

21/03b Delegated Authority Policy

1. Board responsibility

Under Humanists International's Governing Rules, authority for overseeing the work of the organisation is delegated to a Board who are responsible for:

- Ensuring Humanists International effectively fulfils its charitable objects, general functions and duties;
- Determining the overall strategic direction of the organisation and ensuring the availability of resources;
- Monitoring the performance of the Chief Executive and holding them to account for delivery against plans and budgets;
- Promoting and protecting Humanists International's position, values, integrity, image and reputation;
- Ensuring high standards of governance that command the confidence of Humanists International's stakeholders.

The Humanists International Board is accountable to the Humanists International membership.

2. Authority delegated to the Chief Executive

The role of the Chief Executive and Board members are interdependent:

- The Chief Executive is dependent on the Board for authority to function and manage the organisation.
- The Board is dependent on the Chief Executive to exercise leadership by building a staff and volunteer team and by helping Board members to use their time effectively in governing the organisation.

Operational decisions are delegated to the Chief Executive, who manages the organisation in accordance with the strategic, planning and budgetary parameters, and risk management strategy approved by the Board. The Board remains legally responsible for the organisation, including matters delegated to staff.

3. Escalation to the Board

There are some issues on which the Board seeks early warning or dialogue, or on which the Chief Executive should seek the Board's steer and/or input. An agreed approach to risk assessment and management is used to identify issues/cases that require early flagging and possible escalation to the Board, e.g. where there is a potential for high risk and/or high impact.

The Chief Executive will refer matters to the Board which involve:

- Major, or unbudgeted, investment;
- Significant deviation from agreed strategy/plans or precedent setting;
- Significant degree of controversy/contentiousness or political sensitivity.

Escalation ensures that the Board is made aware of issues of high risk/ high impact, and enables it to be kept informed, explore issues with the Chief Executive and exercise discretion as to whether or not it may need to formally approve decisions/action. This process may also help to identify any policy issues arising from new, difficult or contentious decisions. The extent to which the Chief Executive will need to continue to flag/refer issues to the Board will be reviewed and may evolve over time as governance arrangements develop.

Where significant issues occur which the Chief Executive decides do not warrant escalation to the Board, any decisions taken will be reported on a quarterly basis to Board meetings, or more quickly if required.

4. Table of Delegated Authority

| Subject | Decisions reserved to the Board | Decisions delegated to, or the responsibility of, the Chief Executive |
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| Governance | <p>Governance framework: including the Governing Rules, bylaws, sub-committees and governance policies, governance procedures and systems.</p> <p>The cycle of Board meetings, the composition of Board agendas and approval of minutes of Board meetings.</p> <p>Governance reviews.</p> <p>Ensuring accountability to the membership, through the General Assembly and other mechanisms.</p> | <p>Responsibility for all matters of organisational structure below the level of Chief Executive. Able to delegate authority to other staff, and prepare/maintain delegated authority policy for the organisation.</p> <p>Ensure the Board can function properly by making recommendations for meeting cycles and agendas, preparing draft minutes, seeking appropriate advice and information, and providing necessary support and resources for Board members, to maintain</p> |

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| | | and develop their skills and knowledge. |
| Strategy | <p>Determining the overall strategic direction of Humanists International.</p> <p>Consideration and approval of Strategic and Operational plans.</p> <p>Consideration and approval of other key strategies, including fundraising, communications and membership.</p> | <p>Preparation of Strategic and Operational plans for consideration and approval by the Board, ensuring early consultation with the Board and Humanists International members.</p> <p>Preparation of specific work programmes to inform overall Operational Plan, ensuring early consultation with the Board and Humanists International members around new initiatives (new or changed programmes/projects).</p> <p>Preparation of key strategy documents for consideration and approval by the Board.</p> |
| Budget <i>A financial variation shall be treated as significant if it involves more than 20% of the total annual budget.</i> | <p>Consideration and approval of the Annual Budgets and significant funding applications.</p> <p>Variations to the approved budget where the variation would have a significant impact on the overall approved levels of income and expenditure.</p> | <p>Preparation of Annual Budgets in line with Strategic and Operational Plans, ensuring early consultation with the Board.</p> <p>Variations to the approved budget where the variation would not have a significant impact on the overall approved levels of income and expenditure</p> |
| Annual report and accounts | Approval of Annual Report and Accounts and sign-off by President and Treasurer. | <p>Drawing up Annual Report and Accounts for Board approval, via review and recommendations of relevant Sub-Committees.</p> <p>Submission of annual return to relevant regulatory bodies.</p> |
| Financial Management | <p>Oversight of financial management systems. Approve changes and improvements.</p> <p>Consideration of quarterly Finance Reports.</p> | <p>Maintain a system of robust financial management. Recommend changes and improvements.</p> <p>Sign-off all staff expense claims.</p> <p>Authorise all in-budget expenditure.</p> |

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| | Treasurer prepares quarterly Finance Reports for the Board. | Work with the Treasurer to prepare quarterly Finance Reports for the Board. |
| Performance management | Determination and approval of arrangements for performance management and consideration of regular monitoring reports. | Keep the Board informed of progress in achieving performance objectives and advise on any significant variance from the approved Strategy and Budget. Keep the Board informed of any significant operational issues. |
| Risk management | Approval of Humanists International's Risk Management Strategy and consideration of reports of sub-committees. | Maintain a system of internal control and provide the Board and sub-committees with assurance on Humanists International's ongoing effectiveness. Advise the Board and sub-committees on significant changes and escalation of issues for consideration by the Board. |
| HR issues | Appointment, remuneration and supervision of the Chief Executive. Approval of significant changes to overall HR strategy and policy, including staff terms and conditions of employment. | The structure of the staff team. All appointments and all other HR issues, in line with HR policy approved by the Board. |
| Policies and procedures | Consideration, approval and periodic review of all organisational policies. | Preparation of organisational policies for consideration and approval by the Board and development / implementation of organisational procedures, ensuring compliance with key legislation. |
| Audit | Appointment of external auditors and approval of terms of appointment/scope of work/fees. Consideration of significant issues arising from the work of appointed auditors. | Management of relationships with external auditors. Report to the Board matters of significance arising from the work of appointed auditors. |

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| Communication | <p>Approval of Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Consider matters of major public, political or reputational significance.</p> <p>Represent Humanists International to members, funders and external policy makers.</p> | <p>Preparation of Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Identification of significant issues to be considered by the Board.</p> <p>Represent Humanists International to members, funders and external policy makers.</p> |
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