



PAPER FOR GUILD COUNCIL

Paper for:	Guild Council
Purpose of paper:	FOR DECISION
Submitted by:	LM (Guild President) and MO (VP Liberation & Equality)
Date of meeting:	Remote, paper circulated for remote response on 1 July 2022
Title of paper:	Trustee Recruitment

SUMMARY OF PAPER

The University of Exeter Students' Guild ('the Guild') is a charity. All charities have a board of trustees which is the highest point of governance for the students' union. The board of trustees is comprised of 4 x elected Officer Trustees (the Guild President and the Vice Presidents), 4 x appointed Student Trustees, and 4 x appointed Lay / External Trustees (who bring professional expertise).

The Guild's superior governing document is the [Articles](#). Part 3 of the Articles sets out how the board of trustees operates and is recruited. The Appointments Committee (appointed by the trustees) recruits both the Student and Lay Trustees. Guild Council is required to ratify the appointment of Student Trustees (section 24) and vote on the appointment of Lay Trustees (section 25) in order for these appointments to take effect. The Appointments Committee have concluded a recruitment process for both Student Trustees and Lay Trustees.

On 25 May 2022, at its last meeting of the year, Guild Council voted to [delegate its authority](#) so that it could conduct business, including the ratification of trustees, via email. This paper sets out the individuals the Appointment Committee is recommending for appointment to the Board of Trustees. Guild Council must ratify these appointments in order for them to take effect.

WHAT IS GUILD COUNCIL BEING ASKED TO DO?

Guild Council is asked to ratify the appointment of the following proposed Student Trustees:

- Christopher Menon
- Alex Martin
- Nur Farah Meor Azlan
- Niamh Crowe

Each member of Guild Council submit a vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain by email before 9am Wednesday 6 July 2022.

Guild Council is asked to vote in favour of the appointment of the following proposed Lay Trustees:

- David Craddock
- Harriet Jones

Each member of Guild Council submit a vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain by email before 9am Wednesday 6 July 2022.

Members may cast separate votes for each individual or a single vote covering all the proposed trustees.

Recommended Appointments

To assist with the process, a biography and supporting statement from the Appointments Committee of each candidate recommended for appointment is provided below.

External Trustees

Introductory Notes

The external Trustee recruitment pack made reference to the following skills gaps on the Board of Trustees: equity, diversity and inclusion specialism, and business development/commercial expertise to assist with the areas of the Guild strategy where development work is needed. We particularly encouraged applications from individuals who could offer expertise in these areas. On conducting the two-stage interview process, the panel found two candidates who would each contribute significantly to the development of the Guild in each of these target specialisms and would like to therefore recommend the appointment of ***both*** candidates. This would result in a ***temporary imbalance*** of the Trustee board, with 5 x External Trustees, 4 x Full Time Officers, and 4 x Student Trustees. However, the Panel noted that the Guild is committed to creating a new Full-Time Officer role in 23/24 and as such, from 23/24 onwards the Board will grow to comprise 5 x FTOs, 5 x student Trustees, and 5 x External Trustees. Given the immediate strategic priorities of enhancing work around EDI and diversifying income, we have an opportunity to bring significant relevant expertise to the Board in 22/23 to give a head-start to this work. There will only be an imbalance for the first year and the majority of the Board members will still be students/Officers, so the Panel is content that it is justified to provide the appropriate expertise at a critical time in the Guild's development. This would also negate the need for a costly and time-consuming repetition of the external Trustee appointment process in 23/24, enabling a greater emphasis on reviewing the Officer remits to create an additional Officer role. Finally, this recommendation would help to provide resilience for the Board when significant turnover of Officers and student trustees happens each year. The Articles allow for "not more than six" of each Trustee type, so this recommendation is permitted by the Articles and is therefore recommended by the appointment panel for ratification by Guild Council.

External Trustee – David Craddock – Biography

David has recently relocated to the South West, and brings a wealth of experience in senior business development/commercial roles for Unilever and small businesses. He has also worked in the Higher Education sector leading collaborative projects across universities in Wales and is familiar with legal and commercial arrangements in the sector. David has also worked in South East Asia, Europe and North America in marketing roles.

External Trustee – David Craddock – Supporting Statement

David's experience lends itself to supporting the Guild with its income diversification strategy given the Guild's recent transfer of its commercial services across to the University, which means the Guild is now entirely reliant on the block grant from the University. Whilst the Guild has secured a healthy increase to its block grant and has assurances from the University that this funding level is sustainable, it would be in the Guild's interests to evaluate opportunities for business development and independent sources of income to enable a greater breadth of services for students. David was also interested in the role of the Guild in ensuring student entrepreneurs are supported properly.

David demonstrates a strong commitment to the Guild's values and an understanding of the challenges facing students. David also has experience mentoring young entrepreneurs, especially in strategy and business planning development, and is keen to support the Guild in developing employability and leadership skills for members.

External Trustee – Harriet Jones – Biography

Harriet is an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion specialist based in Exeter, with 10 years' professional experience leading and influencing organisations on EDI by targeting the underlying causes of inequality. She has implemented impactful actions to progress systemic and cultural change in complex organisations, including Universities and most recently for the NHS.

External Trustee – Harriet Jones – Supporting Statement

Harriet is committed to seeing the Guild at the forefront of EDI innovation and debate. She is experienced in connecting current academic thinking with student campaigns and activism to create systemic actions within organisations that lead to tangible impact and change. Harriet is excited about our organisational value to be "radically inclusive" – she understands this to be a commitment to "fixing the system", ensuring our policies, processes and practices are designed for inclusion. Harriet has worked in the UK and in Australia and provided some useful examples of best practice where she has held organisations to account on their EDI commitments; influencing leaders and progressing innovative solutions and improvements. Having started her career at University of Exeter, she is particularly excited to support the Guild in bringing its values to life.

Student Trustee

Introductory Notes

Due to all four student trustees coming to the end of their term, there were four positions available. Our Board does not currently represent the diversity of our student membership and we actively encouraged applications from students based at the St Luke's campus, those who are studying for a postgraduate research degree, and those students based in College of Medicine and Health (CMH), College of Life and Environmental Sciences (CLES) and College of Engineering, Mathematics and Physics (CEMPS) and the Business School, which have previously been underrepresented on the Board.

The process was led by an appointment panel, and students submitted an application form and then were shortlisted and invited by the panel to a short interview. From those interviews, 4 recommendations have been made.

Student Trustee – Christopher Menon – Biography

Christopher is studying Biology and Computer Science through Flexible Combined Honours. Christopher is currently on placement at Vodafone and is due to return back to campus their final year in September 2022. Christopher has been a committee member of the Contemporary Choir music society.

Student Trustee – Christopher Menon – Supporting Statement

Christopher interviewed extremely well, showing passion and an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the Guild which would be a real asset. Even though Christopher has been on placement, they have engaged and very interested in our progression over the year including our democracy review and very positive about the changes being made in that area. Christopher

showed a keen interest in wanting to shape and safeguard the future of the Guild and continuous growth so that we are the best SU we can be. Christopher reflected our organisational values very well during the interview, especially around collaboration and how would work as a group of Trustees.

Student Trustee – Alex Martin – Biography

Alex is studying History and will be going into their final year. Alex has been an active committee member of the Debating Society amongst participating in other societies and activities. Alex was also an elected National Union of Students (NUS) National Conference Delegate and represented Exeter on a national level at this conference.

Student Trustee – Alex Martin – Supporting Statement

Alex showed their passion for wanting to be a trustee including wanting to give back to the Guild and student community after having such a great personal experience, they want to ensure as many students as possible have a great time at Exeter. Alex, through experience and examples on how they'd approach matters, showed their critical thinking, thinking outside the box and logical approach. Alex gave the panel a clear indication of how they're keen to improve the Guild, including how to improve transparency and communication to the wider student community about Trustee board and how decision-making can be more open and accessible. Alex communicated their understanding of being radically inclusive well and enforced not being complacent and constantly pushing the boundaries to do better.

Student Trustee – Nur Farah Meor Azlan – Biography

Farah is an international postgraduate research student (doing a PhD in Medical Studies) studying at St Luke's. Farah has a wealth of experience volunteering within charities and community-based projects and has a real interest in running their own charity in the future.

Student Trustee – Nur Farah Meor Azlan – Supporting Statement

Farah showed her interest in understanding and supporting a charity to run, plus there was a big passion about wanting to give back to the student community and working to help students have the best time at Exeter. Farah focused on the want to make sure every student has an opportunity to do their best which fits extremely well with our values. Farah gave plenty of great examples and experience about making important decisions, using their initiative and logic, and working with people to overcome barriers whilst being empathetic and caring. The values and experience that Farah holds would make them an excellent student trustee.

Student Trustee – Niamh Crowe – Biography

Niamh is studying English & Film and TV Studies and going into their final year. Niamh has experience working in retail, would love to work in the charity sector in their career and has an interest in the finance side of Trustee Board and how the Guild spends their money. Niamh has also been a Peer Mentor for Disability (in particular Mental Health).

Student Trustee – Niamh Crowe – Supporting Statement

Niamh came across passionate and interested in improving the Guild, with a particular interest in the financial side of the Guild. Niamh highlighted their interest in ensuring that the Guild spends money on the right thing that benefits all students. Expanding on that, Niamh highlighted that they'd like to remove barriers to participating in activities and opportunities the Guild provides as well as influencing societies to ensure everything is accessible to all. Niamh also highlighted their current

experience in retail and how they approach teamwork, which sat closely with our collaboration value and focused on their ability to discuss, listen and compromise if there isn't an agreement right away. Niamh showed through their examples and experience that they embody the Guild values.