



**UKCISA** UK Council  
for International  
Student Affairs

# Chair of Trustees

Recruitment Pack

November 2025

# Welcome from the Chief Executive

## Thank you for your interest in becoming Chair of Trustees at UKCISA.

As the UK's national advisory body for international students and the professionals who work with them, our purpose is clear: to ensure that every international student has the best possible experience while studying in the UK. This mission is more important than ever. International students currently studying across the UK make an invaluable contribution to our campuses, communities, and society.

At the same time, the environment in which they live, and study has become increasingly complex, shaped by shifting government policy, economic pressures, and evolving student expectations. UKCISA stands alongside international students and those who work with them, helping them navigate these challenges.

UKCISA is unique in the way we represent and convene our stakeholders. We provide specialist advice and guidance directly to international

students, and ensure that student sponsors have access to accurate, trusted information.

Over 400 UKCISA members — public and private universities, colleges, schools, and students' unions — access and benefit from our expert training, professional development networks, and specialist resources to help them deliver the best possible support to their international students.

We are a powerful collective voice in advocating for progressive policy related to international students, engaging with government and policymakers to share the lived experience of students and evidence from our member institutions to inform policy development and implementation. Our policy advocacy combined with our trusted information, advice, and guidance ensures that UKCISA plays a pivotal role in UK's international education sector.

Our Board and their strategic direction enable us to deliver activity in support of our mission. Our trustees help to shape our priorities, provide the constructive challenge and oversight that keep us accountable, and support a sustainable future for the

organisation. They are also our champions, representing UKCISA and our work, while ensuring that we remain closely aligned to the needs of students and members. Their vision, credibility and commitment is critical to ensure that UKCISA continues to play a leading role in the UK's education sector, developing impactful partnerships, amplifying the voices of students, and supporting the sector to adapt to challenge and create opportunities.

I am delighted that you are considering joining us at such an important time, and I look forward to working with our new Chair to ensure that UKCISA continues to champion international students and the sector for many years to come.

**Anne Marie Graham**  
Chief Executive,  
UKCISA



# Our mission

**UKCISA's vision is that every international student who comes to the UK has a positive experience and is able to tell friends and families that the UK is a welcoming place to study, and live.**

To help achieve this, we work towards a transparent immigration system which is easy to navigate, whatever the level or length of study, and an inclusive and competitive post-study work offer that enables our world class education system, in schools, colleges and higher education institutions to attract and retain ambitious and talented individuals from across the world.

## Our values

At UKCISA, our staff, members, and international students are at the heart of everything we do. These values guide us and keep us accountable in our work and services:

**Quality.** We maintain the highest possible standards for our staff and our members who work directly with international students.

**Collaboration.** We work collaboratively with our members, UK governments and partner organisations to provide a world class experience for international students.

**Innovation.** We evaluate and refresh our services, to ensure we deliver maximum value for our members.

**Trust.** We act with integrity and commitment to provide advice, guidance and training that international students and our members can depend on.

## Our aims are to:

- » increase support for international education and raise awareness of its values and benefits;
- » reduce obstacles and barriers to greater student mobility;
- » encourage best practice, professional development and the highest quality of institutional support for international students throughout the education sector.



# Our work and impact

**We provide trusted advice and guidance for international students.**

We give expert advice directly to students, to support every step of their journey. They can access trusted, up-to-date guidance about immigration, fees and other aspects of being an international student for free from our website, call our advice line or sign up to our newsletter.

## Supporting our institutional members

We have members from across the education sector; all committed to the highest standards of international student support. We provide advice, expert training and events to support their roles.

## Influencing policy

We work with UK governments, government agencies and sector organisations to ensure the UK remains attractive and welcoming to prospective and current international students.

This breadth gives UKCISA unrivalled convening power: it brings together the institutions and organisations that shape international student policy and practice, providing a trusted forum for collaboration, evidence gathering, and sector-wide influence. As Chair, you will play a central role in guiding this collective voice and ensuring UKCISA continues to convene the sector effectively on behalf of international students.



[Read our Annual Review 2024-25](#)

**408**

members

Including all public universities in the UK

**2,969**

calls to our student advice line

**1,563**

calls to our member advice line

**34**

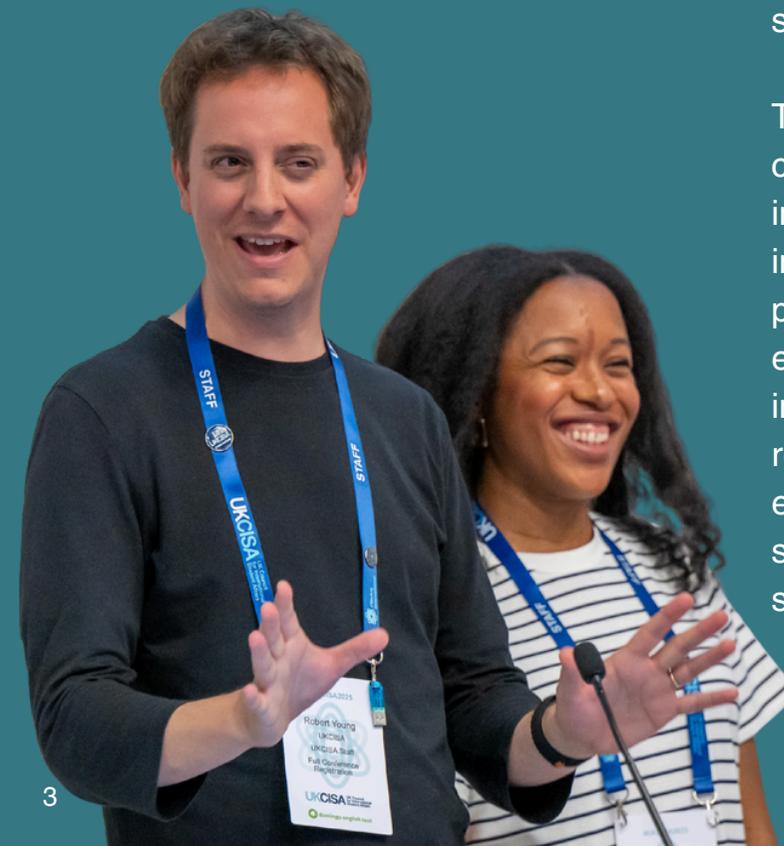
training sessions for international student support professionals

**788**

attendees from universities, schools, colleges and students' unions across the UK

**2.7m**

website views



# Our work: Student Ambassadors and Charter

International students are at the heart of everything we do at UKCISA. We are proud to work with and learn from our Student Ambassadors to help deliver our vision of a world-class international student experience.

The #WeAreInternational Student Ambassador Programme is UKCISA's student network of global future leaders. An education policy and leadership development scheme that has been running for five years, there are now over 40 Ambassadors from around the world in the network.

The programme empowers international students to be key partners in shaping a quality student experience, using their knowledge and first-hand experience of studying in the UK to influence policy, lead the #WeAreInternational campaign and develop an inclusive global student community.



Now more than ever, in a country where international students' contributions are drowned out by negative narratives, we need strong and passionate leadership to guide UKCISA. An organisation at the forefront, advocating for a positive experience for all international students, championing a transparent and clear immigration system and an inclusive post-study work offer.”

Pedram Bani Asadi, 2025 Chair of UKCISA  
Student Advisory Group



## Amplifying student voices

The #WeAreInternational Student Ambassadors led the creation of an International Student Charter, developed with the input of students and staff from across the international education sector in the UK.

It provides guidance on the fundamental principles for delivering a world-class international student experience, from pre-arrival to post-graduation.



20

Ambassadors across the network

from

27

countries

30

institutions represented

352

events attended

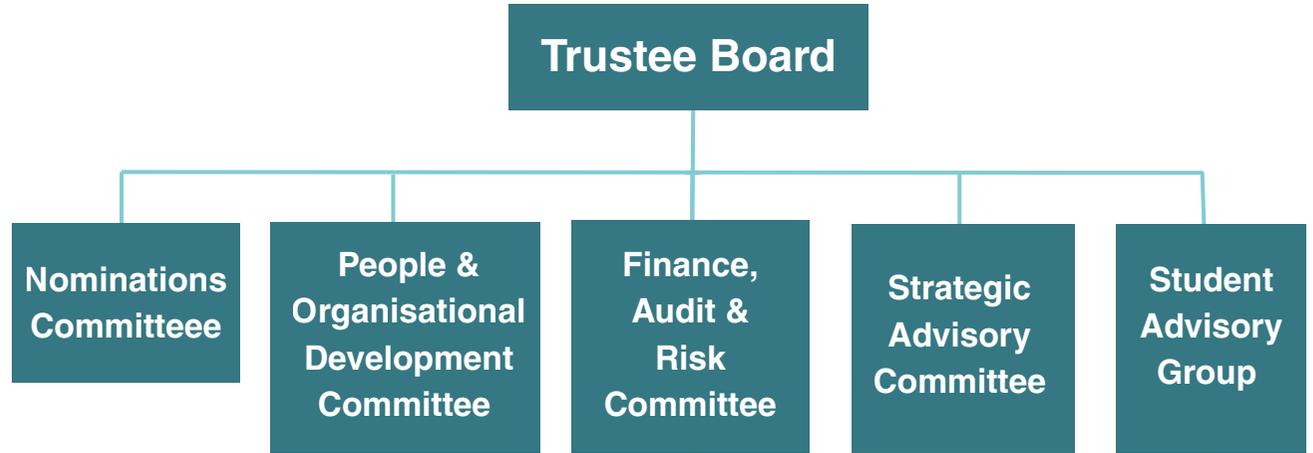
 [Our Student Ambassadors](#)

# Our Governance

**UKCISA's Board of Trustees is supported by five sub-committees.**

Each committee is chaired by a trustee and provides advice and recommendations to the Board on a defined area of responsibility, to enable the Trustee Board to make informed decisions to support the strategic direction and governance of the organisation.

Committees also include independent non-trustee members who bring relevant skills and expertise to support effective decision-making and oversight.



**»» [More about our governance](#)**

## Role description

**The Chair provides inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring effective governance and accountability for UKCISA's mission.**

Working closely with the Chief Executive, the Chair supports the Executive Team, represents the charity externally, and acts as an ambassador for international education.

### Role description

The Chair holds the Board and Executive Team to account for the Charity's mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring that each trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.

The Chair supports the Chief Executive and ensures that the Board functions as a unit and works closely with senior management to achieve agreed objectives.

The Chair will act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with the Chief Executive.

<b>Remuneration</b>	Voluntary (reasonable expenses reimbursed)
<b>Location</b>	UK-based, with travel to meetings and events
<b>Time commitment</b>	Four Board meetings per year (plus preparation), regular meetings with the Chief Executive, and representing UKCISA at external events
<b>Term</b>	Three years, renewable (maximum 10 years in line with the Articles of Association)

# Principal responsibilities

## Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership to the charity and its Board, ensuring that the Charity has maximum impact for its beneficiaries.
- Ensure that trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.
- Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives and provides a clear strategic direction for the charity.
- Ensure that the Board regularly reviews major risks and associated opportunities and is confident that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities and manage and mitigate the risks.
- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability.

## Governance

- Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the charity.

- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees.
- Encourage positive change where appropriate and address and resolve any conflicts within the Board.
- Appraise the performance of the Trustees and the Board on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively.
- Proactively support diversity in UKCISA's governance structures and oversee monitoring of EDI across the Board and Committees.
- Work within any agreed policies adopted by the charity.

## External relations

- Act as an ambassador for the cause and the charity.
- Maintain close relationships with key members of the Government and with key influencers.
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate.

- Represent the charity at external functions, meetings and events.
- Facilitate change and address any potential conflict with external stakeholders.



# Principal responsibilities

## Efficiency and effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the Board of Trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process.
- Ensure that trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the charity and that the Board takes collective ownership.
- Foster, maintain and ensure that constructive relationships exist with and between the trustees.
- Lead by example in creating a culture of respect, openness, and belonging within the Board.
- Work closely with the Chief Executive to give direction to Board policymaking and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees.
- Monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

## Relationship with the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team

- Establish and build a strong, effective and constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive, ensuring s/he is held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives.
- Support the Chief Executive, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- Ensure regular contact with the Chief Executive and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- Liaise with the Chief Executive to maintain an overview of the charity's affairs, providing support as necessary.
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Chief Executive in consultation with other trustees.

- Ensure that the Chief Executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

# Person specification

**In addition to the qualities required of a trustee of the charity, the Chair must also meet the following requirements:**

## Personal qualities

- Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the charity, its strategic objectives and cause.
- Personal gravitas to lead a significant national organisation.
- Exhibit strong interpersonal and relationship-building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role.
- Demonstrate a commitment to EDI in all aspects of UKCISA's governance work, ensuring inclusive and equitable decision-making processes.
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.
- Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the charity.

- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events out of office hours.

## Experience

- Experience of operating at a senior executive/c-suite strategic leadership level within the international education sector in the UK.
- Successful track record of achievement through their career.
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees.
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders.
- Significant experience of chairing meetings and events.

## Knowledge and skills

- Broad knowledge and understanding of the international educational sector and current issues affecting it.

- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together.
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues.
- Good understanding of charity governance issues and organisational governance processes.

In addition to their role as Chair of Trustees, the successful candidate will also act as a trustee of UKCISA under UK charity law.



**[Visit gov.uk for advice and guidance on the responsibilities of becoming a charity trustee in the UK](https://www.gov.uk)**

# Recruitment process and timeline

**The appointment of UKCISA's Chair of Trustees will be overseen by the Board's Nominations Committee. The recruitment process for this position is as follows:**

## 1. Application

If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following by **10 am Monday 12 January 2026**:

- A detailed CV, outlining your relevant achievements, skills and expertise.
- A supporting statement (maximum three sides of A4) highlighting your suitability for the role.

Applications should be sent by email to [chiefexecutive@ukcisa.org.uk](mailto:chiefexecutive@ukcisa.org.uk).

## 2. Informal discussions

- Prospective candidates are welcome to schedule an informal conversation with our Chief Executive to inform their application.
- Shortlisted candidates may also be required to meet informally with the

Chief Executive as part of the appointment process.

## 3. Shortlisting

The Nominations Committee will review applications and recommend a shortlist for interview.

## 4. Interviews

- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an in-person interview in Central London with a panel of UKCISA representatives, currently planned for **Tuesday 10 March 2026**.
- Note: Dates and deadlines may be subject to change and candidates will be informed in advance should this happen.

## 5. Selection and appointment

After interviews, the panel will make their selection and contact the successful candidate to offer them the role. The final appointment will be subject to ratification by the Trustee Board.

The successful candidate will take over the role of Chair after the incumbent Chair steps down on 1 July 2026. The new Chair will oversee the last two Board meetings of 2026, to be scheduled for early September 2026 and mid-November 2026, depending on the Chair's availability. Future meetings will be arranged based on the Board's schedule of business and the availability of the Chair and other trustees.

The new Chair will be invited to attend additional meetings with senior staff, trustees or others as part of the induction process.

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or would like to arrange an informal discussion, please contact [chiefexecutive@ukcisa.org.uk](mailto:chiefexecutive@ukcisa.org.uk).



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