

Scottish Youth Parliament

External Advisors Terms of Reference

Updated November 2023



Background to SYP

The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) is the national democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people. Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) are elected in national elections for a two-year term and represent constituencies and national voluntary organisations. SYP is a rights-based organisation that campaigns for change to make Scotland the best place to grow up.

For more information about the work of SYP please visit our website www.syp.org.uk

SYP has a staff team of ten, led by the SYP Chief Executive with offices in Edinburgh.

Governance Arrangements of SYP

SYP is a youth led organisation governed by a board of trustees made up of 8 MSYPs. The board are elected by the membership at our AGM annually. The board are supported by External Advisors (EXAs) who are there to advise the board on key issues and the SYP Senior Management Team including CEO, Head of Participation and Programmes and Head of Policy and Public Affairs.

The board meet every 10-12 weeks in a mixture of face to face and hybrid meetings along with 3 strategy days per year.

EXAs are volunteers and attend board meetings as non-voting advisors to the board and are defined in SYPs Articles of Association which is our governing document to provide advice, assistance and guidance to the trustees and SMT.

EXAs are recruited to fill specific skills gaps within the SYP board for example Law, Accountancy, Fundraising, Youth Work etc to support the work of the organisation.

Role of an External Advisor

EXAs play an important role in the governance of the organisation in supporting and guiding the board. EXAs are not involved in the day to day running of the organisation. EXAs bring their knowledge and expertise in their relevant disciplines to support the youth led board and support the CEO in strategy.

Your role on the SYP Board as an External Advisor will be managed by the SYP Chief Executive, who will be your main point of contact outwith board meetings. You will also meet regularly with the SYP SMT and trustees to take on board committee work outwith board meetings.

SYP is specifically looking for new External Advisors with expertise in:

- Legal Advisor
- Accountancy, Audit and Risk
- Human Resources and People
- Fundraising and Income Generation
- Government/Political Engagement
- Equalities and Human Rights

Expectations

The expectations of an SYP External Advisor are:

- To offer expertise, support, and advice to trustees in delivering the SYP Strategy.
- To support SYP trustees in the overall governance of the organisation.
- To work with the SYP board on complex issues giving your knowledge and experience to support trustees.
- To attend the SYP AGM.
- To support the SYP board with input on short-term working groups and board committees.
- Be an ambassador for SYP and promote our work and values in your professional networks including supporting SYP with networking opportunities.
- Support the SYP Chief Executive in their role and work with them on supporting the board to deliver on SYPs objectives and KPIs.

Time

- You agree to a 4-year term (two full memberships) with extension by mutual agreement for up to another 2 years.
- You commit to attending board meetings (in person or online) including time for reading papers.
- You agree to an induction day at the SYP Office for new advisors and will support future inductions for the SYP board.
- Regular meeting with the SYP CEO
- Attendance at SYP events when possible e.g. SYP Awards, SYP Sittings, Parliamentary Receptions, etc.

Conduct

- the Scottish Youth Parliament and the SYP Board and External Advisor Code of Conduct sets out the standard of behaviour we expect from our External Advisors.
- SYP is a charity and must be politically neutral in our work, as an external advisor you will not use your role to promote personal or political opinions when representing SYP.

What to expect from SYP

- Regular meetings with the SYP CEO who will be your day-to-day contact.
- Comprehensive induction process to support your understanding of SYP.
- Annual gathering of external advisors, hosted by SYP.
- Development and training on UNCRC and Childrens Rights.
- Opportunities to attend SYP Parliamentary Receptions, Awards, and events across the year to support your understanding of our work.
- Reasonable travel expenses.

For an informal discussion about this role, please contact, Jamie Dunlop, Chief Executive, Scottish Youth Parliament at jamie.d@syp.org.uk