

Draft Minutes Board of Trustees

Monday 20th January 2025, Via Teams



Attendance & Apologies

Members Present		
	Name	Title
OA	Omowaleola Adebayo	President (Chair)
RW	Roddy Williamson	External Trustee (Vice Chair)
IA	Ismail Ali-Nizami	External Trustee
MC	Maeve Cowper	External Trustee
AS	Aaron Sweeney	Student Trustee
TO	Timiebi Oyinpere	VP Education
ID	Immad Din	VP Welfare & Wellbeing
In Attendance		
EM	Emily McIntosh	UWS Director of Student Success
SD	Sinéad Daly	Chief Executive
RS	Romina Scott	Deputy Chief Executive – Governance and Finance
DD	David Devlin	Head of Student Union Support Services
CS	Cristina Scarafile	Finance & Admin Coordinator (Minutes)
Apologies		
MS	Muhammad Saddique	VP Student Development

1 Welcome, opening, apologies & declaration of interests

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apology from (MS).

1.2 Declaration of Interests

Three declarations of interest were noted, from the Chair (President), VPE & VP W&W in relation to item 5.1 on the agenda. After a discussion, the Board agreed these members would not be able to vote on this item.

2 **Appointment of New Trustees**

The Board approved the appointment of the following new Trustees to sit on the University of the West of Scotland Students' Union Board of Trustees and can be added to Companies House.

- Mekaela Price – External Trustee,
- Ian Allan – Student Trustee,
- Veronica Gyampoh – Student Trustee.

One of the Board members requested an introduction summary of each of the new trustees be sent to the existing trustees for information.

Action: CS

3 **Minutes from Last Meeting**

The minutes from the last Board of Trustees Meeting held on the 11th of December 2024 had two corrections noted, a name spelling error and wording changed from 'commenced' to 'ending'. With these amendments, the minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

Action: CS

3.1 **Matters Arising**

- CEO Report - Outcome of an Audit meeting with the university, 1) frequently asked section to be added on our website with information on how to opt out of the Students' Union, 2) regarding our affiliation fees, these are to be included in our public accounts. This is ongoing as this is being taken forward by the Head of Legal Services and Head of SUSS as the process needs to be streamlined – **Ongoing**
- Declaration of Interest – All Student Officers to submit a declaration of interest for item 5.1 on the 11th of December's agenda – **Complete**
- Finance Strategy & Staffing Proposals – Meeting to be arranged for January 2025 and this will be added to the agenda – **Complete**
- Election Panel Proposals - Meeting to be arranged for January 2025 and this will be added to the agenda – **Complete**
- Finance – additional Bank account with Natwest/RBoS group has been declined. The Deputy CEO will get further information on this – **Ongoing**
- Business WhatsApp – numbers cannot be anonymised therefore alternative will be looked at – **Ongoing**

The Matters Arising was approved by the Board.

4. **AGM**

The Board agreed the Students' Union Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday the 13th of March, 3pm to 4.30pm.

5. **Strategic Staffing & Financial Forecast until 2026/27**

5.1 **Finance Strategy & Staffing Proposals**

The CEO advised the Board they had a meeting with the Student Officers prior to this meeting, regarding their concerns to the proposed changes to the future Student Officer posts. The meeting detailed where the proposals originated from, which had been included in a previous meeting held regarding the Democracy Review.

The CEO presented a PowerPoint to the Board of the proposed options and discussed some of the concerns raised by the Student Officer Team. A lengthy and robust conversation commenced among the Board Members and invited attendees with regards to the proposed changes which would improve student engagement. All members agreed with proposal C with the exception of the Student Officers, as they disagreed with the proposals.

A further discussion continued with regards to how the Students' Union will fund this. This discussion included potential risks involved, how these risks could be mitigated, possible alternatives, the potential impact regarding workload on Student Officers as well as the Student Union staff. The voting Board members commented that they were satisfied with the rationale provided by the Senior Leadership regarding the proposal.

Option C was approved by the voting Board Members. The Student Officers were excluded from this vote due to declarations of interest.

5.2 **Adjustments to Executive Officer Team, including new Job Descriptions**

Regarding item 5.2, there was a discussion on the wording 'useful skills' in the job descriptions opposed to 'essential' or 'desirable'. The CEO explained the rationale behind this in that, it was to encourage more students to apply by using softer language that would prevent potential barriers to students. Also, they had noticed this was the language used by other Student Unions. The Board agreed to the wording recommended by the CEO.

A Board member commented, from reading the student comments from meetings held before Christmas, many queried the requirement in having to have had previous engagement with the Students' Union. The Head of Student Union Support Services explained the rationale behind this to the Board. After discussions it was agreed the wording needs to be changed to broaden the requirement to include union engagement at other universities/colleges, sitting on general Committees or other organisational memberships etc. It was agreed that a detailed job role needed to be included to help students fully understand what is expected of them.

Action: DD

Item 5.2 was Approved

- 5.3 Additional Senior Democracy & Insights Coordinator, if approved will require approval for Job Description.

Item 5.3 was Approved

- 5.4 Promotion of the Student Societies Coordinator, if approved will require approval of Job Description.

The CEO explained the rationale behind this proposal, in that item 5.4 is a result of the Boards vote on item 5.1 of the agenda, where option C was agreed. The staff member is currently at the top of their pay grade and this new role takes on more responsibilities. This change of role is determined only by the successful completion of a matching in process, as well as an interview.

Item 5.4 was Approved

6. **Student Support Services**

- 6.1 Election Panel Proposal – Paper 3 for approval

The Head of Student Union Support Services advised the Board there were a lot of questions asked during the forums regarding the candidate approval committee, therefore requested this is delayed to the next election cycle to ensure that students are comfortable with this and understand the committee's expectations and functions.

This followed with a robust discussion between Board members, which included suggestions of holding informal information sessions to give potential candidates a clear indication on what they are embarking on, as well as an information pack which includes frequently asked questions, with some statistics etc. This would promote more opportunity for clarity, discussions and improved understanding.

The Chair encouraged the Student Officer team to contribute to this discussion to which one declined.

Delay with Candidate Approval Committee was Approved

- 6.2 Referendum Wording

The Board engaged in a full and in-depth conversation on the Referendum wording with the final wording to be emailed out to the Board for approval before this goes to Student Council at the end of January.

Action: DD

- 6.3 Democracy Review Update

The CEO asked the Board if they had any questions or comments regarding this paper?

A Board member commented that they found the question and answer section at the end of the paper very helpful and was a nice summary of the discussions that were going on.

7. **Bye Law & Policy Reviews – Paper 5**

The following Bye Laws that require no changes at present:

- Bye-Law 2: Student Council
- Bye-Law 7: Complaints Procedure
- Bye-Law 8: Code of Discipline
- Bye-Law 9: Licensing Scotland Act 2007
- Code of Practice

Approved with no changes

To review the following Bye-Laws as part of the democracy review:

- Bye-Law 1: Board of Trustees
- Bye-Law 3: Executive Board
- Bye-Law 4: Elections
- Bye-Law 5: Societies Council

It was agreed that these will be updated as we go over the Democracy Review

Wording/spelling to be checked throughout i.e. SAUWS removed and replaced.

Action: DD

8. **Chief Executive Officer**

It was agreed this report was to be taken as read. There were no approvals required from the Board on this paper.

Regarding item ii. Major Incident Policy, this will be taken to the next Audit & Risk Committee meeting which will be held on the 8th of May for approval.

Action: SD/CS