

Society for Longitudinal and Lifecourse Studies

Role of Honorary President (Chair)

General Chair responsibilities

Providing leadership for the committee 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 documents;
- 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 the committee development activities such as self-assessments;
- 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 committee members to participate and preventing more talkative members from dominating the debate;
- **Keeping committee members informed:** The Chair establishes and monitors systems for distributing information before meetings and keeping committee members updated between meetings;
- **Acting as a point of contact between meetings:** The Chair makes themselves available to committee members and others for contact between meetings.

Committee leadership

- **Building the committee:** The Chair leads member recruitment and induction, strengthening the group by finding capable new committee members and providing for Chair succession;
- **Engaging the whole committee:** The Chair uses the skills and interests of all committee members and does not allow cliques or inner circles to form;

- **Developing governance effectiveness:** The Chair improves overall committee effectiveness by taking steps to increase governance ability in the group and in individual members of the committee;
- **Seeking self-development:** The Chair seeks to improve governance practice by continually seeking to improve their own performance. They encourage feedback and responds accordingly;
- **Dealing with conflict on the committee:** The Chair monitors and addresses conflict among committee members and other parts of the Society.

Policy

- **Giving direction to committee policy-making:** The Chair exercises leadership by setting priorities for the committee and steering discussion toward strategic issues;
- **Monitoring the implementation of committee decisions:** The Chair ensures that committee 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/contracted

- The Chair leads the committee as it fulfils its management responsibilities toward the Society's administrator, overseeing the role definition, selection, contracting, training, assessment and discipline;
- Addressing conflict in the Society: The Chair monitors conflict in the Society. They are available to help staff, committee members, and others to resolve conflicts. They take 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 committee membership;
- Willingness to put time and effort into the Chair role;
- Respected and trusted by other committee members.

Personal qualities

- Good, independent judgement;
- Impartiality, fairness and confidentiality;
- Willingness to speak their 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;
- Previous leadership position;
- Experience of committee work.