



UNIVERSITY OF WEST LONDON  
STUDENTS' UNION

# Trustee Board

Meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 17:00  
UWLSU Conference Room

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## Minutes

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### MEMBERSHIP:

Yash Arora (YA/Chair), Kevin Dickie (KD), Farimah Darbyshire (FD), Josefine Victorino (JV), Adarsh Sangeetha (AS), Trisul Suman (TS)

**SMT:** Tye McMahon (TM), Hamna Azam (HA), Jamal El-Kalawy (JE), Robert Carr (RC)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Patrick Fuller (PF), Monika Sowa (MS)

**EXTERNAL GUESTS:** Nil

**APOLOGIES:** FD

*This is a summarised version of the minutes; the complete version is accessible upon request.*

### 1. Introduction

*(Yash Arora - SU President)*

1.1. The meeting started at 17:04.

- 1.2. YA welcomed everyone.
- 1.3. Apologies were received from KD.

## 2. **Declarations of Interests** (Yash Arora - SU President)

- 2.1. None were declared.

## 3. **Draft Business Plan and Budget [Presentation]** (Presenters: Tye McMahon - Chief Executive Officer; Hamna Azam - Head of Finance & HR)

- 3.1. TM noted the Draft Business Plan and Budget proposal is first presented to the Trustee Board, then revised and presented to the Student Liaison Committee (SLC) before being approved by UWL.
- 3.2. TM noted that following the Trustee Board Strategy Day, the budget has been discussed with PF and Sara Raybould (Senior DVC UWL).
- 3.3. HA presented the financial overview.
- 3.4. **Action:** TM will share the headline numbers and relevant papers with the Trustees for their endorsement, with a review scheduled for July.

## 4. **Minutes and Matters Arising from December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, and March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025** (Yash Arora - SU President)

- 4.1. Actions arising from December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, were completed.
- 4.2. TM has followed up with NUS and is awaiting a response.
- 4.3. Trustees approved the minutes from December 2024 and March 2025.

## 5. **SABB Objectives Update** (Jess Smith – Representation and Advocacy Manager; Presenters: Yash Arora - SU President, Adarsh Sangeetha – VP of Education, Trisul Suman – VP of Activities and Participation)

- 5.1. The Sabb Objectives Update was taken as read.
- 5.2. The Vice-President of Activities' (TS) update is as follows.
- 5.3. Priority 1: **Promoting physical health and wellbeing**
  - 5.3.1. TS has introduced a low-commitment sports programme to promote physical health and wellbeing.
  - 5.3.2. As part of the Re-Freshers programme, TS participated in SU activities to promote physical health and wellbeing, which included various sports, such as rugby and badminton.

- 5.3.3. TS interviewed professional rugby player on Freddie's stage where students learnt about the inspiration behind his success as he promoted the benefits of physical health and sports participation.
- 5.4. Priority 2: **Supporting women's growth/participation in sports**
  - 5.4.1. TS has launched several initiatives in collaboration with UWL women's sports teams and the Women's Network.
  - 5.4.2. Women's only MMA class might be repeated after Easter break due to high interests.
  - 5.4.3. TS has collaborated with the newly formed Women's Network to identify and create more opportunities for increasing women's participation in extra-curricular sports and activities.
  - 5.4.4. UWLSU plans to run strength-based workshops for women.
- 5.5. Priority 3: **Breaking down financial barriers to extracurricular participation**
  - 5.5.1. The Access Fund is now live, providing financial support to students facing economic barriers to participating in sports. In collaboration with the UWL Advice team, the fund ensures equitable opportunities for extracurricular activities despite cost-of-living challenges.
  - 5.5.2. TS is finalising a 'sports closet' initiative, a borrowing platform for sports equipment. The closet aims to remove financial barriers to physical activity, with kit donations received from local clubs like Ealing Trailfinders.
- 5.6. UWLSU Vice-President of Education' (AS) update is as follows.
- 5.7. Priority 1: **Integration of life-skills**
  - 5.7.1. AS is planning a 'Professional Cupboard' initiative to provide students with clothes for interviews and formal events.
  - 5.7.2. AS is planning 'soft skills workshops' to develop students' interpersonal skills.
  - 5.7.3. AS attended UWL Study Support Team's English Social Cafes to connect with students and build their confidence in English.
- 5.8. Priority 2: **Supporting students with a study life balance**
  - 5.8.1. AS identified that students often skip breakfast due to time constraints and financial limitations. In response, UWLSU is now hosting regular 'Community Breakfast' events at all campuses to encourage socialisation and healthy eating habits.
  - 5.8.2. AS is in discussions with LGCHT to offer workshops where students can learn basic food preparation skills.
  - 5.8.3. Additionally, AS is in the initial planning stages of researching ideas for a 'Student Excellence Week' to celebrate student achievements.
- 5.9. Priority 3: **Creating cross cultural learning opportunities**
  - 5.9.1. AS is exploring ideas to expand global learning opportunities for students in a social setting.
  - 5.9.2. AS has also consulted with the Postgraduate Education Officer at Bristol SU, drawing on their experience with similar successful programs. AS plans to introduce an initial social focus group where students can engage in interactive games and discussions.
- 5.10. The UWLSU President's (YA) update is as follows.
- 5.11. Priority 1: **Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention.**

- 5.11.1. YA is addressing challenges that students face getting home and UWLSU now has in place a portable charging unit, which has been utilised during late night events. YA is currently in conversations with the library – for students to have access to the charging unit when the library is open 24h.
- 5.11.2. A successful Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention Campaign was delivered in March, which included a workshop on harassment as well as social media collaboration with UWL.
- 5.12.       **Priority 2: Enriching student experience in London**
  - 5.12.1. YA is a part of the 'Cost of Living' working group with UWL and is contributing to discussions around reducing costs for students.
  - 5.12.2. The Community Cupboard, providing essential support to students facing financial hardship, has seen increased usage over the past few months, and this initiative is being promoted throughout the campus.
  - 5.12.3. Due to the popularity of the clothes swap events, they are now being held regularly.
- 5.13.       **Priority 3: Building student communities**
  - 5.13.1. YA took part in Disability Awareness and Accessibility Month, collaborating with UWL Wellbeing to raise awareness of the sunflower lanyard, and promote their services.
  - 5.13.2. YA lead re-freshers events to support his goal of building community by celebrating different cultures and groups across campus with events such as Debate Night, Cultural Fair and Reading Breakfast.
  - 5.13.3. YA is successfully running a new monthly 'podcast' style project called 'Campus Chats'.

## 6. CEO Update

*(Tye McMahon - Chief Executive Officer)*

- 6.1. The CEO Update was taken as read.
- 6.2. The following are the central issues currently affecting the University of West London (UWL), the SU, and the broader UK higher education (HE) landscape.
- 6.3. **Financial Pressures on UK Universities**
- 6.4. UK universities, including both research-intensive and teaching-focused institutions, are facing significant financial challenges driven by several key factors.
  - 6.4.1. Rising operational costs.
  - 6.4.2. International student fee dependency.
  - 6.4.3. Course closures and restructuring.
  - 6.4.4. Industrial action.
  - 6.4.5. Deficit budgets and redundancies.
- 6.5. **Changes in Student Recruitment Trends**
- 6.6. Over the past few months, UCAS and HESA have published new data on evolving student recruitment trends. Key observations include:
  - 6.6.1. Domestic application declines in some subjects.
  - 6.6.2. Strong competition for international students.
  - 6.6.3. Regional demographic changes.
  - 6.6.4. Apprenticeships and alternative pathways.

## **6.7. Government Policy on Higher Education**

6.8. Recent policy announcements and consultations from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Office for Students (OfS) include:

- 6.8.1. Tuition fee cap consultations.
- 6.8.2. Reforms to student loan repayment terms.
- 6.8.3. Lifelong loan entitlement (LLE) developments.
- 6.8.4. OfS quality assurance priorities.

## **6.9. Cost of Living Impact on Students**

6.10. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis continues to exert financial pressure on students nationwide.

- 6.10.1. Accommodation affordability.
- 6.10.2. Food and utility bills.
- 6.10.3. Welfare Services demand.
- 6.10.4. Policy advocacy.

## **6.11. Changes to the SU staffing team**

6.12. Trustees noted the report.

## **7. Quarterly Report (Including the Risk Register Summary)**

*(Bradley Valva - Finance & Performance Analyst;*

*Presenter: Tye McMahon - Chief Executive Officer)*

7.1. The Quarterly report was taken as read.

7.2. Q2 was characterised by student engagement through course, career and community enhancing activities across all schools, outreach, exam engagement, social media campaigns, societies and sports.

7.3. Quarterly Performance Indicators for the Q2 reporting KPIs were assessed as follows.

- 7.3.1. Overall Engagement
- 7.3.2. Overall Satisfaction and NSS
- 7.3.3. Student Voice
- 7.3.4. Community and Belonging
- 7.3.5. Advise and Outreach
- 7.3.6. Communications
- 7.3.7. Central Services and HR
- 7.3.8. Student Staff
- 7.3.9. Commercial Services KPIs
- 7.3.10. Quality Assurance
- 7.3.11. Finance KPIs
- 7.3.12. Risks and Opportunities

7.4. The following are the key deliverables for next quarter

- 7.4.1. NSS Completion
- 7.4.2. Refreshers Programme
- 7.4.3. DEA's and Outreach
- 7.4.4. Varsity
- 7.4.5. Election

7.5. Trustees noted the report.

## **8. Management Accounts**

*(Hamna Azam - Head of Finance & HR)*

- 8.1. The Management Accounts report was taken as read.
- 8.2. The February report highlights steady financial performance alongside a proactive approach to addressing challenges.
- 8.3. Enhanced engagement trends and successful planning for key projects reinforce the organisation's commitment to prioritising student needs while maintaining financial discipline.
- 8.4. Continued focus on cost controls, strategic planning, and operational efficiency will be critical to achieving the year-end surplus target.
- 8.5. Planning and preparations for Varsity, Sabbatical Elections, and Star Awards have been a key priority to maximise student involvement and participation in the coming months.
- 8.6. Trustees noted the report.

## **9. February Induction and Enrolment Report [Presentation]**

*(Rob Carr – Head of Commercial Operations)*

- 9.1. February and Induction Report were presented by RC in the presentation and video format.
- 9.2. The summary of the February Induction and Enrolment is as follows.
  - 9.2.1. Opening Night – Dynamic Duos sold 137 tickets with 123 attended.
  - 9.2.2. Refreshers Fair had 571 scanned attendees. The event was split across Freddie's and Lawrence Hall with good engagement from external suppliers.
  - 9.2.3. Cultural Fair had 318 attendees. There were 12 external vendors involved.
  - 9.2.4. Cuddle Club sold 40 tickets. This was a smaller event to avoid overwhelming the animals.
  - 9.2.5. Memberships
    - 9.2.5.1. As of year-to-date (YTD), there are 1130 Student Group Members, which is an increase of 5 year-over-year (YoY).
    - 9.2.5.2. The number of Club Members has decreased by 12, bringing the total to 536.
    - 9.2.5.3. Meanwhile, Society Members have increased by 29, totalling 705.
    - 9.2.5.4. The most popular clubs are Men's Football with 86 members, which is a decrease of 26 members. Cheerleading follows with 79 members, down by 16. Men's Basketball has entered the top 3 for the first time, with 62 members.
    - 9.2.5.5. The most popular societies are Nepalese with 112 members, which is a decrease of 13 members. Baking is new to the list with 84 members. Film has also entered the top 3 for the first time, with 67 members.
  - 9.2.6. Trustees noted the report.

## **10. Review and Update to Staff Handbook**

*(Katherine Hyde – HR Manager;  
Presenter: Hamna Azam – Head of Finance and HR)*

- 10.1. Review and Update to Staff Handbook was presented by HA.
- 10.2. As part of this year's review, the UWLSU HR team have updated the staff handbook by making the changes in the following areas:
  - 10.2.1. Introduction – ACAS Codes of Practice.
  - 10.2.2. Recruitment – In relation to right to work checks as well as data storage.
  - 10.2.3. Induction – In relation to mandatory induction training requirements.
  - 10.2.4. Capability – Reference to additional support available.
  - 10.2.5. Sick Leave – Amendment to number of dates in relation to a 'fit note' requirement.
  - 10.2.6. Maternity Pay - To clarify the qualifying period for entitlement to statutory maternity pay (SMP) and to clarify how keeping in touch (KIT) days work.
  - 10.2.7. Shared Parental Leave (SPL) - To clarify that parents who take SPL are also entitled to the equivalent of KIT days.
  - 10.2.8. New Policy: Neonatal Care Leave and Pay - The new legal provision for neonatal care leave and pay which became law on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025.
  - 10.2.9. Pay Bands - Update to current salary bands.
- 10.3. Trustees approved the update to Staff Handbook.

## **11. Privacy Notice Update**

*(Monika Sowa – Governance Officer)*

- 11.1. MS presented the Privacy Notice Update.
- 11.2. Proposed changes are as follows:
  - 11.2.1. Data Processing Activities.
  - 11.2.2. Compliance with Data Privacy Laws.
  - 11.2.3. Contact Details.
  - 11.2.4. Appendix A.
- 11.3. Trustees approved the update to the Privacy Notice.

## **12. Reappointment of Kevin Dickie**

*(Tye McMahon - Chief Executive Officer)*

- 12.1. The paper prepared by TM seeks Trustee Board approval for:
  - 12.1.1. The reappointment of Kevin Dickie for a second four-year term on the UWLSU Trustee Board.
  - 12.1.2. The formalisation of his roles as Deputy Chair of the Board and as Chair of the Remuneration Committee.
- 12.2. KD has served as a Trustee of the UWLSU since February 2021 and throughout this period, he has actively supported the Board with governance expertise and contributed significantly to the strategic direction of the Students' Union.
- 12.3. KD's contributions over the past four years have demonstrated his commitment to strong governance, financial oversight, and strategic guidance.

Board members have consistently commended his clear thinking, collegial approach, and dedication to the SU's mission.

12.4. The Board approved the Reappointment of Kevin Dickie.

**13. AOB:**

13.1. KD asked if the appointment of the alumni trustee could be discussed.

13.2. TM confirmed that there were two candidates, and the new alumni trustee should start in July.

13.3. TM expressed optimism regarding FD's return. However, should FD not return, it may be necessary to recruit a new trustee.

**14. Conclusion:**

14.1. The meeting concluded at 18:15.

14.2. The next meeting's date is 1<sup>st</sup> July.

**15. Summary of Actions arising:**

15.1. Draft Business Plan and Budget: TM will share the headline numbers and relevant papers with the Trustees for their endorsement, with a review to be scheduled for July.