

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**Student Leadership Team (SLT)**

12 – 14 July 2024

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The SLT is asked to:-

- i) **note** this regular report from the Board of Trustees

1. There is a requirement under the Articles of Association for the Board of Trustees (BoT) to provide a report to the Student Leadership Team (SLT) at each meeting. This report is intended to provide the following:
 - a) a formal opportunity for SLT members to raise any questions arising from the minutes or other matters relating to the role of the Trustees, and
 - b) the opportunity for Trustees to raise any specific items with the SLT or report on progression of any non-routine matters.
2. The Board met on the 30th April 2024 online via Microsoft Teams. The meeting minutes are available on the website [here](#).
3. Three special resolutions for changes to the Association's Articles of Association were brought to the Trustees for approval. These were:
 - Resolution A: Approve an official change to the name of our elected student team from Central Executive Committee to Student Leadership Team
 - Resolution B: Amend Article 26 to introduce an additional 3-5 EDI Representative positions on the SLT to provide better representation for the active groups of the Association
 - Resolution C: Implement a change to Article 20 to allow Student Leadership Team elections and Student Trustee elections to run in alternate years

Trustees approved these three special resolutions.

4. There were an additional two resolutions for policy changes to be presented at Conference, which were submitted by students on the website. These were to; approve a motion to support the Students Association to campaign for the better support diagnosis of neurodivergent conditions such as ADHD, where students are seeking a diagnosis to support their studies. The second resolution was to

approve a motion for representatives of the OU Students Association to campaign for the University not to reduce the existing curriculum, even when making financial cuts, but rather to find ways of preserving and, wherever possible extending, the curriculum. Trustees approved these motions.

5. The final special resolution for the Trustees' consideration was a potential name change from Association to Union. Trustees voted in favour of Conference 2024 voting on the principle of changing the brand of the organisation to be clearly identifiable as a Student Union. Trustees did request for the wording to be changed to ensure neutrality and agreed the wording as: Students are asked to vote on a motion to rebrand the OU Students Association to be identifiable as a Student Union, known at 'OpenSU'.
6. Due to the current vacancy of the Associate Director: Finance and Compliance, the Chief Executive presented the finance report. She reported that the Association remains in a healthy position with a surplus predicted against the revised budget of £159,742. The OU Students Shop was currently forecast to exceed £80,000 which exceeds HMRC's small trading tax exemption limit, so temporarily closing the shop prematurely was discussed as an option to avoiding corporation tax liabilities. Trustees approved the proposed changes to the OU Students Shop Working Group's Terms of Reference.
7. With regard to the name change from Association to Union, the BoT recognised that implementing this change would require considerable effort and resources. Therefore, they approved the resolution in principle but indicated that more work will required such as calculating the financial implications.
8. The Associate Director of Projects and Services presented the newly updated risk register which has been re-structured based on the NCVO's template. Consultations with the full staff team have taken place to inform the risk register. Trustees were asked to discuss the risks that were deemed critical or severe and identify if further action is required. Trustees were happy with the mitigation actions currently in place and the Chair commended everyone involved in the creation of this risk register.
9. Trustees discussed a buddy scheme for incoming Trustees to meet with current Trustees and help them settle into their new roles. All Trustees agreed this would be a valuable and beneficial scheme, therefore the Chief Executive and VP Administration will meet to assess how it would work logistically.
10. The Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare was given the go ahead to draft 360 appraisals for the Chief Executive and Chair of Trustees for sign off by the Trustees and get the 360 appraisal process underway.
11. Staffing matters: This last quarter has been a quiet one recruitment and staffing changes wise. Jasmine Ewart joined us on 22 April and has settled in excellently, immediately getting involved with Conference. We are pleased to announce that Emily Cox has been made permanent as of 1 June. As of 1 August, Lara Munday will be taking on a new 9 month project looking at volunteering in the nations and consequently has been made Senior Projects Officer. Interviews are ongoing for the Associate Director: Finance and Compliance role but an update on the successful candidate should be provided in the next report.

12. The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday 23 July 2024.

Beth Metcalf
Chief Executive