

Chair of the Political Studies Association

Role specification

The Chair of the PSA is the Chair of Trustees and also Chair of the Senior Leadership Team. The role of the Chair is to provide leadership and direction to the board of Trustees. The Chair's aim is to enable the board to fulfil its responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the PSA.

The Chair works with the CEO and other office-holders to ensure that the PSA complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations and to make sure that the PSA pursues its objects as defined in its governing documents. The Chair's role is also to work in partnership with the Chief Executive Officer and staff, helping them achieve the aims of the PSA; and to optimise the relationship between the Trustees and the staff. The Chair acts as a strategic ambassador for the PSA and as a figurehead for the profession. In addition to the general responsibilities of a Trustee, the Chair has a number of tasks specific to their role.

Main responsibilities of the Chair

- Providing leadership for the board of trustees in their role of setting the strategic direction for the PSA in a manner that is in line with the Articles of the Association;
- liaising with other Learned Societies (within and beyond the social sciences and within and beyond the UK);
- planning the annual cycle of board meetings, setting the agendas, chairing and facilitating Executive Committee meetings, monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented;
- representing the PSA and acting as spokesperson;
- supporting the CEO in the smooth and efficient running of the organisation;
- working with CEO and office-holders to ensure best practice in governance; ensuring all policies are in place and objectives delivered, including equality and diversity
- reviewing and appraising the performance of the CEO (the Chief Executive Officer reports directly to the Chair);
- maintaining careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the organisation;
- liaising regularly with the CEO and Hon Treasurer to maintain a clear grasp of the charity's financial position and to ensure full and timely financial transparency and information disclosure to the Trustees;
- sitting on appointment panels as required — acting as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required; attending, as ex-officio member, other committees or working groups when appropriate.

Person specification

- Commitment to the organisation (commitment to the governing values and ambitions of the PSA as set out in its Strategic Plan, including for equality and diversity);
- intellectual standing and position within the profession;
- proven leadership ability; ability to work with Vice-Chair in an effective partnership;

- integrity, strategic vision and independent judgement;
- willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as Chair and trustee;
- ability to take decisions for the good of the PSA;
- excellent communication skills that combine political sensitivity with tact and diplomacy; willingness to speak one's mind and listen to the views of others;
- understanding of, and capability to exercise oversight of a budget;
- understanding of the legal responsibilities and liabilities of a trustee;
- understanding of the changing HE landscape in the UK and how to strategically frame and position the PSA within that context.

Commitment statement

The role of Chair requires a time commitment across the annual cycle equivalent to around one day per week (including trips to PSA HQ in London). Calendar commitments include full Executive and Senior Leadership Team meetings (eight per annum); at least quarterly reviews with the CEO; the annual conference (usually the week before Easter); and the PSA Annual Awards Dinner (November). In addition the Chair is expected to be active and visible at a range of conferences and specialist research group and network events the Chair will also receive a significant number of invitations for formal and informal meetings with a range of professional, civil society, governmental and parliamentary bodies. Some of these commitments may be delegated to the Vice-Chair, other trustees and the CEO.

The Chair's department will receive an annual payment of **£7,500** for the lifetime of the Chair's appointment (three years). This sum will only be paid to academic departments and may only be spent on departmental, teaching or administrative activities.