



Date: Thursday 9 February 2023  
 Time: 18:00  
 Venue: South Wing G12 Council Room

## Board of Trustees Minutes

Chair: Deniz Akinci, Union Affairs Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Beth Beasant, External Trustee (UCL Staff)	✓		
Clare Bracey, External Trustee (Non-UCL), Vice-Chair (External)	✓		
Deniz Akinci, Union Affairs Officer (Sabbatical), Chair	✓		
Dimitris Dimitropoulos, Student Trustee (DD)	✓		
Hamza Ahmed, Education Officer (Sabbatical)		✓	
Maheem Imran, Student Trustee (MI)	✓		
Mary McHarg, Activities & Engagement Officer (Sabbatical)		✓	
Petra Barran, External Trustee (UCL Alumni)		✓	
Rachel Lim, Student Trustee (RL)	✓		
Seyi Osi, Equity & Inclusion Officer (Sabbatical), Vice-Chair		✓	
Umair Mehmood, Welfare & International Officer	✓		
Xin Huang, Student Trustee (XH)	✓		

In Attendance:
Carl Salton-Brooks, Director of Student Experience
Dorota Dominiczak, Director of Finance
James Nediyaathu, Head of Commercial Services (For item 10)
John Dubber, Chief Executive
Rebecca McLoughlin, Governance & Administration Coordinator, Minutes
Simon To, Director of Policy, Governance & Advocacy, Secretary

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed all those present.

**RECEIVED**

### 2. Declaration of Interest

The Chair asked if there were any declarations of interest. There were none.

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### 3. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting on 8 December 2022

The Board approved the minutes from the meeting on 8 December 2022 as a true and accurate record.

**APPROVED**

### 4. Actions and matters arising from the meeting on 8 December 2022

The Chair noted that the following action was still outstanding:

*The Director of Student Experience to add the trustees to the mailing list for the all-student newsletter.*

**RECEIVED****5. Sabbatical Officers' Report**

The Chair summarised the Sabbatical Officers' Reports and provided some highlights. The Welfare & Community Officer summarised their report and highlighted that the Hardship Fund had received lots of applications.

**RECEIVED****6. Chief Executive's Report**

The Chief Executive summarised highlights from their report and included an update on the following:

- UCL has published its new Strategy and a new Student Life Strategy with the Union as the delivery partner and additional funding made available.
- Large increase in applications to our student hardship funds.
- The Bloomsbury Shop has opened and trading is going well.
- Recently submitted our Student Submission to UCL's assessment as part of the national Teaching Excellence Framework.
- We recently marked This Girl Can week with a busy programme of events and sports taster sessions.
- Nominations have opened for the Leadership Race.
- Had a range of international visits from other Universities such as the University of Sydney and University of Kenya.

The Board asked about the uptake of applications to the Hardship Fund. The Chief Executive confirmed that £57k has been distributed so far. The Union has recruited two new advisors to assist with applications. They added that the Union does need to look into ways to generate income for the fund. The Director of Policy, Governance & Advocacy stated that the emergency fund has received the most applications out of all the funds available and noted the importance of being able to support students in this way.

**RECEIVED****7. Management Accounts (to December 2022)**

The Director of Finance gave an overview of the Management Accounts up to December 2022. They noted that at the end of December 2022, and 5 months into the financial year, the Union's cumulative financial position remained strong due to good commercial performance and tight control over expenditure. The December results show a net deficit of £33k versus a budgeted deficit of £26k, and a cumulative surplus achieved in the first five months of £208k. The Director of Finance added that the Bloomsbury Shop opened on 16 January and this delay meant a loss of sales and contribution as we have not traded during the busiest trading period (September to December). The UCL East Shop opened in mid-November, but its trading was impacted by low footfall in the area. However, the UCL subsidy will help to cover this year's deficit.

The Director of Finance confirmed that the Management Accounts had been recommended to the Board by the Finance Committee.

The Board received the Management Accounts (to December 2022).

**RECEIVED****8. Forecast 1**

The Director of Finance confirmed that the Finance Committee had recommended Forecast 1 to the Board for approval. They then outlined the key assumptions in preparing the forecast figures and went on to highlight the main points in the forecast. They stated that the overall changes in the commercial and non-commercial contributions are not significant, and Forecast 1, like the 2022/23 Budget, projects a breakeven financial position for the Union (or £1k surplus). They went through each department and outlined the variance between forecast 1 and the budget. The Director of Finance explained the reason for the overspend in the Facilities department and confirmed that the new Head of Health & Safety and Facilities had requested extra funding to cover the increase in cleaning and pest control costs. They also noted that the savings in the Policy, Governance & Insight department was due to staff savings as there was no longer a Postgraduate Officer in post and there had been a delay in recruitment to some roles.

The Director of Finance went through the Forecast 1 turnover targets. They highlighted that the Hanger Shop had overachieved, so their budget has been increased. At the start of the year the budget for Phineas Bar had not been accurate, but they confirmed that this has now been revised, so it is more realistic. They added that the budget for both convenience stores has also been reduced.

The Board asked if the projects for regulatory compliance were governance related issues. The Director of Operations replied that they were not. They were due to the Facilities department having to put some measures in place to ensure that we were compliant from a health and safety perspective.

The Board resolved to approve Forecast 1.

**RESOLVED****9. Presentation: Commercial Developments**

The Head of Commercial Services stated that there has been positive feedback from students regarding the opening of the two new convenience stores. They noted that there is the potential for significant future commercial growth, taking on new outlets and adapting current outlets.

The Head of Commercial Services went on to outline future growth possibilities and various opportunities which were currently being pursued.

The Head of Commercial Services confirmed that a Commercial Development Manager is being recruited to help manage projects and proactively seek out further commercial opportunities. They added that a full outline of The Hanger Shop expansion will be brought to the next Board meeting in March.

**Action:** The Head of Commercial Services to bring a full outline of The Hanger Shop expansion to the next Board meeting.

The Board asked if the Union would be able to expand in all the areas mentioned or was there a priority list of the projects. The Head of Commercial Services responded that the Marshgate Café and Astor College Café were the priorities at this stage.

The Board asked if the Union had thought about what areas they intended to invest in with the increased revenue from these new commercial outlets. The Chief Executive responded that this has not yet been looked at in detail, but there are many areas across the Union that would benefit from an increase in investment.

The Board asked what sort of customers the Union hoped to attract with the Astor College Café. The Head of Commercial Services replied that the café is in a good spot on the main street and their target customers would be passing trade and students living at Astor College. The Chief Executive added that there are also three other student accommodations halls close by and a sports hall just behind the café with potential future Union usage.

The Board asked if the Print Room Café renovations would decrease the number of seating in the Café as currently there can be difficulty in getting a seat in there. The Head of Commercial Services responded that the renovations are looking at just rearranging where things are located in the Café such as the chillers. The Chief Executive added that there is also possible potential in time to open up more space to enable additional seating.

The Chair commented that the Marshgate Café would create more Union spaces at UCL East as currently this is very limited. The Head of Commercial Services confirmed that they would be bringing back further information to the next Board meeting regarding the Marshgate Café and The Hanger Shop expansion.

**ACTION:** The Head of Commercial Services to bring further information regarding the Marshgate Café and The Hanger Shop expansion.

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## 10. Student Life Strategy

The Director of Student Experience confirmed that UCL Council has approved the Student Life Strategy. They stated that the Strategy is designed to enable the largest ever expansion of co- and extra-curricular experience at UCL and was developed in partnership with colleagues across the institution and has the full backing of the University Management Team. The Strategy brings with it a multimillion-pound investment in the Students' Union phased over a five-year period.

The Director of Student Experience gave a brief overview of the Student Life Strategy and went through the priority projects. They highlighted the six key areas that the strategy will focus on:

- Sport and physical activity.
- Performing and creative arts.

- Community volunteering.
- Intercultural engagement.
- Departmental societies.
- Vibrant student life in the heart of London.

The Director of Student Experience noted the need to invest in enablers to ensure the Student Life Strategy happens. The Welfare & Community Officer noted that the need for more cultural events. The Director of Student Experience responded that this is one of the objectives in the strategy but the funding starts in August this year so any possible events would have to take place after the funding has been received.

The Board asked what the biggest risks and challenges were in delivering the Student Life Strategy. The Director of Student Experience replied that over the next few months they will be in consultation with teams to build a 5-year plan with key milestones. They added that some of the larger projects will need us to build on our current infrastructure to ensure we can deliver the projects. The Board asked if this may involve changes to our structure. The Chief Executive replied that we will need to look at how we deliver our current services and where we need to grow to ensure delivery of these projects.

The Board discussed the need to ensure that going forward we make UCL aware of any projects that are working well to show them a clear vision of what we are achieving.

The Chair asked how the Union will distribute funding fairly to all the sports teams. The Director of Student Experience replied that currently the Union have a very robust process to allocate clubs & societies funding.

The Director of Student Experience asked the Board to contact them or the Chief Executive if they had any further questions.

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**11. Report from the meeting of Finance Committee on 26 January 2023**

**RECEIVED**

**12. Any Other Business**

The Director of Policy, Governance & Advocacy reminded members that there is a Board Briefing taking place on Wednesday 8 March from 4pm-6pm, followed by dinner for all members.

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<b>Minutes approved as a true and accurate record</b>	
Chair:	Deniz Akinci
Signature:	
Date:	23/03/23