



# STUDENTS' UNION

## UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

**Title: Students' Union Trustee Report for 2022/23**

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**Purpose: To present the Students' Union's Trustee Report to our AGM**

### Introduction

The 2022-23 financial year has been a period of significant change for UCASU. Through leadership transitions and financial challenges, the Union has stuck to its mission to support and enhance the student experience at the University for the Creative Arts. This report outlines the work undertaken and its impacts, providing an overview of the Union's ongoing commitment to serving its student members.

### Board of Trustees

#### Sabbatical Officers

Sol Gjøines	Resigned June 2023
Fosyal Mobarock	Resigned June 2023
Cassie de St Croix	Appointed July 2023
Rajon Voumick	Appointed July 2023

#### Student Trustees

Charlie Skinner	Appointed September 2022
Cassie de St Croix 2023	Appointed September 2022 and became an officer trustee July 2023
Mariana Goncavies Silva	Appointed March 2023
Frankie Larsen	Appointed March 2023
Aly Pitre	Appointed March 2023

#### External Trustees

Michael Wigg	Appointed March 2023
Martin Dodd	Appointed March 2023
Riley Clowes	Appointed March 2023

### Key Management Personnel

Throughout 2022-2023, the senior management team consisted of the Chief Executive and then Acting Chief Executive. Andy Squire was Chief Executive until August 2022, with Kara Nutley stepping in as Acting Chief Executive afterwards. The Chief Executive works closely with elected Executive Officers to manage the day-to-day operations of the Union.

## Structure, Governance and Management

UCASU operates under the Education Act 1994 and follows internal rules approved by the University for the Creative Arts. The Union represents, supports, and advocates for students, providing social and recreational activities, and acting as the recognised channel of communication between students and the University.

Full-Time Sabbatical Officers are elected annually with the 2023 elections seeing the appointment of new officer trustees. The board also includes Student Trustees and External Trustees, who provide their expertise to support the Union's effective governance.

## Organisational Management

The Trustees are responsible for setting the Union's overall policy. The Board of Trustees meets regularly to review the Union's performance, receive updates from Officers and management, and make key policy decisions. UCASU employs 10 full-time staff members, excluding Sabbatical Officers, to ensure the smooth running of operations.

## Relationship with University for the Creative Arts

UCASU's relationship with the University is governed by a framework that includes an annual block grant and access to campus facilities, utilities, and services. This support is integral to the Union's operations, allowing us to focus on enhancing the student experience. The Trustees anticipate this mutually beneficial relationship will continue, ensuring the Union's long-term financial viability.

## Principal Risks and Uncertainties

UCASU recognises several key risks that could impact its operations. To mitigate these risks, we acknowledge the need for continuous improvement to our risk management strategies and enhancing these systems going forward.

1. **Over-reliance on University Block Grant**
2. **Not Meeting Income Targets**
3. **Challenges in Recruiting and Retaining High-Calibre Staff**
4. **Unequal Provision of SU Activities Across Campuses**

The board will also continue enhancing risk management through strategic planning and a dynamic risk register to proactively address challenges.

## Aims, Objectives and Activities

UCASU's mission, vision, and values, as set out in our strategic plan from July 2021, guide all of our work:

- **Mission:** To create extraordinary experiences, amplify the student voice, and foster a sense of belonging

- **Vision:** To be the heart of the student experience at UCA, helping our members make a positive impact on the world.
- **Values:** Shaped by Students, Empathy, Sustainability, Radical, and Vibrant

## Strategic Themes and Objectives

1. **Change the World:** We aim to inspire students to make a positive impact on the creative industries and the wider world. We are committed to sustainability, safety, and inclusivity on campus.
2. **Students Owning Their Experience:** We will amplify the student voice, ensure fair representation in university decision-making, and provide strong support throughout their academic journey.
3. **Developing Our Members:** UCASU offers a range of opportunities for personal and professional development, such as creative events, community engagement, and employment opportunities, empowering students to take leadership roles.
4. **Relevant and Trusted:** We strive to be relevant and trusted by our members, continually researching their needs and improving our services, events and communications.
5. **Community and Wellbeing:** Building a strong sense of community and supporting student wellbeing is central to UCASU's activities. We are focused on fostering identity communities and supporting all students, including those impacted by the closure of the Rochester campus.

## Key Activities and Impacts

- **Markets and Commercial Activities:** Our spring and winter markets saw tremendous success with increased participation, each event hosting over 100 tables.
- **Clubs and Societies:** UCASU continued to support over 50 clubs and societies, with leadership from 130 committee members.
- **Students' Union Elections:** A total of 605 votes were cast in this year's Students' Union elections, demonstrating strong student engagement.
- **Evening Events and Staff Development:** Our evening commercial events, such as Halloween, Summer Ball and events throughout Freshers' Week, were highly successful, with high levels of student attendance. Training modules, including 12 bar-related sessions and 3 health and safety modules, have equipped our student employees with essential skills that enhance their employability.
- **Diversity in Entertainment:** We introduced a broader range of DJs this year to cater to our diverse student body. This initiative has made our events more inclusive, ensuring that all students feel represented and valued within the Union's social activities.
- **Student-Led Fundraising:** The glasshouse was the platform for enhanced student-led fundraising activities, allowing students to showcase their talents and engage in event management and fundraising.
- **Organisational Health Assessment:** At the end of the financial year, we conducted an Organisation Health Assessment, which highlighted areas for improvement. This ongoing self-reflection is crucial for ensuring that the Union remains responsive and aligned with the evolving needs of its members.

## Contribution of Volunteers

Over 5% of our student population actively volunteer across clubs, societies and various campaigns. We are deeply appreciative of their dedication, which allows the Union to effectively deliver a range of services and activities that enhance the student experience.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the 2022-23 year has been one of both challenge and growth. UCASU remains committed to its mission of improving student life and adapting to the changing needs of its members. With strong leadership, strategic financial planning, and continued student engagement, we look forward to a more resilient and impactful future.

Charlie Skinner  
SU President Farnham