Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies

The Secretary

The role of the Charity Secretary is to support the Chair in ensuring the smooth functioning of the board. This document is a sample job description and person specification.

General responsibilities

- To advise the Trustees that the Society complies with its constitution, charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To advise the Trustees that the Society pursues its objects as defined in its constitution.
- To advise the Trustees that the Society applies its resources exclusively in pursuant of its objects (the charity must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are).
- To contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the Society, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the Society.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the Society.
- To build and maintain membership of the Society.
- To support the Chair and Treasurer in protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds.

In addition to the above duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Additional duties

Either personally or by delegation, the Secretary should:

- receive agenda items from other trustees/staff;
- prepare agendas in consultation with the Chair;
- circulate agendas and supporting papers in good time;
- make arrangements for meetings:
  - booking the room;
  - equipment;
  - refreshments; and
  - facilities for those with special needs;

- check that a quorum is present;
- minute the meetings and circulating the draft minutes to all trustees;
- ensure that the minutes are signed by the Chair once they have been approved;
- check that trustees and staff have carried out action agreed at a previous meeting;
- circulate agendas and minutes of the annual general meeting and any special or extraordinary general meetings; and
- sit on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Secretary person specification

- commitment to the Society;
- willingness to devote the necessary time and effort;
- strategic vision;
- good, independent judgment;
- ability to think creatively;
- willingness to speak their mind;
- understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship;
- ability to work effectively as a member of a team;
- [comply with the Trustee Code of Conduct and] demonstrate selflessness, integrity, objectively, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- a strong organisational ability;
- knowledge or experience of business and committee procedures; and
- minute-taking experience, if this is not being delegated to staff.