



Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board

Date: 10 March 2025

Meeting time: 14.00pm– 17.00pm

Optional: St Luke's Tour 13.00pm–13.30pm, Lunch 13.30pm–14.00pm

Location: **Room 220, Baring Court, St Lukes Campus, Exeter**

Membership:

Alex Martin (AM) – President and Chair of the Board
Katy Willis – External Trustee and Deputy Chair of the Board
Kira Brookes (KB) – Officer Trustee/ Student Living Officer and Vice Chair of the Board
Ella Trudgeon (ET) – Student Trustee
Margaret Laithwaite (ML) – External Trustee
Reuben Sek (RS) – Student Trustee (joining Online)
Agneta Ravindran Buvana (ARB) – Student Trustee
Charles Jones (CJ) – External Trustee
India Walton–Salmon (IWS)– Officer Trustee / Societies and Employability Officer
Thomas Tran – Officer Trustee/ Communities and Equality Officer
Sebastian Racisz – Officer Trustee / Education Officer
Edward O'Sullivan – Student Trustee
Fonar Al-Derzi – Student Trustee
Sophie Elliott – External Trustee
Harriet Jones (HJ) – External Trustee

Apologies:

Sebastian Racisz – Officer Trustee / Education Officer
Kira Brookes (KB) – Officer Trustee/ Student Living Officer and Vice Chair of the Board

In Attendance:

Ali Chambers (AC) – CEO and Board Secretary
Tom Barrass (TB) – Head of Student Engagement
Cassie Thornton (CT) – Head of Marketing and Brand
Lizzie Bowtell (LB) – Head of Organisational Development
Cindy Porter (CP) – Head of Finance
Amy Holden (AH) – Insights and Influence Senior Manager
Dani Alexander (DA) – Leadership and Governance Manager, Board Clerk / Minute taker

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome to Trustees

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and highlighted it was good to be



on St Luke's campus. The Chair noted the importance of Change week taking place that week.

2. Apologies for absence
Apologies received from Sebastian Racisz and Kira Brookes.
3. Notification of Any Other Business
There were no new notifications of any other business.
4. Notification of Any new Conflicts of Interest
No new conflicts of interest.
5. Notification or Any Conflicts for this meeting
No new conflicts of interest for the meeting.
6. Minutes from the last meeting and action log
No amendments to the minutes were highlighted, and the Chair highlighted the actions log with the suggestion of closing the action relating to a new Guild building. The Board agreed to closing this action.
7. St Luke's Campus welcome and a student story Verbal TB-24.33
CT introduced the topic of student experience at St Luke's, and the meeting was joined by Sabrina, Sriram, and Alice who were St Luke's students sharing their experiences. They discussed the academic and social aspects of being a St Luke's student, highlighting the benefits and challenges. They emphasised the importance of understanding the academic and social aspects of being a St Luke's student.

The students discussed the split between academic work at St Luke's and social activities at Streatham campus. They appreciated the smaller campus and the availability of study spaces, which helped them balance their academic and social life.

Students discussed the challenges they faced, such as the disconnect between campuses and the lack of Guild presence at St Luke's. They emphasised the need for better communication and support from the Guild to improve their overall experience. They suggested having a Guild representative on campus at least once a week and improving communication between campuses.

Students discussed their identity as University of Exeter students, with some feeling more connected to the University as a whole rather than just St Luke's. They emphasised the importance of being part of the wider university community.

The Board thanks the panel for their time and for sharing their experience as a St Luke's student.

8. Guild Accountability Board Report To Note TB-24.34
TB introduced the next discussion which was a report from the Guild Accountability Board, and invited students on to the panel. Students Edgar, Eshaah, Sriram, Alice and Sabrina to the panel who were all members of the Guild Accountability Board.

The Board and students on the panel discussed the need for better collaboration between the Accountability Board and the Trustee Board. They emphasised the importance of regular updates and face-to-face interactions to improve communication and understanding between the two boards.

Participants suggested having regular updates from the Trustee Board to the Accountability Board. They believed that this would help keep both boards informed and aligned on key issues and decisions. Participants recommended having face-to-face interactions between the boards to build stronger relationships and facilitate better communication. They suggested organising joint meetings or informal gatherings to enhance collaboration.

The Board thanked the students for their time and for sharing their thoughts. Students Edgar, Eshaah, Sriram, Alice and Sabrina left the meeting.

9. The meeting had a break from 15.00-15.05pm
10. Student Engagement Report To Note TB-24.35
The Chair and Officers discussed their paper with the Board, highlighting ongoing work on Curriculum for Change and efforts within the Guild to amplify diverse student voices, including an inclusive food presentation for senior University stakeholders.

AM shared key takeaways from the Wonkhe trip in January and provided an update on the two working groups established following the Encampment.

The meeting discussed the ongoing efforts to address classism, including conducting surveys to gather data on students' experiences and working with the university to develop targeted support initiatives. They highlighted the importance of understanding the specific challenges faced by students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and how to support these challenges. These included providing financial assistance, creating mentorship programs, and

offering tailored career guidance to help these students succeed academically and professionally.

The Board noted the report.

11. CEO Report To Note TB-24.36
AC presented their report to the Board, highlighting key areas for discussion, including a confidential update.

AC shared insights from a recent Students' Union CEO meet-up, where they discussed the fundamental role of student unions.

The Board engaged in a discussion on the role and future of student unions and the Guild, exploring potential opportunities for the Guild moving forward.

The Board noted the report.

12. Representation Review To Note TB-24.37
TB discussed the purpose and aim of the Representation Review with the Board, and outlined the discussed which was to support the Board in thinking about the evidence and assurance they needed to make a confident decision about implementing changes to representation, as well as their tolerance for risk when it comes to implementing changes based on the pilot projects.

The Board outlined the need for a tangible plan for representation to be presented to the Board in July including the financial implications of this plan.

The Board highlighted the Student representation review working group and standing this up again, and all were in agreement. **ACTION: Set up Student Representation Review Working Group meetings**

The Board also discussed the risk appetite, and the need for a follow up survey or session to gauge this appetite ahead of the July meeting. **ACTION: Assess board risk appetite for the representation review.**

AH left the meeting.

13. AOB - Response to Freedom Event Verbal AOB
The Chair addressed the incident involving the Freedom Society and the hate speech made by a speaker. They discussed the investigation, the actions taken, and the feedback received from affected societies. They emphasised the need for policy changes and better support for affected communities, and also to review the member code of conduct.

The Chair thanked Trustees for contributing to the discussion.

14. The meeting had a 5 minute break

15. Organisational performance To Note TB-24.38

The Organisational Snapshot provided an overview of performance between November and January, covering key areas through a dashboard, which included:

- Guild Life Participation
- Social Impact Measures (KPIs)
- Management Accounts – January
- People Workforce Snapshot

The Board was asked to note the dashboard and provide any reflections on the data, including opportunities or gaps for further exploration. The Board discussed the support provided to societies around handling their positive and negative balances, and work being done by the activities team to support this.

The Board received the update.

16. Reforecast 1 To Approve TB-24.39

CP provided a financial update include a breakdown of the 2024-2025 reforecast compared to the original budget. CP highlighted the assumptions for the 2024-2025 reforecast including bringing forward the Real Living Wage for student staff is applied from 1st April 2025. CP provided an update on the surplus and the cash balance held on behalf of societies. They discussed the reforecast process and the additional items incorporated into the forecast. The surplus amount expected at the end of the year was £30,997. CP presented a break down of the cost variances per cost centre and expenditure as of % of income. The Board discussed the importance of ensuring staff wellbeing while maintaining financial efficiency and the need to review the staff costs KPI and consider a different workforce planning model for the next strategy.

The Board approved the Reforecast.

17. Guild Future Strategy To Note TB-24.40

The Chair of the Board proposed setting up a deep dive session after the meeting to allow for a detailed discussion on the Guild Future Strategy and next steps.

The Board agreed to a deep dive session. **ACTION: Organise a Guild Future Strategy deep dive session.**

18. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The meeting had no questions or comments on the items for information, and TB-24.47 and TB-24.49 were approved.

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| a. Finance and Risk Committee minutes | To Note | TB-24.42 |
| b. People and Governance Committee minutes | To Note | TB-24.43 |
| c. Student Trustee Recruitment timeline | To Note | TB-24.44 |
| d. Guild Accountability Board meeting minutes | To Note | TB-24.45 |
| e. Workplace Adjustments Policy (approved at People and Culture Committee) | To Note | TB-24.46 |
| f. Updated Delegation of Authority | To Approve | TB-24.47 |
| APPROVED | | |
| g. Decision making principles | To Note | TB-24.48 |
| h. Health and Safety Policy | To Approve | TB-24.49 |
| APPROVED | | |
| i. Safeguarding Report | To Note | TB-24.50 |

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| 19. CEO Appraisal points (closed item for Trustee) | To Note | TB-24.41 |
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- Guild staff left the meeting.

20. Feedback Form

Trustees were asked to complete the Board feedback form after the meeting.

21. Date of the Next Meeting – 7 July 2025

The Chair wrapped up the meeting.

22. End of meeting

ACTION LOG

| Action | Date of action | Deadline | Responsible for action | Progress and Impact |
|---|----------------|------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Set up Student Representation Review Working Group meetings | 10/3/25 | April 2025 | TB&DA | Complete |
| Assess board risk appetite for the representation review on an individual basis | 10/3/25 | April 2025 | TB | |
| Organise a Guild Future Strategy deep dive session. | 10/3/25 | April 2025 | AC&DA | Complete |