



**Minutes of the Trustee Board meeting  
held on Wednesday, 30 July 2025, 5.30pm to 7.30pm,  
Hybrid at Goldsmiths Students' Union, Dixon Road, London SE14 6NW,  
and online via Google Meets  
These minutes contain closed items.**

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT:**

Luca Di Mambro-Moor (LDMM)	Sabbatical Officer - SU President and Chair of Trustees
Sofian Kourkzi (SK)	Sabbatical Officer - Education Officer
Shada Abdalqader (SA)	Sabbatical Officer - Welfare & Liberation Officer
Richard Frost (RF)	External (Lay) Trustee
Aniq Ahmed (AA)	External (Lay) Trustee
Kofi Siaw (KS)	External (Lay) Trustee
Abigail Mensah (AM)	External (Lay) Trustee
Preety Kaur (PK)	Student Trustee
Chloe Shaffer (CS)	Student Trustee

**ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Ed Nedjari (EN)	Chief Executive
Victoria Chwa (VC)	Governance and Strategic Projects Coordinator
Oliver Roscoe (OR)	Head of Commercial Operations
Duha Abdulghaffar (DA)	Commercial Operations Manager
Wala Osman (WO)	HR Manager
Danielle Sevenoaks (DS)	Communications Manager

**APOLOGIES RECEIVED:**

Starr Thomas (ST)	Sabbatical Officer - Campaigns & Activities Officer
Rhiannon Suchak (RS)	Head of Memberships

**ABSENT:**

Abigail Atta-Panin	Finance Manager
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## **1.0 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting noting apologies from two attendees Rhiannon Suchak, Danielle Sevenoaks, and one absent Abigail Atta-Panin.

## **2.0 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

2.1 There were no conflicts of interest declared.

## **3.0 Declarations of Any Other Business**

3.1 There were three additional items of business identified for discussion.

## **4.0 Action Tracker**

4.1 Trustees noted the action tracker.

## **5.0 Minutes of the last meeting held 23 April 2025**

5.1 Trustees approved the minutes of the last meeting held 23 April 2025 as a correct record.

## **6.0 Sabbatical Officers Introduction and New External (Lay) Trustee members Introduction**

6.1 New Sabbatical Officers and External Trustees introduced themselves.

## **8.0 Chief Executive Updates (Paper A)**

8.1 The Chief Executive provided their update to the Board.

8.2 The Chief Executive provided an update on the status of the Union's accounts. Trustees noted that Goodman Jones had confirmed a timeline for completion, with the accounts expected to be posted by 11 August. This date reflects the requirement for the auditors to review stock-take prior to sign-off. It was further noted that initial concerns regarding the EPOS data had been addressed, and the figures now appear more favourable than first anticipated. Once the stock take and EPOS data reviews have been completed, Goodman Jones will finalise and upload the accounts during the week commencing 11 August.

8.3 Trustees acknowledged the Chief Executive updates as written in the paper.

## **9.0 University Position and Key Updates for Trustees**

9.1 The Chair provided an update on the current position of the University. It was noted that, as with much of the higher education sector, around 70% of institutions are forecasting a deficit for the forthcoming academic year. Goldsmiths is also forecasting a deficit.

Council, at its June meeting, conditionally accepted the University's budget for the next financial year and instructed the Executive Board to review the budget with a view to presenting a balanced version to a subcommittee meeting scheduled for Friday. The Chair confirmed attendance at this meeting.

Trustees noted that Council had expressed concern that a deficit budget had been presented for the seventh consecutive year and had therefore directed the Executive to identify cost-saving measures. Discussions have been ongoing with colleagues in the UCU branch regarding the University's voluntary severance scheme, which is anticipated to deliver savings of approximately £2 million, primarily from professional services staff. Further updates were expected in the coming weeks.

9.2 It was also noted that the University has not yet confirmed the Union's final grant allocation for the next financial year, necessitating contingency planning by the Union in the interim.

9.3 The Chair informed trustees of new appointments within the University's senior management team. Professor Annabel Kiernan has been appointed as the permanent Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience, succeeding interim Paul Rowlett. The Union has had positive early engagement with Professor Kiernan, particularly regarding discussions on the Freedom of Speech Code of Practice. The University has committed to ongoing collaboration with the Students' Union on reviewing the Code as cases arise, and to a formal review within one year.

The financial position of the University remains uncertain, and it is unclear whether a balanced budget will be achieved. Early indications suggest that further in-year cost-saving measures may be necessary, pending consideration by University Council.

## **10.0 Management Accounts - April, May, June 2025 (Paper B)**

10.1 The Chair and Chief Executive provided an update on the management accounts. It was noted that the figures presented are based on data from several weeks prior and pre-date the departure of the previous Finance Manager.

The Union has engaged Delaweh, Director of Resources at Westminster

Students' Union and a consultant with extensive experience in Students' Union finance, to assist in reviewing and improving the accuracy of the accounts. Delaweh had already been working with the Union prior to the Finance Manager's departure and is continuing to review the financial data alongside Toyin from the finance team.

10.2 It was acknowledged that earlier versions of the management accounts contained duplication errors in the income lines, which meant the figures could not be fully relied upon. These issues are now being resolved, and a more accurate set of accounts reflecting trustworthy figures, whether positive or negative, is expected within the next week.

10.3 Trustees discussed that, while corrected figures may initially appear worse, the revised accounts will provide a clearer and more accurate picture of the Union's financial position.

The Chief Executive recognised that the timeliness of management accounts has been a persistent issue and confirmed a renewed commitment to ensuring that monthly management accounts are produced and shared consistently going forward. Communication with staff regarding the roles of Delaweh and Toyin, and the process for producing and reviewing financial information, will be shared early next week to improve internal transparency.

## **11.0 Commercial Report - End of Year and Summer Project Rationales 2025 (Papers C and C.1)**

11.1 The Chair introduced the next item, the Commercial Report and End-of-Year Summary, noting that this item was presented for note only, as summer projects fall within operational expenditure and therefore do not require trustee approval.

11.2 The Head of Commercial presented the report, summarising performance across commercial outlets for the year.

The Head of Commercial noted that while the year began strongly, with high student engagement in the bar driving sales, trade declined from January onwards. A mid-year reforecast was undertaken in February to reflect reduced performance, with revised targets set for each outlet:

Bar: targets reduced by 1.84%

Café: targets reduced by 0.87%

Shop: targets reduced by 7.78%

Performance improved in March during a period of favourable weather, resulting in the café exceeding targets by 19.38% and the shop by 40.2%, although the bar narrowly missed its revised target by 1.37%.

At the end of June:

Bar sales were £23.5k below target

Café was £9.2k above target

Shop was £2k above target

Overall, commercial sales were down by £12.3k compared to budget.

It was noted that operational costs had been reduced in line with lower sales and that managers had taken on more direct operational duties to mitigate staffing costs. Additional staff sickness costs in the bar amounted to approximately £2.5k in February–March.

### 11.3 Departmental Summaries

**Bar:** Despite reducing sales targets, the bar continued to underperform, largely reflecting wider trends in the nighttime economy. Profit margins improved from 71% to 74%, supported by higher tariffs for external bookings.

**Shop:** The shop recorded a £2,427 surplus at June end. Performance was affected by lower footfall both during and outside of term time, attributed in part to increased remote learning. Cost reductions and incremental price increases improved margins. Recruitment for a new Shop Coordinator role remains on hold pending confirmation of the Union's grant allocation. Work is underway to diversify merchandise and expand the food offer, including introducing East Asian products to better serve the student demographic.

**Café:** Continued to perform strongly, recording a £5,750 surplus at June end. Small-scale capital investments in equipment improved efficiency and margins. The trial of a Student Baker role was successful and will now become a permanent position. The café is now operating year-round, generating income during non-term periods. Planned summer works include upgrades to refrigeration and temperature control systems.

### 11.4 Business Development

The Events, Bookings, Media and Advertising area recorded a £11,731 loss, largely due to changes in promoter pricing structures and the loss of a vintage fair provider. Income from the Native media sales partnership totalled £14,150 year-to-date, and contract renegotiations are ongoing with expectations of increased income next year.

Rebranding of the venue, including a new website and promotional materials, has already generated new regular bookings for the upcoming year.

### 11.5 Summer Projects

Three summer projects are planned:

- Café refrigeration improvements

- CCTV system upgrade
- Development of the bar balcony as a destination space

All projects fall within operational expenditure and do not require trustee approval.

#### 11.6 Staffing and Structure

Adjustments to commercial staffing include increasing the Café Coordinator role to full-time, reinstating the Retail Coordinator role (paused pending financial clarity), and formalising the Student Baker role.

- 11.7 Trustees discussed the approach to budgeting and forecasting for the upcoming year. Oliver explained that sales projections are primarily based on the previous year's actuals, adjusted for known trends. Mid-year reforecasting will occur, with potential for earlier review if trading deviates significantly.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive clarified that while the University is under budgetary pressure, student numbers are expected to remain stable for the coming academic year, with a slight change in the balance between home and international students.

Overall, the commercial year closed with a small loss of £838, but the Union anticipates improvements in the next financial year, supported by continued operational efficiencies, capital investment, and expanded commercial offerings.

#### 12.0 2025/26 KPIs (Paper D)

- 12.1 The Chair introduced the KPI item, noting that this was presented for information only.

- 12.2 It was reported that the Union has transitioned to a live tracking system for departmental KPIs, consolidating all data into a single shared spreadsheet. The document presented to trustees contained a screenshot of this live tracker, representing the combined performance indicators across all departments.

The Chair thanked managers for their work in inputting and maintaining accurate data in the new system.

No questions were raised by trustees regarding the KPIs.

#### 13.0 Strategy Working Group (Paper E)

- 13.1 The Chair introduced the paper on the development of the Union's new long-term strategy, noting that the current three-year strategy is approaching its conclusion. The coming academic year will be used to develop a new strategic plan for the Students' Union.

- 13.2 A proposed timeline and scope for this work were outlined. While the previous strategy covered a three-year period, trustees were invited to consider whether a five-year timeframe might be more appropriate for the next plan.

The paper also proposed a review of the Union's strategic pillars and organisational values, as staff feedback indicated that the current values are not fully reflective of the breadth of the Union's work or of the membership experience, and are perceived as overly internally focused.

- 13.3 A Strategy Working Group will be formed to lead the development process. The proposed composition includes:

- The Chief Executive
- At least one additional Sabbatical Officer
- One Student Trustee
- One External Trustee
- Representatives from the staff team

The group will meet at least twice outside of standard Trustee Board meetings.

- 13.4 The Chair invited expressions of interest from trustees wishing to join the working group. It was noted that sabbatical officer representation could be confirmed separately through internal discussion, but nominations from student and external trustees were encouraged at the meeting.

Richard and Chloe were nominated to participate. Trustees approved the working group proposal.

## **14.0 Organisational Policies for Approval (Paper F)**

- 14.1 The Chair introduced the agenda item on organisational policies, providing a brief overview of the rationale behind the development of two new policies:

### ESG Policy

- Developed to formalise the Union's approach to environmental, social, and governance issues.
- Responds to areas where the Union engages the University on ESG topics, prior operational decisions lacking documentation (e.g., exclusions of certain banking firms from advertising contracts), and references in student democratic motions.
- The policy was circulated to staff and the sabbatical officer team for feedback.

### AI Policy

- Introduced to provide institutional guidance on the use of Artificial Intelligence, particularly in contexts with potential reputational, ethical, or legal risk.

- Staff consultation highlighted areas of concern, especially around generative AI technologies (LLMs, image generation tools).
- Policy restricts use in specific circumstances, for example, in the Advice Team where inaccurate information could be provided to members.
- Emphasises that the policy reflects the Union's position at a specific point in time and will be reviewed regularly.

14.2 Trustees discussed the AI policy, with points raised including:

- Clarification of the policy's scope, particularly differentiating between general AI use and restricted organisational contexts.
- Concerns that some of the policy language in Section 3 (context) was overly broad or lacked factual precision.
- Recognition of the need for careful risk management, particularly regarding student interactions and internal communications.
- Agreement that the policy should remain flexible to accommodate future changes in technology and practice.

The Chief Executive proposed decoupling Section 3 (context) from the main policy to focus on the scope, definitions, and restricted uses, while removing potentially contentious contextual statements.

14.3 The ESG policy was approved by consensus.

The AI policy was approved without Section 3 (context), following a vote:

For: 5

Against: 2

Abstentions: 1

It was noted that the policy will be implemented internally and reviewed regularly to reflect developments in AI and organisational practice.

## **15.0 Closed Meeting, Trustees Only**

15.1 [REDACTED – Closed Session]

## **16.0 2025/26 Trustee Board Meeting Dates**

16.1 Trustees noted the dates for the Trustee Board meeting for the 2025/26 year.

## **17.0 Any Other Business (AOB)**

17.1 Trustee Board Meeting Dates: Proposed dates for the upcoming year were presented and noted. No objections were raised.



Reallocation of Cut the Rent Funds: Trustees approved the use of previously held rent funds to support the needs of Palestinian students relocating to Goldsmiths. Funds will be used to cover essential items upon arrival, as visa and IHS fees are covered by the university.

Auditor Engagement: Arrangements for a meeting with auditors in August were discussed. Trustees will liaise offline with Victoria and Goodman Jones to finalise timing and discuss selection of auditors for the next period.