



External Trustee: Information Pack



Be part of something...

Bigger

Welcome to GCU Students' Association

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) Students' Association is an expanding organisation providing a wide range of activities and services for the benefit of its 20,000+ students. The Students' Association is located within the Students' Association Building on the Glasgow Campus and has a presence at the London campus. The Students' Association has its own unique and friendly community.

GCU Students' Association is a registered Scottish charity, number SC022887. The Students' Association has a Trustee Board that has ultimate responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the Students' Association, ensuring it is solvent, well-run, meets its mission, vision and values and delivers its charitable purposes. The trustees of the charity consist of four Full Time Officers (elected), four Student Trustees (appointed) and four External Trustees (appointed).

The Students' Association main purpose is to represent all students at GCU. It is autonomous from the University and is democratically controlled by students at all levels. All GCU students are automatically members. More information about us can be found at: www.GCUstudents.co.uk/aboutus.

The Students' Association employs permanent staff. The permanent staff provide continuity, professional and managerial expertise and are responsible for undertaking the day-to-day management and running of the organisation, implementing Students' Association policy. All staff ultimately report to the Chief Executive, who in turn reports to the Trustee Board via the Chair and Vice Chair. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the strategic and general management of the Students' Association.

On an annual basis we elect four Full Time Officers who take a year out of studying, sometimes known as Sabbatical Officers. The Full Time Officers responsible for ensuring the views of GCU students are effectively represented and that the Students' Association makes a positive difference to the lives of our members. The Full Time Officers meet regularly, as the Executive committee, to discuss the student experience at GCU.

Student Voice is our policy making body that meets four times a year. It oversees the work of the Full Time Officers, holds them to account and sets our campaigning and representation agenda.

The Students' Association is split into three departments:

- Representation and Advice Department
- Activities Department
- Membership Support Department

Representation and Advice Department

The Representation and Advice Department supports all student representatives on campus. This includes training and supporting academic reps who work to improve the student learning experience within the university, supporting the Executive Committee and establishing mechanisms, such as Student Voice and the Ideas platform to decide our policies as an organisation. This department takes forward our Representation Networks, Teaching Awards and ethical and environmental work.

Within the Representation and Advice Department is the Advice Centre. The Advice Centre is a confidential drop in and appointment service where students can see our Student Advisers for information, support and advice on academic and personal issues. The Advice Centre supports students requiring academic representation, such as disciplinarys, appeals and Fit to Sit. The Advice Centre also operates the Nightline Service, supplies free condoms and sanitary products and operates our Emergency Hardship Fund and Student Pantry.

Activities Department

The Activities Department provides opportunities for members to get involved in the Students' Association. This department trains and supports our sports clubs, societies, media groups (student magazine and the radio station) and supports the development of our students through the Student Leaders Programme.

Membership Support

The Membership Support Department provides financial, administrative and membership support for the other two departments.

More information about the Students' Association can be found at: www.GCUstudents.co.uk/aboutus.



Charity

GCU Students' Association is a charity that is registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and has the following charitable purposes:

- ▶ the prevention and relief of poverty of students
- ▶ the advancement of citizenship and community development
- ▶ the advancement of education
- ▶ the advancement of the arts, heritage, culture and science
- ▶ the advancement of health amongst students
- ▶ the organisation of recreational activities for students who have need of them by reason of financial hardship or other disadvantage
- ▶ the promotion of religious or racial harmony
- ▶ the promotion of equality and diversity
- ▶ the promotion of charitable fundraising activities



More information about OSCR can be found at: www.oscr.org.uk. We are a registered Scottish Charity No. SC022887.

Funding

The main source of income for the Students' Association is the Block Grant and Other University Grants that is received from the University. In 2023/24 the Students' Association received grant funding of around £800,000.

More information from www.GCUstudents.co.uk/financial.



What is a Charity Trustee?

Charity trustees are the people who make up the governing body and have “general control and management” of a charity. Charity trustees are responsible for the governance and strategy of their charity. They are responsible for making sure that their charity is administered effectively, and is able to account for its activities. The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 sets out the duties and responsibilities of charity trustees in Scotland. More information about the legal duties of charity trustees can be found: <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/managing-a-charity-guidance/guidance-and-good-practice-for-charity-trustees/>.

The governing body within the Students’ Association is called the Trustee Board. Trustees on the Trustee Board are liable, both collectively and individually for all the activities of the Students’ Association. This means all trustees are equally accountable for the Students’ Association. Trustees have a duty to act in the best interests of the Students’ Association and have a duty of care to all those with whom they have dealings. Trustees are expected to act together as a board to realise the values and purposes of the Students’ Association and to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements.

All trustees of GCU Students’ Association will be asked to complete a Charity Trustee Declaration Form and complete a Basic Disclosure Check to confirm they are not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee. Current GCU and Students’ Association employees and current GCU students cannot apply to be External Trustees.

The Students’ Association provides Trustee Indemnity Insurance for Trustees of the charity.

What is the role of a Trustee at GCU Students' Association?

A Trustee Role Description has been formed based on the responsibilities of trustees outlined in the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the legal responsibilities outlined for a students' association in the Education Act 1994.

Trustee Role Description

- To ensure that GCU Students' Association complies with its Constitution, charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that GCU Students' Association pursues its purposes as defined in the Constitution.
- To ensure that GCU Students' Association applies its resources in pursuance of its purposes.
- To contribute actively to the Trustee Board in giving firm strategic direction for GCU Students' Association, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of GCU Students' Association.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To use any specific skills, knowledge or experience you have to help the Trustee Board make sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which trustee has special expertise.
- To act in the interests of the charity, putting its interests before their own interests or those of any other person or organisation



Trustee Board Composition

- 4 Full Time Officer (or Sabbatical) Trustees
- 4 External Trustees
- 4 Student Trustees

A Full Time Officer is paid and takes a year out of studying at GCU and is elected by a cross-campus election. The Student Trustees are unpaid and are currently studying at GCU. Student Trustees are appointed normally for one year. External Trustees are appointed and unpaid and serve for a three-year term, calculated from the date of appointment. External Trustees may serve a maximum of two terms, either consecutively or non-consecutively.

The Student President is the Chair and the Vice Chair is an External Trustee. The Chief Executive, Senior Managers and Clerk are also in attendance.

Trustee Board Remit

The Trustee Board meets four times a year and has the following remit:

- a) Has ultimate responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the Students' Association, ensuring it is solvent, well-run, meets its mission, vision and values and delivers its charitable purposes
- b) Must ensure that the Students' Association complies with its Constitution, the Education Act 1994, University Code of Practice and relevant charity law.
- c) Must maintain and regularly review the Students' Association internal controls, performance reporting, policies and procedures
- d) Must act prudently to protect the assets and property of the Students' Association, and ensure that they are only used to deliver the purposes of the charity
- e) Must regularly review the risks to which the Students' Association is subject, and take action to mitigate risks identified
- f) Must uphold and apply the principles of equality and diversity, and that the Students' Association is fair and open to all sections of the membership in all its activities

Your commitment as a trustee of GCU Students' Association would normally include attending four meetings a year (normally lasting two hours each during the week and taking place early evening), a training event and to attend some social activities throughout the year to get to know fellow trustees, Students' Association employees and our members. We encourage our Trustees to attend our meetings in person but you can attend online.

Trustee Person Specification

Being a Trustee provides you with an exciting opportunity to use your skills, creativity, knowledge and experience to make a positive difference to the lives of our members.

Trustee Person Specification

- A commitment to the purposes, mission, vision and values of the organisation
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic Vision
- Good, independent, objective judgement
- An ability to think creatively and articulate ideas
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Enthusiastic commitment to voluntary and community activity

Vice Chair (External Trustee)

In addition to the Trustee Person Specification we are looking to appoint an External Trustee who will become our Vice Chair and has knowledge or experience in:

- Third Sector (Voluntary Sector)
- Governance
- Leadership and Management

You must have a least one year's experience of being a Trustee on another charity.

The Vice Chair is responsible for supporting the Trustee Board Chair, an elected Full Time Officer who changes every year, in the leadership of the Board. The Vice Chair will deputise for the Chair as required, provide a coaching and mentoring role to the Chair and offer general support to ensure effective Board meetings. The Vice Chair supports the performance management of the Chief Executive. When required, the Vice Chair will have responsibilities in dealing with complaints or conduct issues about the Chief Executive or Full Time Officers. Read the [Vice Chair Role Description](#).

External Trustee

We are also looking for an External Trustee with knowledge and experience in:

- Human Resources Management

We are interested in individuals of any age and welcome applications from people from a range of backgrounds. A full induction programme will be provided. We are happy to support you in developing your knowledge about our Students' Association. All applications will be considered.

Trustees are expected to sign the GCU Students' Association Trustee Code of Conduct.

This position is unpaid but reasonable out of pocket expenses can be paid in accordance with the Students' Association Financial Policies and Procedures.

Induction, Training and Support

Each trustee will receive a comprehensive induction to the work of the Students' Association and be invited to attend annual Trustee Board Training.

Length of Appointment

External Trustees are appointed for a three-year term, calculated from the date of appointment. External Trustees may serve a maximum of two terms, either consecutively or non-consecutively.

How do I apply?

Please send a copy of your CV or LinkedIn profile and a supporting statement demonstrating how you meet the Trustee Person Specification and your relevant knowledge, background or experience that would benefit the Trustee Board to hello@GCUstudents.co.uk. Please put either 'Vice Chair' or 'External Trustee' in the subject field. **Deadline for submission of applications is Wednesday 29th January 2025 at 12noon.** The anticipated interview date is Tuesday 11th January 2025.

How will External Trustees be appointed?

All applications will be considered by the Students' Association and a shortlist of candidates will be invited to an informal online interview to meet our current trustees and the Chief Executive. Interviews will focus on your background, experience and knowledge.

More Information

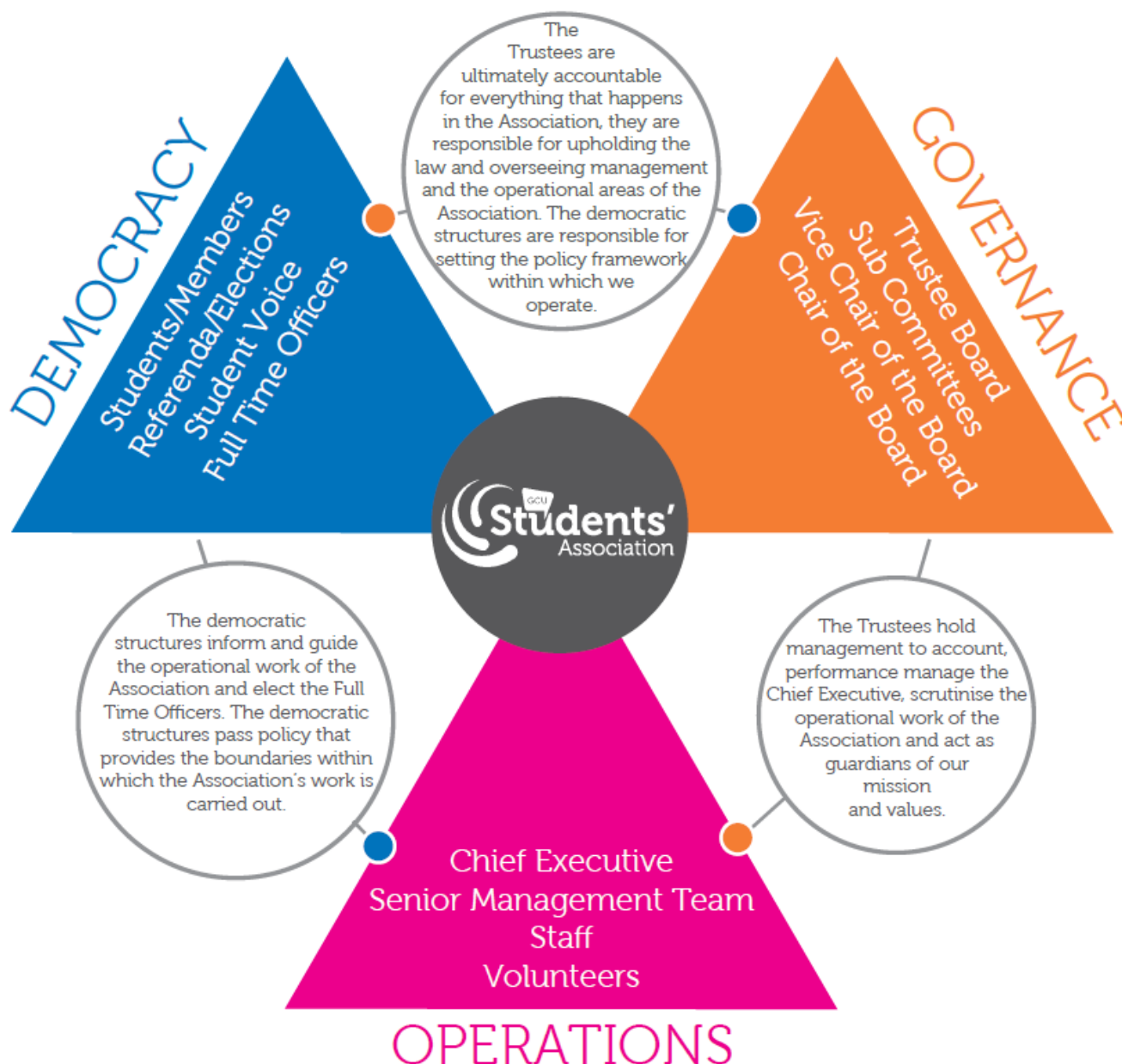
For more information, to arrange a visit to the Students' Association Building or an informal discussion about becoming a Trustee please contact:

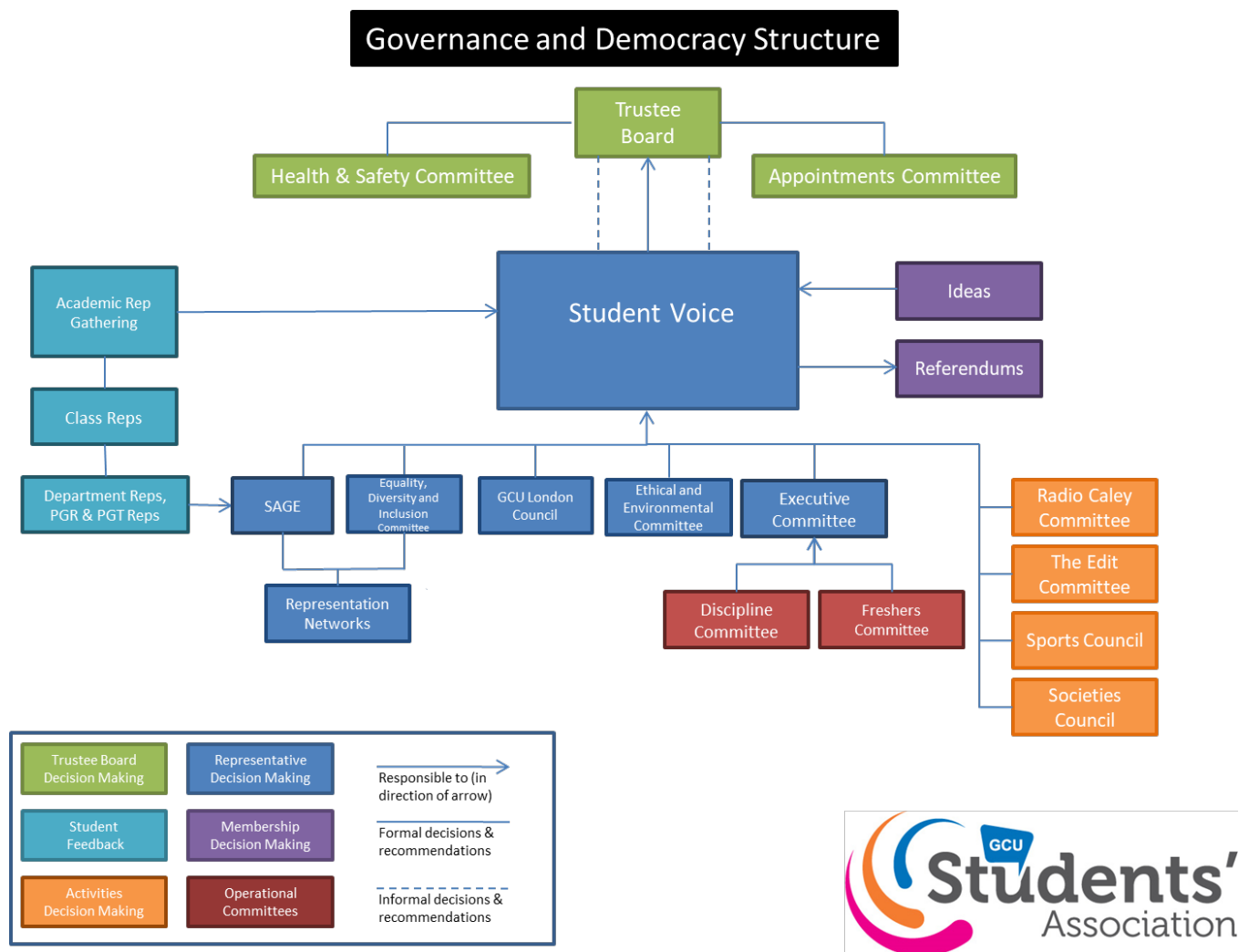
David Carse	chief.executive@GCUstudents.co.uk
Chief Executive	0141 331 3886
Wilfred Obi	president@GCUstudents.co.uk
Chair of Trustee Board and Student President	0141 331 8112

Governance, Democracy and Operations Structure

There are three sections of our student-led organisation that works together to ensure we run smoothly, explained in the diagram below. We have GCU students, our members, involved in every level of decision making.

More information: www.GCUstudents.co.uk/governance.





Mission

To represent and support GCU students to have the best university experience.

Vision

That you will have an outstanding experience that will live with you forever.

Values

Inclusive

We champion diversity and support you to be proud of who you are.

Community

We foster a culture of belonging, where you can make connections for life by creating a supportive community.

Student-led

Our student-led activities empower students to become leaders and make their voices heard.

Fun

We are dedicated to providing a fun and friendly atmosphere where everyone is welcome.

Strategic Plan 2025

We launched our new strategic plan in Spring 2022 after extensive consultation with GCU students (our members), our employees, the University and with our Trustees. We also refreshed our Mission, Vision and Values.

We consulted with GCU students through our Annual Student Survey and at our Student Voice and Sub Committee meetings. From the survey respondents:

- over 75% agreed with our Vision
- 84% agreed with our Mission
- 87% agreed we had chosen the right strategic areas

The Strategic Plan was approved by our Trustee Board in December 2021. It is mapped against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Scottish Government National Performance Framework (measuring progress against National Outcomes).



Each year we will update on our achievements with our strategic plan in our annual report within our audited accounts and progress against our Key Performance Indicators.

You can read about our achievements in our annual report within our [Accounts 2024](#) and our progress against our [Key Performance Indicators](#).





Student Partnership Agreement

The [Student Partnership Agreement](#) is a collaboration between the Glasgow Caledonian University and GCU Students' Association to ensure student engagement and partnership working remains at the heart of everything we do in order to maximise the student experience at GCU.

The Student Partnership Agreement was refreshed during the academic year 2022/23 and [relaunched](#) in January 2024.

An Award Winning Students' Association

GCU Students' Association are proud to have achieved the following accreditations:



We are an award winning Students' Association. Find out more information:
www.GCUstudents.co.uk/awardwinning.

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