



**STUDENTS' UNION**  
UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

# University for the Creative Arts

## Students' Union

### **Minutes of Trustee Board Meeting**

**Date:** 4 September 2025

**Time:** 5:00pm–7:00pm

**Venue:** Microsoft Teams

**Chair:** President Farnham (Phoebe Daniels)

### **Attendance**

Chair – President Farnham (Phoebe Daniels)

President Canterbury (Joshua Singh-Hill)

President Epsom (Shayaike Hassan)

Student Trustee (CS – Castiel “Bucky” Sanderson)

Deputy Chair – External Trustee (Martin Dodd)

External Trustee (Emily Linnemann)

External Trustee (Leena Patel)

External Trustee (Alex Causton)

Chief Executive Officer (CEO – Kyley Winfield) – In attendance

Director of Commercial & Operations (DCO – Jackie Crossman) – In attendance

### **Absent**

Student Trustee (Vidisha Baird)

## Preliminary Matters

### 1. Opening Remarks

Chair opened the meeting at 5:00pm and welcomed attendees.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

No apologies received. Student Trustee (VB) noted as absent.

### 3. Conflicts of Interest

CEO declared a connection: partner works at UAL (unrelated role, no crossover).

Chair noted officers' dual roles as trustees and sabbaticals; confirmed distinction recognised.

### 4. Minutes from Previous Meeting (20 June 2025)

Approved.

### 5. Actions from Previous Meeting

- PDF board pack introduced; technical issues noted, will improve for next meeting.
- External trustees completed declarations.
- Revised Trustee Code of Conduct prepared; to be taken to People & HR Subcommittee for approval before Board ratification.
- Bye-laws conflicts remain unresolved; CEO to prioritise with SEM.
- Co-option process to be consulted with students via Union Council.
- Maidstone representation: CEO to attend welcome and visit campus monthly during 2025–26.

## Matters for Discussion

### 6. CEO Update (CEO)

Report received and noted.

#### Highlights:

- Strategic Direction 2024–27: Annual Operating Plan aligned to priorities and enablers; three-year phasing mapped.
- University relationship strengthening; NSS focus group proposed.
- HR platform BrightHR rolled out; digital training improving processes.

- CEO engaged in sector networks (Southern SUs, mentoring with Aberystwyth SU).
- Risks noted: dependency on UCA funding, small team capacity, UCA restructuring.

**Discussion:**

Trustees advised exploring external coaching outside the SU sector, for example Blue Edge.

**6.2 CEO Objectives 2025–26**

Approved.

**6.3 Annual Operating Plan 2025–26**

Approved.

Trustees requested clearer definition of leadership roles.

Agreed mid-year reanalysis to refine baselines where data is incomplete.

**6.4 Democracy & Governance Reviews (Tender)**

Received and noted.

**Discussion points:**

- Budget (£5k) considered tight; trustees supported flexibility to increase to £7k from surplus if required.
- Confirmed funding from unrestricted reserves (c.£20k surplus achieved in 2024–25).
- Agreed reserves policy update to next Finance Subcommittee, alongside potential creation of an investment fund for strategic projects.
- Language: recommended framing as Request for Proposals (RFP) rather than formal tender.
- Trustees emphasised proposals should be cost-neutral or deliver savings; avoid recommending unaffordable expansions.
- Inviting proposals for optional “add-ons” (e.g. staff/student training, six-month health checks).
- Strengthen references to liberation, inclusivity, and accessibility in scope.
- Potential providers identified: Counterculture, Nick Smith, Jackie Garner, peer SUs.

**Action:** CEO to circulate final RFP to trustees for network sharing.

**7. Finance Update, Management Accounts and Risk (DCO)**

Reports received and noted.

### **Highlights:**

- 2024–25 ended with surplus £21,217 (vs £14,162 budget).
- Overspends on consultants offset by savings in other areas.
- Commercial income shortfall mitigated by tighter cost control; strong summer ball performance.
- Positive VAT review may lead to retrospective savings.

### **Discussion:**

- Trustees congratulated staff on surplus despite cost pressures.
- Suggestion to explore additional NI refunds (External Trustee (LP) to follow up).
- Agreed importance of monitoring sabbatical campaign expenditure to ensure effective student engagement.
- Risk Register noted (average score improved from 16.1 to 9.87).
- Legal Compliance tracker noted; fuller GDPR/safeguarding updates due at next Board.

### **Decisions:**

- June & July 2025 management accounts approved.

### **Comfort Break**

## **8. Policies and Procedures (DCO)**

Updates and tracker received and noted.

### **Discussion:**

- Trustees endorsed approach of aligning with BrightHR templates and separating policies for clarity.
- Approval process: policies to be circulated individually for correspondence approval between meetings.
- Key compliance policies to be prioritised for October HR Subcommittee.
- Agreed importance of staff engagement with policies: suggested workshops/briefings to keep policies “alive” and understood.
- No Platform policy: requires review in light of current Freedom of Speech legislation.

- AI policy: UCA has no current policy; trustees agreed SU should develop a position through Union Council consultation, with an all-staff meeting to explore internal use and risks (e.g. data input).
- Student Trustee (CS) stressed SU stance should reflect student concerns if UCA policy diverges.

#### **Actions:**

- DCO to circulate priority policies for correspondence approval.
- HR Subcommittee to review compliance-critical policies in October.
- DCO to arrange staff session on AI.
- DCO to review No Platform policy.

## **Matters for Information**

### **9. Officer Updates**

Received and noted.

- **President Epsom:** Focus on employability, planning internship/job fair and workshops, and developing social space in refectory. Requested trustee support with business contacts. Also developing a 'Squid Games' style engagement activity.  
**Action:** CEO to connect President Epsom with Aber SU to explore the success of Aber Challenge and learn from it for UCASU.
- **President Canterbury:** Campaign to revitalise social space (renamed The Nook); phased redesign with student involvement; new multi-purpose office move noted. External Trustee (AC) offered to provide brand strategy support and CCCU connections.
- **President Farnham:** Campaign centred on cost of living. Developing Farnham food bank, fundraising, and student support guide. Working with UCA contacts and local councils on funding. Trustees advised exploring university hardship funds.

Trustees praised officers for progress made over the summer.

## Matters for Discussion (continued)

### 10. Any Other Business (AOB)

None raised.

### 11. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 4 December 2025, 5–7pm (via Teams).

## Actions Table

Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline/Notes
5. Actions from Previous Meeting	Prioritise resolving bye-laws conflicts with SEM	CEO	November 30 <sup>th</sup> 2025
5. Actions from Previous Meeting	Consult students on co-option process via Union Council	CEO	November 30 <sup>th</sup> 2025
5. Actions from Previous Meeting	Attend Maidstone welcome and visit campus monthly during 2025–26	CEO	September 2025- June 2026
6.4 Democracy & Governance Reviews	Circulate final RFP to trustees for network sharing	CEO	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
7. Finance Update	Update reserves policy for next Finance Subcommittee	DCO/Finance Subcommittee	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
8. Policies and Procedures	Circulate priority policies for correspondence approval	DCO	December 14 <sup>th</sup> 2025
8. Policies and Procedures	Review compliance-critical policies	HR Subcommittee	October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2025
8. Policies and Procedures	Arrange staff session on AI	DCO	January 2026
8. Policies and Procedures	Review No Platform policy	DCO	November 30 <sup>th</sup> 2025

9. Officer Updates (Epsom)	Connect President Epsom with Aber SU to explore success of Aber Challenge	CEO	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
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Minutes prepared by CEO