Bristol SU

Trustee Board Meeting – Minutes

Date: Tue 16 Jun 2026
Trustee Board Meeting Time: 1 – 4pm
Venue: 5.22 Senate House and online

Trustee Members - Full-Time Officers

Ella Lovibond (EL)	Sport & Student Development Officer
Jessie Yeung (JY)	International Students Officer (P, C & EDI Co-Chair)
Katie Poyner (KP)	Union Affairs Officer
Linlu Ye (LY)	Equality, Liberation and Access Officer
Lucy Pears (LPe)	Student Living Officer
Mia Stevens (MS)	Undergraduate Education Officer
Sharan Khemlani (SK)	Postgraduate Education Officer

Trustee Members – Student Trustees

Ismail Zarif (IZ)	Student Trustee
Kreeshi Shavdia (KS)	Student Trustee (FARG Co-Chair)
Shubham Kulkarni (SKu)	Student Trustee
Varenya Mehrotra (VM)	Student Trustee (Trustee Board Co-Chair)

Trustee Members – Co-opted/Nominated Trustees

Allan Allison (AA)	Co-opted Trustee (FARG and interim Trustee Board Co-Chair)
Steph Hayle (SHa)	Co-opted Trustee
Helen West (HW)	Co-opted Trustee
Steph Harris (SH)	Co-opted Trustee
Lucinda Parr (LP)	Nominated Trustee (P, C & EDI Co-Chair)

In Attendance

Ben Pilling (BP)	Chief Executive
Suzanne Doyle (SD)	Governance and L&D Manager and Clerk
Hannah Khan (HK)	Governance and Complaints Assistant
Cassie Agbehenu (CA)	Director of Impact and Influence (item 8)
Christy O'Sullivan (CO'S)	Director of Student Opportunities & Community (item 8)
Paul Arnold (PA)	Director of Digital, Marketing and Enterprise (item 8)
Keith Feeney (KF)	University Legal Contact
Becky Moises (BM)	Incoming Sport and Student Development Officer
Elliot Green (EG)	Incoming Student Living Officer
Jasper Daniel (JD)	Incoming Equality, Liberation and Access Officer
Jordan Fung (JF)	Incoming Undergraduate Education Officer
Vedant Jain (VJ)	Incoming Student Trustee
Wiktoria Kwartnik (WK)	Incoming Student Trustee

Please remember these papers and discussions are confidential within the trustees and staff at the meeting.

Agenda items approved by People, Culture & EDI Committee and FARG Committee need to go to this trustee board for formal approval.

All the papers are in this **Trustee Meetings folder** on the Trustee SharePoint site as well as in the agenda items below.

Bristol SU

No	Item	Lead
	STANDING ITEMS	
1	**Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**	**Chair**

1.1 Trustees **NOTED** a welcome from the Chair Varenya Mehrotra (VM) who explained that the incoming trustees were in attendance as observers and could ask questions but couldn't vote on anything.

1.2 Trustees **NOTED** introductions as this was Steph Hayle's (SHa) first meeting and for the new student and full-time officer trustees who were in attendance.

1.3 Trustees **NOTED** trustee members present; Lucinda Parr (LP) was only able to attend for the first hour and a half:

Ella Lovibond (EL)	Sport & Student Development Officer
Jessie Yeung (JY)	International Students Officer
Katie Poyner (KP)	Union Affairs Officer
Linlu Ye (LY)	Equality, Liberation and Access Officer
Lucy Pears (LPe)	Student Living Officer
Mia Stevens (MS)	Undergraduate Education Officer
Sharan Khemlani (SK)	Postgraduate Education Officer
Kreeshi Shavdia (KS)	Student Trustee
Shubham Kulkarni (SKu)	Student Trustee
Varenya Mehrotra (VM)	Student Trustee
Allan Allison (AA)	Co-opted Trustee
Effy Hayle (EH)	Co-opted Trustee
Helen West (HW)	Co-opted Trustee
Steph Harris (SH)	Co-opted Trustee
Lucinda Parr (LP)	Nominated Trustee

1.4 Trustees **NOTED** those in attendance present:

Ben Pilling (BP)	Chief Executive
Suzanne Doyle (SD)	Governance and L&D Manager and Clerk
Hannah Khan (HK)	Governance and Complaints Assistant
Christy O'Sullivan (CO'S)	Director of Student Opportunities & Community (item 8)
Paul Arnold (PA)	Director of Digital, Marketing and Enterprise (item 8)
Elliot Green (EG)	Incoming Student Living Officer
Jasper Daniel (JD)	Incoming Equality, Liberation and Access Officer
Jordan Fung (JF)	Incoming Undergraduate Education Officer
Vedant Jain (VJ)	Incoming Student Trustee
Wiktoria Kwartnik (WK)	Incoming Student Trustee

1.5 Trustees **NOTED** apologies from Ismail Zarif (IZ), Cassie Agbehenu (CA), Keith Feeney (KF), and Becky Moises (BM).

1.6 Trustees **NOTED** the meeting would be recorded for the purpose of those not able to attend and to support the minutes. The recording would be deleted after 14 days.

1.7 Trustees **DECLARED** no other business.

2	**Register and Declarations of Interests**	**Chair**
2.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the Register of Interests. There was an update from Paul Arnold (PA).	
2.2	Trustees **DECLARED** some new interests. Allan Allison (AA) has started a new job at Kaplan. LP has joined the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) Strategic Clinical Academic Advisor group. SHa will be added in due course but confirmed she had no conflicts with any items on the agenda.	
2.3	Trustees **DECLARED** no conflicts related to the Register of Interests or conflicts of interest relating to any agenda item.	
3	**Minutes of Last Meeting**	**Chair**
3.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** the minutes of the last trustee board meeting on 21 Apr 2026.	
3.2	**DECISION: All 14 trustees present APPROVED the minutes of the last trustee board meeting on 21 Apr 2026.**	
4	**Actions and Matters Arising**	**Chair**
4.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the actions and matters arising from the minutes.	
4.2	The live Trustee Action register for info which includes completed actions**.**	
4.3	There were no questions or comments.	
	OPERATIONAL REPORTS	
5	**End of Year Officer Report and update on Officer Priority 3 - Student Poverty**	**Officers**
5.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the End of Year Officer Report including an update on officer priority 3 – Student Poverty.	
5.2	Officers shared an update on the Student Poverty priority; this is the third and final update of the three priorities. It's been a challenging area as there are factors impacting cost of living outside the university's control.	
5.3	The team has focused on ensuring students are allocated university accommodation they can afford, increasing the university hardship funds and relaunching the Sanctuary Support Fund, and cheap hot meals via the SU Hatch. They started work making laundry affordable and equal across accommodation and hope this will continue.	
5.4	The Officers shared key successes. Katie Poyner (KP) highlighted increased space for students and the Society Ambassador Structure. Ella Lovibond (EL) highlighted Derby Day, the Injury Support Group. Linlu Ye (LY) highlighted the Gender Expression fund, work to improve Disabled Students' experiences, and consent training for student group leaders. Mia Stevens (MS) highlighted the Feedback Fellows project, support for students with marking criteria and moderation processes, and releasing teaching timetables earlier. Sharan Khemlani (SK) highlighted events for postgraduate	

	students (PGs) over summer and mentoring for international PG taught students. Jessie Yeung (JY) highlighted work on wellbeing, support, and political advocacy for international students.	
5.5	Trustees asked how many weeks the accommodation contracts were and if they reflected the academic year. Undergraduate accommodation is 38 or 42 weeks and PG accommodation is a whole year. These dates reflect the academic year and term dates.	
5.6	Trustees asked how many PGs in Bristol over the summer are residents and whether the summer offer has activities for residents living away from Clifton campus. There are a large percentage of international students who aren't Bristol residents, although they weren't sure of exact numbers of residents. The PG summer guide was shared, which includes activities across and beyond the city.	
5.7	Trustees asked whether early release of teaching timetables would extend to exam timetables. Officers weren't sure if it was the same process as teaching timetables, but there's student appetite for this so it might be something the next Undergraduate Education Officer could explore.	
5.8	Trustees asked how the percentages in the collective priorities were calculated and if there are any incomplete aims, the Officers would like to see finished. The line shows the original aims the officers agreed to work on in Summer 2025, and the circle reflects RAG rating of aims agreed with the University Executive Board (UEB). Officers would have liked to find more student spaces but believe there's now a foundation for this to be done next year.	
5.9	Trustees asked if the Officers would like to see any changes to the UEB shared priorities process. Officers will be discussing this later in the week but felt it worked well and appreciated being able to share all their ideas with UEB and see what they agreed with. Bristol SU and UoB are leading sector in their relationship, so this only needs tweaks rather than an overhaul.	
5.10	Trustees asked if the Officers wanted to highlight any strong civic relationships or any partnerships they'd like to develop. They felt Citizens UK and other groups supporting asylum seekers and refugees had been good partnerships and wanted to connect with more of these organisations.	
5.11	Trustees and staff thanked the officers for their inspiring work. They noted the achievements were impressive and added that the way they've worked together has been as important as the outcomes. The team has been a real morale boost for the SU and the university, and the officers were commended on their professional, collaborative and positively challenging approach.	
6	**Co-Chairs End of Year Report**	**SH/VM**
6.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the Co-Chairs Cover Sheet and Report.	
6.2	This outlines reflections on the year and a handover for the next Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs highlighted the support they had given each other this year as a key positive, and VM was thanked for stepping up. Key recommendations include more structured 121s and stronger Co-Chair induction particularly for the Student/Officer Co-Chair.	
6.3	Trustees felt the recommendations were good and thanked the Co-Chairs for doing a really good job and chairing the meetings well.	
7	**SMT Operational Report**	**Directors**
7.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the SMT Operational Report.	

7.2	This report shares a narrative view of what's been going on in the SU, including challenges, opportunities and risks. Christy O'Sullivan (CO'S) shared that his directorate was in a turnover point as committees complete their handover and groups give their feedback. He shared themes from Rate My Group and Rate My Year, which collect feedback from student group members and leaders. These feed into team planning for next year.
7.3	Trustees asked how long it would take for the new finance system to feel embedded for groups. The system isn't fully implemented and they're looking at tools to speed up processes. There was a specific issue this year due to the finance system changeover, but this is now resolved and it will be faster and more stable going forwards.
7.4	PA shared reflections on his directorate. He highlighted increased student space across campus and affordable food through the SU Hatch and events such as the exam period tuck shop.
7.5	Trustees asked if there was scope to show links between the operational items and the strategy. A strategic report goes to the first and third Trustee Board meetings and the awayday and trustees agreed they didn't need this more regularly. Items in the Operational report could be linked to the strategy by colour or a widget.
7.6	**ACTION: To reflect on showing links between items on the operational report and the strategy, e.g. by colour or a widget, by Sep 2026 – BP.**
7.7	An incoming trustee asked if SU staff could attend democratic meetings to share work the SU is doing alongside officer work. Generally, staff wouldn't present at Student Council, but there will be a review of democratic meetings next year.
BREAK	
WORKING GROUPS	
8	**Board Composition and Governance Working Group Report and Recommendations** — **SD**
8.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** the Board Composition and Governance Working Group Report and Recommendations.
8.2	FARG Committee had already discussed the report and approved the recommendations, but it was important the full board had a chance to look at it as there's a lot of recommendations for next year.
8.3	This followed a Board Effectiveness Review which reviewed governance structures, and a few working groups were set up to address the outcomes. This group looked at a lot of areas, some of which will feed into the Articles and Byelaws review next year.
8.4	Trustees asked if there was appetite to move towards the Carver model or if delegated authority for committees was preferred. The group felt they didn't want to change the structure too much at the moment, but it may be considered again in the future. Over the summer a group will be looking at the Scheme of Delegation to consider which items committees could approve.

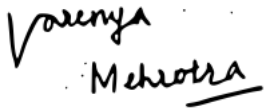
8.5	Trustees liked the idea of giving committees more powers, but flagged quoracy for committees can be quite small and low turnout could have a significant impact on approving key items, so this should be considered when looking at the Scheme of Delegation.	
8.6	Trustees asked if there were opportunities for student and officer trustees to upskill in areas of the committee they don't sit on. All student and officer trustees are offered finance training. P, C & EDI Committee reviewed training recently and agreed they didn't want more training throughout the year. Trustees will have 121s and reflective questions during the year which will include asking if they want more training.	
9	**Risk Working Group Report and Recommendations**	**SK**
9.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** the Risk Working Group Report and Recommendations.	
9.2	FARG Committee had already discussed the report and approved the recommendations, but it was important the full board had a chance to go through it.	
9.3	This working group was established to review the Risk Management Policy and create a risk appetite statement. The group discussed the strategic risks in depth and agreed a risk appetite level for each one. This was used to write a risk appetite statement.	
9.4	Trustees felt the report was thorough and methodical, and the risk appetite statement was good. They reflected they had mentioned wanting a better understanding of risk in the governance review and felt this work had reflected that.	
9.5	An incoming trustee asked how the risk appetite levels were calculated as they don't correlate to the PxI numbers. The numbers came from the risk register and were considered by the group, but they also considered the ethics and persona of the organisation for each risk when agreeing the level which is why the two don't correlate.	
ASSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE		
10	**Co-opted Co-Chair Approval and Student/Officer Co-Chair Recommendation**	**SD**
10.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** Allan Allison (AA) as the Co-opted Co-Chair.	
10.2	Trustees **RECEIVED** Varenya Mehrotra (VM) the Student/Officer Co-Chair.	
10.3	The Board Rules explain how Board Co-Chairs are selected. SH stepped down as Co-opted Co-Chair earlier in the year and AA and Helen West (HW) agreed to split the role until the Autumn when it will be reviewed. The Student/Officer Co-Chair has a term of 2 years so VM can continue in the role. Another trustee was interested and they have been contacted to let them know the situation.	
10.4	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED Allan Allison as the Co-opted Co-Chair.**	
10.5	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED Varenya Mehrotra as the Student/Officer Co-Chair.**	
11	**Trustee Policies**	**SD**
11.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** the amendments to the following policies:	

11.1.1	Trustee Code of Conduct	
11.1.2	The main change is that a section has been added in line with the Staff Code of Conduct.	
11.1.3	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED the Trustee Code of Conduct.**	
11.1.4	Trustee Conflicts of Interest Policy	
11.1.5	This was previously a joint staff and trustee policy, but changes were made to the staff policy about staff relationships which is not relevant to trustees, so the policies have been separated.	
11.1.6	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED the Trustee Conflicts of Interest Policy.**	
11.1.7	Trustee Expenses Policy	
11.1.8	This policy is in line with the staff policy but excludes a new section about staff travel to Temple Quarter which isn't relevant to trustees.	
11.1.9	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED the Trustee Expenses Policy.**	
11.2	The incoming trustees were told they would be sent the policies to sign when they begin their term.	
12	**Board Effectiveness Review Action Plan Update**	**SD**
12.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** a presentation update on the Board Effectiveness Review Action Plan.	
12.2	The Board Effectiveness Review took place from September 2024 – May 2025. The review was based on the Charity Governance Code, which has since changed. The Governance Code Working Group will be looking at the new Code which will also inform the Articles and Byelaws review. Recommendation areas, quick wins and working groups were summarised and plans for the next year were shared, with four key areas highlighted.	
12.3	Suzanne Doyle (SD) and Hannah Khan (HK) were thanked for their work on the action plan.	
12.4	Trustees noted that the Articles and Byelaws review will be a big piece of work and require full board engagement. Trustees were asked to consider if they would like to be involved. Amendments to the Articles need to be approved by the SU Board, the University Trustee Board and Student Council as it's a joint document with the university. Byelaws are approved by the SU Board and Student Council.	
COMMITTEE UPDATES		
13	**People, Culture and EDI (PCEDI) Committee**	**Chair – JY**
13.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** a verbal update from the People, Culture and EDI Committee on 19 May 2026 from Jessie Yeung (JY). The Committee discussed a lot of areas including the Officer Engagement Survey and the dip in recruitment of People of Colour. There were some comments and actions on the Staff Expenses Policy to support staff who work late.	

13.2	Trustees **NOTED** the minutes and items which were discussed	
13.2.1	**3PCE25-26MAY PCEDI Minutes 17 Mar 2026.pdf** (previous meeting minutes)	
13.2.2	**9PCE25-26MAY Staff Pay and Reward Policy.pdf**	
13.2.3	**9PCE25-26MAY Staff Leave (Other) Policy.pdf**	
13.2.4	**9PCE25-26MAY Staff Shared Parental Leave Policy.pdf**	
13.2.5	**9PCE25-26MAY Staff Expenses Policy.pdf**	
13.2.6	**9PCE25-26MAY Staff Information and Communications Systems Policy.pdf**	
13.2.7	**9PCE25-26MAY Staff Branded Clothing Policy.pdf**	
13.3	Trustees asked if there had been any updates to the Staff Expenses Policy. It was reviewed but not changed following conversations with the teams it impacts most, as 11pm is industry standard and the budget implications were larger than expected. The policy will be looked at during budget setting next year and may be reviewed.	
13.4	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED the following, which PCEDI Committee approved and recommend to the full board for formal approval:** - **PCEDI Minutes 17 Mar 2026 (previous meeting minutes)** - **Staff Pay and Reward Policy** - **Staff Leave (Other) Policy** - **Staff Shared Parental Leave Policy** - **Staff Expenses Policy** - **Staff Information and Communications Systems Policy** - **Staff Branded Clothing Policy.pdf**	
14	**FARG Committee**	**Chair – KS**
14.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** a verbal update from the FARG Committee on 25 Mar 2026 from Kreeshi Shavdia (KS). Items discussed include policies, the Management Accounts and the elections report. NUS should have sent a report on the election but this is to follow. The budget was discussed with a 2% cost of living uplift for staff agreed following discussions at PCEDI.	
14.2	FARG Committee thanked Amaan Ali, a former student with first-hand experience of submitting a complaint who volunteered his time to improve the new Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy. A footnote will be added to the policies to thank him and acknowledge his contributions.	
14.3	Since the meeting the Reserves Policy has been updated based on the feedback at FARG – the updated policy was shared with the Board. The action from FARG was to specify what counts as direct and indirect costs.	
14.4	Trustees **NOTED** the minutes and items which were discussed	
14.4.1	**3FARG25-26JUN Budget Approval 2026-2027.pdf**	
14.4.2	**5FARG25-26JUN Investment Report.pdf**	

14.4.3	**6FARG25-26JUN Reserves Policy Review Paper Jun 2026.pdf** (version sent to FARG)	
14.4.4	**13TRU25-26JUN Reserves Policy Review Paper Jun 2026 Updated.docx** (updated version)	
14.4.5	**6FARG25-26JUN Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery Policy Jun 2026.pdf**	
14.4.6	**8FARG25-26JUN Internal Financial Controls CC8.pdf**	
14.4.7	**10FARG25-26JUN Minutes 25 Mar 2026.pdf** (previous meeting minutes)	
14.4.8	**13FARG25-26JUN Bristol SU Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy Jun 2026.docx**	
14.4.9	**13FARG25-26 JUN Bristol SU Student Group Conduct and Disciplinary Policy Jun 2026.docx**	
14.4.10	**14FARG25-26JUN Board Composition Governance Working Group Report.pdf**	
14.4.11	**16FAR25-26 JUN Annual Statement of Legal Compliance 2024 - 2025.pdf**	
14.4.12	**18FARG25-26JUN Risk Working Group Report.pdf**	
14.4.13	**18FARG25-26JUN Risk Management Policy Tracked Changes.pdf**	
14.5	**DECISION: All 13 trustees present APPROVED the following, which FARG Committee approved and recommend to the full board for approval:** - **Draft Budget Approval 2026-2027** - **Investment Report Recommendations** - **Reserves Policy Review Paper (updated version)** - **Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery Policy** - **Internal Financial Controls CC8** - **Minutes 25 Mar 2026 (previous meeting minutes)** - **Bristol SU Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy** - **Bristol SU Student Group Conduct and Disciplinary Policy** - **Board Composition Governance Working Group Report recommendations** - **Annual Statement of Legal Compliance 2024 – 2025** - **Risk Working Group Report recommendations** - **Risk Management Policy**	
15	**For Info**	**Chair**
15.1	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the Trustee Attendance Register.	
15.2	Trustees **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the meeting, training and trustee awayday dates for 2026/27. Trustees were asked to get in touch if they couldn't make any dates and student trustees were asked to let the team know if they have any availability changes when they have their timetables.	
16	**AOB**	**All**
16.1	Trustees received an item of other business.	
16.2	As it was the final trustee board of the year, all the trustees were thanked for their contributions over the year. The Board Co-Chairs were thanked for all their work. SD and HK were thanked.	

Approved by Co-Chair of the Trustee Board: Varenya Mehrotra
Signed:



Date: 26 June 2026