

Board of Trustees Minutes

City, University of London Students' Union is a registered charity (charity number 1173858) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 10834450).

16:30 PM, 01 December 2020 | Remote

Members	Initials	Meeting 1 05.10.20	Meeting 2 01.12.2020	Meeting 3	Meeting 4	Meeting 5
Saqlain Riaz (President) (Chair)	SR	✓	✓			
Ruqaiyah Javaid (VP Education)	RJ	✓	✓			
Shaima Dallali (VP Community and Wellbeing)	SD	✓	A			
Nick Ratcliffe (Lay Trustee and Deputy Chair)	NR	✓	✓			
Alan Latham (Lay Trustee)	AL	A	✓			
Clare Searle (Lay Trustee)	CS	✓	✓			
Rumnique Gill (Lay Trustee)	RG	A	✓			
Katherine Higgs (Student Trustee)	KH	✓	N/M			
Ghayathri Sivakumar (Student Trustee)	GS	✓	N/M			

Key: "✓" = Present, "A" = Apologies given, "N/M" = Non-member, "P" = Partial attendance, 'X' = Non-attendance

Included in the circulation	Initials	Reason and Meeting Section
Philip Gilks	PG	Chief Executive (Committee Secretary), All
Margaret O'Donnell	MOD	SU Head of Finance and Operations, All
Hannah Roberts	HR	Deputy Chief Executive, All
Gabriel Chin	GC	Minute Taker, All
Christian James	CJ	Auditor, Knox Cropper, 12. Trustees Annual Report and Audited Accounts
Stephen Anderson	SA	Auditor, Knox Cropper, 12. Trustees Annual Report and Audited Accounts

Formal

1. Welcome and Apologies

The chair called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. Apologies were received from SD.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees 05 October 2020 (Paper: BT2011M)

The Board **approved** the minutes of the meetings held on 05 October 2020.

3.2 Actions Arising

(Paper: BT2012A)

The Board **noted** ongoing actions notes from previous meetings.

4. Decisions taken between meetings

None.

5. Items brought forward by the Chair

None.

6. Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee (Paper: BT2013)

The Board **received** the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings.

7. Minutes of the meetings of the Student Council (Paper: BT2014)

The Board **received** the minutes of the Student Council meetings.

CS requested for précis of the proceedings of Executive Committees and Student Councils to be included with minutes, as she felt further context would be beneficial to trustees not present at said meetings. HR will work with the Representation and Democracy Team to supply this. **(Action)**

Strategy

8. Strategy Update Report (Paper: BT2015)

The Board **noted** the updates received from the four Strategic Operational Plan Priority working groups.

- The conditional award of the Advice Quality Standard Kitemark to the Union was particularly noted in priority 4.
- The Board noted the importance of community-building work and social media development under remote-learning in priorities 1 and 2.
- The Board noted the value of feedback-gathering platforms in priority 3.
- The use of a new visual format was also noted.

9. Strategic Operational Plan Review (Paper: BT2016)

The Board **approved** the new Strategic Operational Plan.

- The Board acknowledged the value of and need for a new operational plan in response to ongoing pandemic conditions.

Executive

10. Chief Executive's Report (Paper: BT2017)

The Board **noted** the Chief Executive's Report.

- The Board commended the valuable contributions of outgoing Advice Manager Luke Frost.
- The Board acknowledged the good sense in standardising staff members' appraisal cycles.
- The Board noted the usefulness of reduced meeting times in remote conditions.
- The Board noted that staff have raised concerns about unevenness of pay between the Union and University for equivalent roles.
- RG asked about staff morale. PG said staff had responded positively in recent meetings but maintaining a positive staff morale amongst the team remains challenging in the current environment.
- CS asked whether there were plans to repeat student check-in activity post-pandemic. HR said plans to continue the activity were underway and the exercise had been shown to be acknowledged as useful sector-wide.
- The Board noted the value in pursuing external unconscious bias training.

- The Board **approved** resources to deliver a gift to each staff member.

Finance, Risk and Audit

11. Management Accounts (Paper: BT2018)

The Board **received** the October management accounts and revised financial forecast. The Board noted that a column was hidden on the document they received, which it was **agreed** would be rectified and redistributed.

- The Board noted that budget holders have been struggling to spend their resources.
- Reforecast is due in December.

12. Trustees Annual Report and Audited Accounts (Paper: BT2019)

The Board **approved** the Annual Report.

Noted that MOD's start date was not correctly recorded in the annual report and should be rectified.

Thanks were given to MOD for her efforts and the substantive improvements her work has been making to Union finance.

Governance and Related

13. By-Election Returning Officer's Report (Paper: BT2020)

The Board **received** the Returning Officer's Report.

14. Health and Safety Policy Review (Paper: BT2021)

The policy was amended to include the Union's status as joint employer of its staff.

Decision

The Board **approved** the amendments made to the Health and Safety Policy.

15. Equality and Diversity Policy Review (Paper: BT2022)

The policy was substantively revised to enable the Union to develop its Equality and Diversity best practice in an active way. The revisions include the convention of a working group of the Board to oversee short- and mid-term Equality and Diversity best practice, yearly review, and to promote and foster good relations between individuals with and without protected characteristics.

Decision

The Board **approved** substantive changes to the Equality and Diversity Policy.

CS commended the changes made to the policy.

Thanks were given to GC for his work here.

16. Amendment to Bye-Law 11: Funding for Catering (Paper: BT2023)

The Board **approved** changes to Bye-Law 11 which allowed for student groups to apply for funding for university catering.

17. To call a referendum on the rejection of the IHRA definition of antisemitism (Paper: BT2024).

It was proposed that a referendum be called in order to invite the student body to vote on the adoption or rejection of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. A number of UK universities have adopted the definition following external pressures across the year 2020. The proposers felt the referendum would address concerns in the student body already voiced at the November Student Members' Meeting, give a strong mandate to the Union to act on the student view, and

meet the goals of Union strategy in providing effective democracy. CS noted that the wording of the referendum question could be more balanced if it sacrificed the clarity of a yes/no answer format and instead took an adopt/reject structure, since such wording would give even weighting to the available options. It was proposed that the clarity of a yes/no answer would be favoured in order to gain better student engagement and produce a higher turnout and stronger mandate. It was also noted that a complaint received criticising the proceedings of the November Student Members' Meeting in view of its handling of a submitted motion also on the subject of the IHRA definition could play no part in the Board's decision at this time due to complaint's still-active, pending investigation, status.

Decision

The Board **approved** the calling of a referendum.

The Board **approved** the proposed wording of the referendum question: 'Should the University reject the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism'.

Other

18. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked GS (not present) for her service as a student trustee, whose term has expired. The Chair praised GS's meaningful contributions in serving the interests of an underrepresented student group and gratefully welcomed any further communications from GS.

19. Trustee-Only Business

The trustees met to discuss business without the presence of non-trustees. No minutes were taken.

The date of the next meeting: 02 February 2021.