

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, 02 February 2021 | 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	✓	✓	A		
Rumnique Gill (Lay Trustee)	RG	A	✓	✓		
Katherine Higgs (Student Trustee)	KH	✓	N/M	N/M		
Ghayathri Sivakumar (Student Trustee)	GS	✓	N/M	N/M		
Ibrahim Hamid	IH	N/M	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

Formal

1. Welcome and Apologies

The chair called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. Apologies were received from CS. IH was welcomed to the board and to his first meeting as student trustee.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees 01 December 2020

(Paper: BT2025M)

The Board **approved** the minutes of the meeting held 1st December 2020.

3.2 Actions Arising

(Paper: BT2026A)

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: BT2027)

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

- The new format of Executive Committee meeting minutes, including summaries was well-received.
- No feedback was given.

Strategy

7. Strategy Update Report (Paper: BT2028)

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

- It was noted that the university agreed to fund a coordinator for Union microplacements with up to 40 placements available per year.
- The advice team were commended for fully meeting AQS kitemark criteria.
- Queries were put about statistics for rep training via Moodle which registered a low completion rate. It was suggested that since these numbers did not reflect synchronous training sessions, they may not be reflective of full training numbers.

Executive

8. Chief Executive's Report (Paper: BT2029)

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

- The Board noted that the University expect a limited campus return for students from March 8th, though the Union is unlikely to see any return to site until academic year 21-2.
- **ACTION:** PG to contact lay trustees by mail without delay, sharing details and expectations of the role for lay trustees to take in leading the Equality and Diversity working group. RG wished for his interest to be noted.
- The Board noted the completion of unconscious bias training.
- The Board noted the Union's plans to take over development of the CityBar service.
- RG queried the recruitment process which had led to the recruitment of two internal candidates to the recently vacant Activities Manager and Advice Manager roles. The Board received assurances that the processes had been fair and transparent for all candidates.

Finance, Risk and Audit

9. Management Accounts (Paper: BT2030)

The Board **received** the December management accounts and revised financial forecast.

The Board **approved** the financial reforecast.

- The Board noted an underspend of £52000 and reserves at 6.5 months' operating costs.
- The Board discussed risks and advantages posed by underspend including effects on block grant funding and support on commercial enterprises such as shop functions.

- AL wished for his interest in sitting on the tendering panel for the Union's auditors to be noted.

10. Staff Salary Review

Information redacted.

(Paper: BT2031)

Governance and Related

11. Referendum on the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism

(Paper: BT2032)

- The Board discussed questions received from the returning officer.
- The Returning Officer agreed to return the referendum.
- The Returning Officer's questions included:
 - Questions around how the Union will maintain its duty of care to students, campaigners, staff, and officers.
 - Whether the University's position on the IHRA definition of antisemitism had been taken into account.
 - Queries about the structure for organising campaigning groups and the timeline for campaigning.
 - Whether the reputational risk posed to the Union had been taken into account.
- It was noted that:
 - The Union's function is to safely facilitate open and fair political debate. It was suggested that the Union would be failing in one of its fundamental purposes if it failed to carry out a referendum on this subject.
 - It was felt that not carrying out this referendum would risk alienating Union core demographics including the politically active left and pro-palestine students among the membership, which are some of the most engaged and active of the student membership.
 - It was also noted that offering a referendum would be the politically neutral option, affording all debating participants a full voice on the issue.
 - Reputational risk to the Union was considered.
 - It was noted that complaints of both islamophobia and antisemitism would have to be anticipated as likely. The Union would not be able to directly intercede on such complaints as they would likely be required to pursue the University's complaints procedure.
 - It was noted that both Jewish and Islamic communities would be openly consulted on decision making around the mode of operation of the referendum.
 - It was noted that the Board's rationale for calling the referendum is to facilitate fair and transparent debate and offer a decision making platform for students.

Decisions

The Board **agreed** to proceed with the referendum as previously triggered by the Board on a revised timeline yet to be determined, by five votes to two.

The Board **agreed** for members SR and NR to meet with PG and HR and determine formal responses to the NUS returning officer's questions, agree timeline, and address protections for staff and student membership.

12. Sabbatical Officer Salary

(Paper: BT2033)

Decision

The Board **agreed** the Sabbatical Officer Salary at grade 3.19 for the coming academic year.

13. Reserves Policy

(Paper: BT2034)

Decision

The Board **approved** changes to the reserves policy.

NR noted the policy's purpose to be reflective of the Union's long-term position, not necessarily its current status under pandemic conditions.

14. Web Provision and Conduct Policy

(Paper: BT2035)

Decision

The Board **approved** changes to the web provision and conduct policy.

15. Appointments Committee

The Board noted updates from the appointments committee.

- IH appointed as student trustee.
- Lay trustee recruitment has been closed with 8 applicants and some late applications expected.
- Noted that a second round of student trustee recruitment is to be completed.

Other

16. Any Other Business

None.

17. 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: 29 March 2021.