

Deputy Chair (Student Director)

New student-led organisation / Inaugural Board

Position detail	Description
Position title	Deputy Chair (Student Director)
Number of positions	One
Position type	Student Director and non-executive company director
Accountability	To the company and the Board collectively
Term	The Deputy Chair holds office for the duration of their term as a Student Director (clause 7.5(c)). Student Directors hold office for a term of two years, with terms staggered so that not all terms expire at the same time (clause 5.1(e)(i)). For the inaugural Board, three Student Directors will serve two-year terms and two will serve one-year terms, as determined in accordance with the election rules (clause 5.1(e)(ii)). A Student Director may serve a maximum of two terms.
Maximum terms	Two terms
Payment	Student Directors may be paid reasonable and nominal fees as determined by the Board, provided that total fees do not exceed any limit in a funding agreement between the Company and the University (clause 5.7(a)). Approved expenses may also be reimbursed (clause 5.7(c)).
Key relationships	Chair, other Directors, Operations Manager, Project Officer, Company Secretary, University representatives and students

Purpose of the position

The Deputy Chair is a Student Director elected to the role by the Directors (clause 7.5(b) of the draft Constitution). The Deputy Chair supports the Chair and helps the Board operate effectively. If the Chair is unavailable or declines to act, the Deputy Chair must chair the Board meeting (clause 7.5(d)). The Deputy Chair may also chair a general meeting in the Chair's absence under clause 8.5(h). The Deputy Chair continues to exercise independent judgement as a Director.

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.

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 Deputy Chair

- Support the Chair in preparing for and conducting effective Board meetings.
- Chair a Board meeting or agenda item when the Chair is unavailable, declines to act or has a conflict of interest (clause 7.5(d)), and chair a general meeting in the Chair's absence under clause 8.5(h).
- Help monitor agreed Board actions and governance priorities.
- Support constructive participation, particularly by newly appointed Student Directors.
- Provide a sounding board to the Chair while retaining independent judgement.
- Assist with Board induction, governance capability-building and evaluation activities.
- Undertake authorised representative or spokesperson duties when requested by the Board.

Eligibility

The Deputy Chair is elected by the Directors from among the Student Directors (clause 7.5(b)). To be eligible for election or appointment as a Student Director, a candidate must (clause 5.1(b)):

- be an individual aged 18 years or older;
- be a Student (that is, enrolled full-time or part-time in a University award program) at the time of their election as a Student Director;
- remain a Student throughout the term of office (clause 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.
- Previous governance-board experience is desirable but is not essential (clause 7.5(b)).

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 step into the Chair role when required.
- Ability to support the Chair without compromising independent judgement or collective accountability.

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.

Area	What to expect
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