in which to have asynchronous discussions. All applications will be shared within this space, with a private channel created where a conflict of interest exists.

Where necessary, a meeting may be called to make final decisions. This will usually be an online meeting and will be organised by the Student Voice Team in coordination with the Chair and Committee Secretary.

All decisions will be recorded in the online space and will be included in the report to the Board of Trustees. The decisions will also assist the Student Voice Team in giving feedback to applicants. A record of decisions made will be kept for a minimum of six months.

Conflict of Interests

A member of the Appointments Committee must declare any potential conflict of interest to the Chair and Committee Secretary at the earliest opportunity. Examples of when a conflict of interest might arise includes, but is not limited to:

- Where a member of the Appointments Committee is applying for a role related to the discussion.

- Where a personal relationship exists between the member of Appointments Committee and an applicant for a role.
- Where there has been a previous grievance between the member of Appointments Committee and the applicant.

Any declared conflicts of interest will be noted and shared with the Board of Trustees.

Reporting

The Chair, in conjunction with the Committee Secretary and with support of the Student Voice Team, will be responsible for submitting a report every quarter to the Board of Trustees. This report will contain a summary of the decisions made in the last quarter; the activities of the Appointments Committee in the last quarter; and any declared conflicts of interest.

The Board of Trustees can, at any time, request up-to-date versions of any Role Descriptions. The Appointments Committee may make minor amendments to the Role Descriptions of the roles within its' remit to keep them updated and accurate. These will be recorded in the quarterly report. Any significant changes will require approval from the Board of Trustees.

The Chair may be invited to answer questions from the Board of Trustees, at their request.

Support

The Student Voice Team will be responsible for support the work of the Appointments Committee. This will include:

- The administrative functions of the committee.
- Checking applications for eligibility and declarations before submitting them for consideration to the Appointments Committee.
- Ongoing support of the appointed representatives.
- Reporting to the Appointments Committee any resignations.

Duties of the Appointments Committee

Training

Members of the Appointments Committee will be required to take part and engage with any training or induction required to fulfil the role. Training will be organised by the Student Voice Team, in conjunction with the Chair and Committee Secretary, and will be appropriate to the role.

Appointment and Training of Student Voice Volunteers

Where necessary, the Appointments Committee will be involved in the design and delivery of aspects relating to the appointment, training and induction of appointments within its' remit.

Equitable Treatment

The Appointments Committee will consider all factors it deems necessary to ensure that candidates are treated equitably. This will include, but is not limited to:

- The Principles and Processes of Appointments.
- The Volunteer Policy.
- The Role Description.
- The Terms of Reference for the committee or group the appointment is being made to.
- Training and known best practice for volunteer management and recruitment.

In all its actions, the Appointments Committee will be required to uphold the Students Associations Values and Behaviours.

Confidentiality

During its work, the Appointments Committee will have access to confidential information. The Appointments Committee are required to ensure that all personal data, and any specific details of an application, are kept confidential.

For some of the roles, applications are not anonymised. This is where prior knowledge of the applicant's experience may be beneficial to the work of the Appointments Committee, or where a conflict of interest might exist. The decision to anonymise applications is made in conjunction with the Chair and the Committee Secretary and will be administered by the Student Voice Team prior to being presented to the Appointments Committee.

Members of the Appointments Committee are not permitted to discuss applications directly with applicants. All conversations relating to an individual's application are to be co-ordinated through the Student Voice Team.

Terms of Reference Amendments

Following approval, these Terms of Reference can only be amended by the Board of Trustees.