

## What roles do staff play in a students' association?

Student association staff play a multitude of different roles within their organisation, and have many different competing demands upon their time. Often this is not captured in their job descriptions!

### **The Enabler**

Sometimes the role of staff is to help the officer to be better at what they do, rather than doing things for them. Can you think of any examples?

### **The Controller**

Sometimes, aspects of a student association's activity require a level of responsibility which can't always be expected of an officer. One example is financial control.

### **The Advisor**

Officers may need advice on how best to achieve their aims, perhaps also about navigating the structures of the college. Whilst this is in some sense 'political', it means staff need to have at least some understanding of all the officer's work, political or not.

### **The Referee**

As opinionated and outspoken people elected because of their views, it's not surprising that officers often disagree with each other. But that can sometimes lead to a breakdown in the workings of the association as a whole, and sometimes someone has to step in. Guess who that 'someone' might be!

### **The Administrator**

Effective administration is essential to the running of a good students' association. Depending on how many staff are at your association, this may involve everything from setting strategy to managing diaries!

### **The Expert**

Sometimes representation requires specialist knowledge. An education officer might need to know the difference between formative and summative assessment, and a welfare officer might need to know about the impact of college life on mental health. Staff will need to know these things too, or at least how to find out about them.

### **The Disciplinarian**

If an officer isn't pulling their weight, or does something which damages the organisation as a whole, it can sometimes fall to staff to pull them up on it. This is one of the main areas of conflict between officers and staff.

### **The Coach**

Staff are often responsible for organizing the induction of officers, and take some responsibility for the officers' development throughout the year.

## Can you think of any others?