

# Duties of the Board of Trustees

The insights, experience and ideas of its trustees widen the Sheffield Music Academy's strategic perspective and help to shape its future development. Trustees are members of the Academy's Board and share collective responsibility for:

- a. determining the educational character and mission of the Academy and overseeing its activities
- b. approving the Academy's overall quality strategy to foster excellent teaching and learning
- c. securing the financial health of the Academy and safeguarding its assets
- d. approving the annual budget
- e. appointing and determining the conditions of service of the Music Director
- f. setting the framework for the pay and conditions of service of all staff
- g. approving the policy for tuition and other fees that students pay to the Academy.

Trustees are expected to learn more about the Academy and their role by undertaking training, visiting the Academy to engage with staff and students and taking on link roles as appropriate.

## Time commitment

The Board is the Academy's principal decision-making body and trustees are expected to prepare and participate in most of the following in a typical year:

- at least four full meetings of the Board – two to three hours plus reading and preparation time
- one Board strategy event - usually one-half day meeting
- two to three hours of induction activities, spread over the first six months from appointment
- two or three hours of training/research as required by the Academy, eg charity governance updates, safeguarding for trustees etc
- two or three engagement activities, e.g. attending Academy lunchtime events, evening concerts, or link responsibilities
- occasional tasks that draw on individual trustees' particular skills, interests, and experience, e.g. being a member of a recruitment panel.

Between meetings, trustees are also be expected to respond in a reasonably timely way to requests for comment from the Music Director, and the Chair and Treasurer of the Board.

## Remuneration

Being a trustee is a voluntary role so there is no remuneration other than reasonable out of pocket expenses.

## Legal liability of trustees

Trustees are legally responsible for safeguarding the Academy's assets and its solvency. The law relating to the personal liabilities of charity trustees is complex and its interpretation is ultimately a matter for the courts, therefore the following points are for general guidance.

A trustee should:

1. be satisfied that any course of action is in accordance with the Academy's Articles of Association and other relevant regulatory documents,
2. ensure they do not commit the Academy to action it cannot carry out,
3. ensure that the Academy does not continue to operate if it is insolvent,
4. register their disagreement if they are concerned that any action would be contrary to any of the above,
5. act honestly, diligently and in good faith, taking professional advice in appropriate circumstances, having regard to the the Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life, ie selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership,
6. avoid putting themselves in a position of conflict between their personal interests and those of the Academy.

The Academy has Trustee Indemnity Insurance in place to cover its trustees if someone says they are solely or partly responsible for a wrongful act such as a breach of trust, a breach of duty, negligence, or defamation.

## Personal circumstances

Trustees must be willing and able to accept the duties of a charity trustee and must not:

1. be an undischarged bankrupt or subject to a current arrangement with creditors
2. have been convicted of any offence within the last five years and had a sentence of imprisonment passed (whether suspended or not) for a period of more than three months without the option of a fine.
3. have been disqualified from acting as a charity trustee under the Charities Act 2011.

Given the Academy's role in working with children and young people, the trustee role is also subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

## Core attributes of trusteeship

- **Committed:** with a strong commitment to the Sheffield Music Academy, its role in improving music education and ambitious to achieve best possible outcomes for learners. Someone who appreciates music education and is willing to spend time with students. This also involves devoting the required time and energy to the role in order to create highly effective governance and be an ambassador for the Academy in their networks.
- **Confident:** of an independent mind, able to lead and contribute to challenging conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role on the Board.
- **Strategic thinker:** possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach someone who appreciates the bigger picture and understands the value of meaningful questioning.
- **Challenging:** being able to challenge without giving offence, understanding the value of critical friendship, which enables both challenge and support, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement.
- **Team player:** prepared to listen to and collaborate with others, understanding the importance of building strong working relationships in the Board and with the Music Director, General Manager, staff, parents and carers, students, and partners.
- **Willing and able to learn:** self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole Board effectiveness, with a strong sense of the importance of effective governance processes.
- **Creative:** able to challenge conventional wisdom and be open-minded about new approaches to problem solving; recognising the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success.

## Skills and Abilities

- **Literacy and numeracy:** able to understand performance reports and statistical data.
- **Communication:** able to express ideas clearly, to listen and learn from others and to communicate about the Academy within your own networks.
- **IT skills:** able to use IT to read electronic documents and use email.
- **Other:** able to commit to the Academy's equality and diversity policies and objectives.

# Role description of the Chair

The Chair ensures that the SMA Board fulfils its duties to:

- a. determine the educational character and mission of the Academy and overseeing its activities,
- b. approve the Academy's overall quality strategy to foster excellent teaching and learning,
- c. secure the financial health of the Academy and safeguarding its assets,
- d. approve the annual budget,
- e. appoint and determine the conditions of service of the Music Director,
- f. set the framework for the pay and conditions of service of all staff,
- g. approve the policy for tuition and other fees that students pay to the Academy.

The Chair leads the Board, playing a central role in shaping the ethos and direction of the Academy, listening to and getting the best out of fellow Board members, challenging and supporting the Music Director and their team, and line-managing the Music Director.

The Chair acts as an ambassador of the Academy, including participation in external networking and when appropriate handles relations with the media on behalf of the Board.

As specified in the Academy's Articles of Association, the Chair ensures that:

- The Board maintains strategic oversight of the Academy.
- The Board follows agreed and proper procedures and acts within its powers.
- Appropriate issues are brought to the Board for decision and/or consideration.
- The business at Board meetings is concluded efficiently and effectively.
- Issues before the Board are debated fully and that all trustees have the opportunity to contribute.
- The seven Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life are observed in all Board activities.
- Discussions and decisions are properly summarised and recorded.

These and other duties are stated formally in the Academy's Articles of Association, including the duty to exercise:

- a second or casting vote where there is an equal division of votes on any decision taken at a Board meeting.
- any specific authority delegated by the Board together with a general delegated authority to act, after consultation with the Music Director, on any issue arising which is both urgent and important which would normally be dealt with by the Board, but which cannot wait for the next Board meeting. Such action will be reported to Board for information/endorsement at its next meeting.