

Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies

Summary of the role of President (Chair)

Responsibilities as a trustee

- The Chair will continue to fulfil all those duties and responsibilities he/she assumed when he/she became a trustee.
- The Chair will act in accordance with any additional organisational policies relating to trustee activity.

General Chair responsibilities

Providing leadership for the board as it fulfils its governance duties and responsibilities toward the Society including:

- setting vision, values, mission, strategy and high-level policy in accordance with charity regulations and the governing document;
- monitoring the Society's performance against established targets;
- securing financial stability for the Society;
- protecting and managing organisational property and investments;
- safeguarding and promoting the Society's reputation and values;
- making sure all organisational activities comply with regulations and the law;
- reviewing major risks and making provisions for the Society to respond appropriately;
- appointing and managing the administrator;
- organising and leading board development activities such as self-assessments; and
- delegating the above duties appropriately.

Specific duties

Meetings

- **Planning meeting schedules and setting agendas:** The Chair establishes dates, time and locations of meetings and sets meeting agendas according to board procedures.
- **Leading meetings:** The Chair leads meetings and facilitates discussion, encouraging all trustees to participate and preventing more talkative members from dominating the debate.
- **Keeping trustees informed:** The Chair establishes and monitors systems for distributing information before meetings and keeping trustees updated between meetings.
- **Acting as a point of contact between meetings:** The Chair makes him/herself available to trustees and others for contact between meetings.

Board leadership

- **Building the board:** The Chair leads trustee recruitment and induction, strengthening the group by finding capable new trustees and providing for Chair succession.
- **Engaging the whole board:** The Chair uses the skills and interests of all board members and does not allow cliques or inner circles to form.
- **Developing governance effectiveness:** The Chair improves overall board effectiveness by taking steps to increase governance ability in the group and in individual trustees.
- **Seeking self-development:** The Chair seeks to improve governance practice by continually seeking to improve his or her own performance. He/she encourages feedback and responds appropriately.
- **Overseeing the work of committees:** The Chair oversees the establishment and activities of board committees, ensuring that they are accountable and report properly to the board.
- **Dealing with conflict on the board:** The Chair monitors and addresses conflict among board members and between trustees and other parts of the Society.

Policy

- **Giving direction to board policy-making:** The Chair exercises leadership by setting priorities for the board and steering discussion toward strategic issues.
- **Monitoring the implementation of board decisions:** The Chair ensures that board decisions are communicated and implemented properly.

Representing the Society

- **Acting as a spokesperson for the Society:** The Chair speaks for the Society when authorised.
- **Representing the Society:** The Chair represents the Society at public gatherings when asked.

Where staff are employed

- The Chair leads the board as it fulfils its management responsibilities toward the Society's administrator, overseeing the role definition, selection, contracting, training, assessment and discipline.
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- **Addressing conflict in the Society:** The Chair monitors conflict in the Society. He or she is available to help the staff, trustees and others resolve conflicts. He or she takes steps to address conflict, acting to protect the Society's reputation and preserve morale.

Chair person specification

Essentials

- Commitment to the Society.

- Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- Willingness to put time and effort into the Chair role.
- Respected and trusted by other board members.

Personal qualities

- Good, independent judgment.
- Impartiality, fairness and confidentiality.
- Willingness to speak his or her mind.
- Tact and diplomacy.
- Respect for others.
- Willingness to learn new skills.

Specific abilities

- Strategic vision.
- Creative thinking.
- Leading meetings.
- Working effectively as a team member.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.

Experience

- Previous chairing experience (preferred but not required).
- Previous leadership position.
- Experience of committee work (preferred but not required).