



**Minutes of the Trustee Board meeting  
held on Monday, 15 December 2025, 5.30pm to 7.30pm,  
Hybrid at Goldsmiths Students' Union, Dixon Road, London SE14 6NW,  
and online via Google Meets**

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT:**

Sofian Kourkzi (SK)	Sabbatical Officer - SU President Chair of Trustee Board
Shada Abdalqader (SA)	Sabbatical Officer - Welfare & Liberation Officer
Starr Thomas (ST)	Sabbatical Officer - Campaigns & Activities Officer
Richard Frost (RF)	External (Lay) Trustee
Aniq Ahmed (AA)	External (Lay) Trustee
Kofi Siaw (KS)	External (Lay) Trustee

**ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Ed Nedjari (EN)	Chief Executive
Victoria Chwa (VC)	Governance and Strategic Projects Coordinator
Rhiannon Suchak (RS)	Head of Memberships
Duha Abdulghaffar (DA)	Commercial Operations Manager
Toyin Olushotoige (TO)	Finance Manager
Wala Osman (WO)	HR Manager
Danielle Sevenoaks (DS)	Communications Manager

**APOLOGIES RECEIVED:**

Abigail Mensah (AM)	External (Lay) Trustee
Preety Kaur (PK)	Student Trustee
Chloe Shaffer (CS)	Student Trustee
Tommy Mitchell (TM)	Student Trustee
Bethelhem Mihret (BM)	Student Trustee



Oliver Roscoe (OR)	Head of Commercial Operations
Mana Misaghi (MM)	Policy Adviser

## **1.0 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. The Chair noted apologies from Tommy Mitchell, Mana Misaghi and Oliver Roscoe. Additionally, two Student Trustees and One Lay Trustee were not in attendance.
- 1.2 It was noted that there were two new Student Trustees due to join following the Autumn Elections, and that introductions would be picked up later as none of them could attend this meeting.

## **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 was one additional item of business identified for discussion.

## **4.0 Action Tracker**

- 4.1 Trustees noted the action tracker.

## **5.0 Chief Executive Updates**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive advised he had only been back for approximately a week and was picking up work from his absence.
- 5.2 NUS investigation: An update was provided on the ongoing NUS investigation being handled externally. It was stated there had been no movement during the period of absence or since return. It was noted that contact had been made with the investigators on the day of the meeting, and that while extenuating circumstances had previously been cited, concern was expressed about the length of time taken.
- 5.3 It was reported that the separate matter relating to students versus the NUS, handled by a different external investigator, had been concluded, with final findings received. Concern was expressed about the contrast in progress between the two investigations.
- 5.4 The Chief Executive reported pressure from another students' union regarding an invoice connected to a protest. It was stated that the invoice is currently on hold, so as to not undermine the position that the investigation is ongoing.

5.5 It was stated that strategy work was underway, with initial activity focused on communications and “data capture” to understand what students, officers, staff and potentially the university want. It was noted that staff were having initial conversations and that this approach differed from the previous strategy developed shortly after Covid, when circumstances were abnormal. It was stated that this work would not sit with one individual alone.

5.6 Advice team recognition: It was reported that the advice team had been nominated for a sector award, reached the finals, and were runner-up to a significantly larger institution. It was stated that this reflected the team’s impact and ability to perform strongly despite limited resources.

## **6.0 Sabbatical Officer Updates**

6.1 It was reported that a significant amount of time had been spent on Council inductions, and that two parallel university workstreams were ongoing: one relating to the financial shortfall, and another relating to TEF 2028.

6.2 An update was provided on liberation and welfare work, including:

- planned liberation group events for the current and next semester;
- ongoing accessibility work on campus;
- activity supporting a Palestinian students’ fundraiser, including a film screening;
- student onboarding support;
- launch of a housing board, with plans to relaunch and publicise it more effectively next semester;
- casework undertaken with sabbatical officers;
- two GARA funding panel meetings held, with applications received but no awards made yet, and further publicity planned;
- meetings with part-time officers to develop provisional plans for next semester.

6.3 A further update was provided on community kitchen activity, noting two successful sessions with strong attendance, increased interest from students in volunteering, and plans to expand the initiative in collaboration with liberation groups. It was also noted that much student casework related to budget pressures and that many issues could be resolved through facilitated communication.

## **7.0 University Position Update**

7.1 Trustees received an update on the university’s ongoing financial shortfall, which remained significant and was largely attributed to student recruitment challenges, particularly international postgraduate students. It was noted that home undergraduate numbers and continuation rates were up.

7.2 It was reported that continuation improvements were attributed, in part, to the

absence of redundancies over the past year.

- 7.3 It was stated that while nothing had been formally announced, significant mapping and data gathering were taking place across academic schools, with parallels drawn to a previous transformation period. Concern was expressed about potential implications.
- 7.4 Trustees were informed that the Interim Vice Chancellor role was time-limited and that a search committee had been formed, with the first meeting planned for January. It was further noted that redistribution of senior responsibilities at the University had placed additional strain on already stretched teams.
- 7.5 An additional update noted that the university was trialling a January intake within business-related schools to attract international students, with low numbers initially, but potential longer-term implications for Students' Union provision if expanded.

## **8.0 Commercial Report**

- 8.1 Trustees received the commercial report and were reminded of the challenging operating environment for student union commercial services and the wider licensed trade.
- 8.2 It was emphasised that commercial activity was viewed primarily as a student service rather than a profit-maximising operation, and that significant price increases were not being pursued in order to avoid exploiting students. Trustees were advised that, despite difficult conditions, Q1 performance showed a small positive position and that alignment between commercial reporting and management accounts had improved.
- 8.3 Discussion highlighted broader economic pressures, including reduced footfall linked to student numbers and wider changes in the local hospitality sector. Trustees discussed the importance of ensuring the commercial offer continued to reflect changing student demographics and preferences, and it was noted that these considerations would be taken forward as part of the wider strategic planning process.

## **9.0 Welcome Week and Student Voice**

- 9.1 A verbal update was provided on Welcome Week, noting improved collaboration with the university following changes in the student success team.
- 9.2 Trustees were informed that key events were well attended and that engagement was more evenly spread across the day compared with previous years. It was noted that the Welcome Fair had taken place on a Friday due to university scheduling constraints, which may have affected engagement, although overall attendance was similar to previous years.

- 9.3 Trustees were also informed that a new Student Voice Coordinator had recently started, bringing prior experience from another students' union. Planning for elections was underway, with increased emphasis on in-person engagement, and longer-term work was planned to strengthen the student voice framework, including reviewing and developing the academic representative scheme.

## **10.0 Management Accounts**

- 10.1 Trustees received the management accounts, which had been prepared and circulated by the finance function with external support. It was noted that, given recent capacity issues and historic problems with financial reporting, the production of first-quarter management accounts represented a significant step forward. Trustees were advised that a substantial amount of work had been undertaken to undo and correct previous accounting issues, including reworking records, reconnecting systems, and resubmitting information, and that reaching this point had required considerable effort.
- 10.2 Trustees were advised that, while the accounts currently showed a surplus against a planned year-end deficit, this position should be treated with caution due to the timing of grant income and ongoing commercial pressures.
- 10.3 Further discussion highlighted several follow-up actions. It was stated that, in the new year, budget holders would need to be met with individually to review their budgets, confirm that expenditure had been coded correctly, understand any timing differences, and support reforecasting activity, which would normally take place in January or February. Trustees were also advised that the current finance team structure was under review, as reliance on highly flexible student staffing had proved unsuitable for core finance functions requiring consistent weekly input. It was noted that options would be explored for more permanent or phased support to ensure sustainability. Trustees were additionally informed of ongoing issues with the organisation's online card payment provider, which had repeatedly suspended services following trustee changes and regulatory updates, and that alternative providers were being explored due to the ongoing disruption.

## **11.0 Approval of General Meeting**

- 11.1 Trustees approved the convening of a General Meeting on 30 January to progress constitutional changes previously approved by the Trustee Board.

**The meeting moved into closed session for AOB.**

- 12.0 Trustees Only AOB item**  
[REDACTED – Closed Session]

**End of Meeting**