

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

9 – 11 February 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 10th July 2023 on Campus and online via Microsoft Teams. The meeting minutes are available to view [here](#).
3. The Deputy President provided an Officer update, focusing on the societies and the suspension of the space society due to non-compliance. The Associate Director: Finance and Compliance will be meeting with the Chair of the spac society to discuss next steps. VP Administration also reached out to the Chair of the Societies Committee to discuss whether a review is required to ensure the process is robust enough to prevent this becoming a reoccurring issue.
4. Trustees were joined by Siobhan Holmes from Hays Macintyre who presented the financial statements and end of years accounts. She praised the team for the effort and work required to produce the end of year accounts. There were no concerns other than trading income, as it is reaching the £80,000 threshold however, it was noted that measures have been put in place to prevent the surpassing of this threshold and it will continue to be monitored. Trustees approved the Trustees Report and Financial Statements to the year-end July 2023.
5. The Head of Strategy and Insight attended the next part of the meeting and presented the key highlights from the 2019-23 strategy. Achievements included; increase in engagement with services and resources, development and implementation of the Individual Representation service, listening and

understanding students needs, as well as the introduction of the Annual Membership Survey. Relationships were built and strengthened such as with the UK nations and OU's Governance and External Affairs team. Moving forward to the new strategy, 16 KPIs were proposed. Trustees welcomed the idea of a dashboard to help with positioning. There was consensus that the introduction of targets and goals would be beneficial.

6. The Chief Executive raised some issues that had arisen from the Effectiveness Review, with the main concern being lack of engagement in the Teams space due to it posing challenges in reaching quoracy for approval and impacting the overall levels of engagement. Trustees discussed ways to improve this going forward and recognised that technology can sometimes be to blame. Head of Executive and Support will enquire with all Trustees about their preferences for engagement eg. Personal email, text etc.
7. Following receiving the Appointments Committee report, a student Trustee raised concern over the committee and the lack of communication, increased workload and declining coherence of the group. The Chief Executive recognised these concerns and agreed that a review into workload, the process and technology used, was required.
8. Student Trustee, Sarah Pickersgill, notified the Chair that she will be resigning from the BoT due to work and study commitments. Trustees thanked her for her time and input into the Board. Due to the length of time remaining in the current term; potential cost, and the remaining complement of Student Trustees, the Trustees decided against holding an election to fill the vacancy.
9. Staffing matters: This quarter has been a busy one staffing and recruitment wise. On 31st October, Paul Holmes joined the Business Services team as Business Services Administrator and has seamlessly adapted to his new role. In early December, Sarah Smerald resigned to allow her more time to care for her children. Pourush Dixit has been appointed in Sarah's position of Volunteering and Representation Administrator and he will be joining us on 12th February 2024. December also saw Linda Aradi (Projects Officer, EDI) go on maternity leave and shortly after she welcomed the arrival of a beautiful baby boy. Rachel Ishmael was successfully appointed maternity cover for Projects Officer (EDI) and has settled well in to the team. Beth Metcalf returned from two weeks Paternity leave in December following an earlier arrival from baby Bodhi. Danielle Cafearo is due to leave us in March to head off on her maternity leave. Recruitment for her maternity cover is ongoing.
10. We are pleased to announce that our two student advisors, Charlotte Stone and Chibwe Mushibwe have been made permanent following the enormous success of the Individual Representation Service. Furthermore, following approval from the SMT and Trustees, a new Projects Officer role has been given the go ahead and recruitment for this is underway internally.
11. The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th October 2023.

Beth Metcalf
Chief Executive

