

UK Council on Deafness Trustees' Policy

UK Council on Deafness (UKCoD) is a Registered Charity, number 1038448.

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity trustees as the people responsible for controlling the administration and management of the charity: the governing document is the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the charity trustees are the Board of Trustees. UKCoD is a Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England number 2933584. The members of the Board of Trustees are also Directors of the Company.

Trustees are elected by the member organisations. In addition the Board has the power to appoint Members of the Board to ensure a balance of skills and knowledge.

The overriding duty of charity trustees is to advance the purposes of their charity as well as several basic responsibilities. UK Council on Deafness (UKCoD) takes its duties seriously in order to support its member charities and businesses working with deaf and deafblind people to improve the lives and wellbeing of their service users.

The following six legal duties are taken from the Charity Commission's core guidance: [*The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do*](#)

1. Ensure UKCoD is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit

You and your co-trustees must make sure that the charity is carrying out the purposes for which it is set up, and no other purpose. This means you should:

- ensure you understand the charity's purposes as set out in its governing document
- plan what your charity will do, and what you want it to achieve
- be able to explain how all of the charity's activities are intended to further or support its purposes
- understand how the charity benefits the public by carrying out its purposes

Spending charity funds on the wrong purposes is a very serious matter; in some cases trustees may have to reimburse the charity personally.

See [section 4](#) of the Essential Trustee for more information.

2. Comply with UKCoD's governing document and the law

You and your co-trustees must:

- make sure that the charity complies with its governing document
- comply with charity law requirements and other laws that apply to your charity

You should take reasonable steps to find out about legal requirements, for example, by reading relevant guidance or taking appropriate advice when you need to.

See [section 5](#) of the Essential Trustee for more information.

3. Act in UKCoD's best interests

You must:

- do what you and your co-trustees (and no one else) decide will best enable the charity to carry out its purposes
- with your co-trustees, make balanced and adequately informed decisions, thinking about the long term as well as the short term
- avoid putting yourself in a position where your duty to your charity conflicts with your personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body
- not receive any benefit from the charity unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in the charity's interests; this also includes anyone who is financially connected to you, such as a partner, dependent child or business partner

See [section 6](#) of the Essential Trustee for more information.

4. Manage UKCoD's resources responsibly

You must act responsibly, reasonably and honestly. This is sometimes called the duty of prudence. Prudence is about exercising sound judgement. You and your co-trustees must:

- make sure the charity's assets are only used to support or carry out its purposes
- avoid exposing the charity's assets, beneficiaries or reputation to undue risk
- not over-commit the charity
- take special care when investing or borrowing
- comply with any restrictions on spending funds or selling land

You and your co-trustees should put appropriate procedures and safeguards in place and take reasonable steps to ensure that these are followed. Otherwise you risk making the charity vulnerable to fraud or theft, or other kinds of abuse, and being in breach of your duty.

See [section 7](#) of the Essential Trustee for more information.

5. Act with reasonable care and skill

As someone responsible for governing a charity, you:

- must use reasonable care and skill, making use of your skills and experience and taking appropriate advice when necessary
- should give enough time, thought and energy to your role, for example by preparing for, attending and actively participating in all trustees' meetings

See [section 8](#) of the Essential Trustee for more information.

6. Ensure UKCoD is accountable

You and your co-trustees must comply with statutory accounting and reporting requirements. You should also:

- be able to demonstrate that your charity is complying with the law, well run and effective
- ensure appropriate accountability to members

- ensure accountability within the charity, particularly where you delegate responsibility for particular tasks or decisions to staff or volunteers

See [section 9](#) of the Essential Trustee for more information.

Trustees are expected to attend ALL Board meetings, which are usually held in London, or on-line. Regular Board meetings are held between 4 and 6 times a year during normal office hours and to attend any Strategic and the Annual General Meetings and conferences. In addition, UKCoD trustees are expected to accept responsibility to develop and progress a specific area of UKCoD activities for the benefit of the deaf community.

Subject to budget Trustees can claim out of pocket expenses incurred in travelling to and from meetings.

UKCoD Trustees are elected or appointed for a three-year term.

Trustee Person Specification

Each Board member must have:

- A commitment to the mission of UKCoD and the concept of an infrastructure body
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and directorship
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort and ability to commit to a minimum first three-year term. NOTE: trustees resigning without completing the first three-year term will not be eligible to apply to become trustee again in the next 8 years. Trustees resigning during an external investigation will become automatically disqualified to reapply at any time again.
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

See : UKCoD's Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy.

Revised from agreed policy (August 2012)

Agreed:

Date: 23 September 2021