

Chair (Student Director)

New student-led organisation / Inaugural Board

Position detail	Description
Position title	Chair (Student Director)
Appointment	The Directors elect one Student Director to the office of Chair (cl 7.5(a)). The Chair is not a separately elected student position.
Position type	Student Director and non-executive company director
Accountability	To the company and the Board collectively
Term	As for Student Directors: normally two years, with staggered terms (cl 5.1(e)). For the inaugural Board, three Student Directors will serve two-year terms and two will serve one-year terms, subject to final appointment arrangements. The Chair holds the office of Chair for the duration of their Student Director term, unless they resign the office or cease to hold office as a Student Director (cl 7.5(c)).
Maximum terms	Two terms
Payment	Reasonable and nominal director fees as determined by the Board (cl 5.7(a)). Approved expenses may also be reimbursed.
Key relationships	Deputy Chair, other Directors, Operations Manager, Project Officer, Company Secretary, University representatives, students and key stakeholders

Purpose of the position

The Chair is a Student Director elected to that office by the Directors (cl 7.5(a)). The position of Chair is not separately elected by students. Candidates nominate for election as Student Directors, and the Directors then elect a Student Director who meets the additional eligibility requirement to the office of Chair. The Chair leads the Board in fulfilling its governance responsibilities, supports effective, inclusive and well-informed decision-making, and helps the Board maintain an appropriate focus on strategy, oversight and the organisation's purpose.

A company-director role

This is not an employee position or an individual advocacy role. The Board governs the organisation collectively. Day-to-day operations are led by the Operations Manager under the direction and control of the Board.

Note — University employment: During the first 12 months, the Board may arrange for the University to provide an interim Operations Manager and Project Officer (cl 5.6(a)). Any such individual may remain a University employee while acting subject to the direction and control of the Board. The implications of this arrangement for employment status, reporting lines and the Board's operational independence should be considered.

Responsibilities shared by all Student Directors

- Contribute to the organisation's purpose, strategy, priorities and long-term sustainability.
- Read Board papers, prepare for meetings and ask questions where information is unclear.
- Consider budgets, funding proposals, financial performance, risk, compliance and organisational outcomes.

- Bring informed student perspectives while considering students across campuses, cohorts and modes of study.
- Exercise independent judgement and participate in collective Board decisions.
- Act honestly and in good faith in the best interests of the organisation.
- Disclose material personal interests and follow agreed conflict-management arrangements.
- Maintain confidentiality and use Board information appropriately.
- Complete induction, governance capability-building and agreed actions between meetings.

Additional responsibilities of the Chair

- Chair Board meetings and support orderly, inclusive and focused discussion.
- Chair general meetings where required (cl 8.5(g)).
- Work with the Operations Manager and Company Secretary to plan agendas and ensure the Board receives appropriate information.
- Promote good governance, collective accountability and appropriate conduct by Directors.
- Help the Board maintain the distinction between governance and day-to-day management.
- Support the induction and constructive participation of all Directors.
- Act as an authorised spokesperson for the Board where approved.
- Manage meetings appropriately when conflicts, confidential matters or difficult decisions arise.
- Exercise a casting vote if votes on a resolution are equal (cl 7.6).
- Maintain an effective working relationship with the Deputy Chair and support acting arrangements.

Eligibility

Candidates nominate for election as Student Directors. To be eligible for election as a Student Director, a candidate must:

- be an individual aged 18 years or older;
 - be a Student (that is, enrolled in a University award program, whether full-time or part-time) at the time of election (cl 5.1(b)(ii));
 - remain a Student throughout the term of office (cl 5.1(b)(ii));
 - not be disqualified or otherwise legally ineligible to act as a company director; and
 - complete the required nomination, consent and eligibility declarations. To be elected to the office of Chair, a Student Director must also have at least one year of experience on a board or committee at the time of that election (cl 7.5(a)).
- Candidates interested in being considered for the office of Chair may indicate their interest as part of the nomination process.

Capabilities and personal qualities

- Sound judgement and willingness to use evidence.
- Reliability, preparation and follow-through.
- Respectful communication and ability to work with different views.
- Confidence to ask questions and contribute constructively.
- Discretion when handling sensitive information.
- Willingness to learn about governance, finance, risk and compliance.
- Ability to facilitate meetings, draw out different perspectives and guide the Board towards clear decisions.
- Ability to maintain role boundaries while working constructively with the Operations Manager and University representatives.

Commitment and support

Area	What to expect
Board meetings	Attend Board meetings as scheduled. The number and duration of meetings will be determined by the Board. Meetings may be held in person or using approved technology.
Preparation	Read agenda papers in advance and prepare questions or comments.
Between meetings	Respond to essential Board communications and complete agreed actions.
Induction	Complete Board induction and governance capability-building.
Support	The Operations Manager and Project Officer will coordinate Board papers, minutes and records and provide governance, operational, financial and compliance advice to support informed decisions.
Reasonable adjustments	Accessible participation arrangements may be requested through newSLO@newcastle.edu.au .

Document control

Field	Details
Document owner	University of Newcastle, pending establishment of the Board
Approval authority	Returning Officer, pending establishment of the Board
Version	0.2
Date	16 October 2026
Related documents	Draft Constitution; Candidate Information Pack; Election Rules; Nomination Form