

## JMSU TRUSTEE BOARD MEMBER VERSION

*These minutes are a member-focused summary of the formal JMSU Trustee Board meeting. They are designed to provide transparent, accessible updates on key decisions and discussions, while removing any confidential or sensitive information not appropriate for wider circulation.*

*By sharing this version, we aim to:*

1. *Keep students informed about how decisions are made at JMSU,*
2. *Highlight how governance supports our student priorities,*
3. *Strengthen engagement with your elected Officer team and the Union's work.*

*For any questions or further details, members can contact the JMSU President at [president@jmu.ac.uk](mailto:president@jmu.ac.uk).*

### **Board of Trustees Minutes** **JMSU CIO Charity Number: 1202881**

JMSU Trustee Board Meeting Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026 (1-4:30pm) – In Person & Teams

#### **Attendees:**

Miles Craven, President (MC) CHAIR  
 Josh Darley, VP Activities (JD)  
 Etienne Lewis-Jarvis, VP Community and Wellbeing (ELJ)  
 Erin Gerard, VP Academic Quality (EG)  
 Joeb Hasty-Fowler, Student Trustee (JHF)  
 Heather Akehurst OBE, External Trustee (HA)  
 Evans Iyamu, External Trustee (EI) – **AGENDA ITEM 1-6**

#### **In Attendance:**

Sarah Latham, Deputy CEO - Membership Engagement (SL)  
 Paul Chapman, CEO (PC)  
 Phil Benton, External Director of Finance, Counterculture (PB)  
 Alex Crowther, Head of Organisational Development (AC) – **AGENDA ITEM 4a**  
 Tim Cherry, DJH Auditors Director Liverpool – **AGENDA ITEM 4a**

#### **Apologies:**

Kofi Ohene Djan, External Trustee (KOD)

### **1. Welcome from the Chair, apologies, and introductions**

**MC** extended a warm welcome to all attendees.

#### **1.1 Declarations of any other business**

No declarations or AOB were declared.

#### **1.2 Notifications of Conflict of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

## 2. Minutes of the Trustee Board and Sub-Committee meetings

Minutes from the previous Trustee Board and sub-committee meetings were **approved**.

### 3. Delivery

#### a. Academic Board Paper

**SL** provided trustees with a comprehensive update on student voice, engagement and representation activity.

Highlights included:

- Strong engagement in student voice activity
- Continued growth in student groups and societies
- Improved BUCS ranking (now 44th, up from 48th)
- 31 candidates standing in the recent elections
- Ongoing work on the referendum action plan

Trustees praised the clarity of reporting and the visible impact of Officer and staff collaboration. The University continues to respond positively to how JMSU represents students.

#### b. University Mental Health Charter

JMSU's contribution to the University Mental Health Charter was discussed, with particular recognition of the strength of student voice and partnership working.

Trustees welcomed JMSU's growing influence in wellbeing strategy and sector best practice.

### 4. Finances

#### a. External Audit

The Board formally **approved** the audited annual accounts.

Key points:

- No material issues identified.
- Unqualified audit opinion.
- Pension deficit fully removed following the University's £1.9m contribution
- Stronger long-term financial clarity

Trustees agreed to re-tender the external audit contract ahead of the next cycle.

#### b. Management Accounts

Financial performance remains positive.

- Year-to-date surplus of £19k (against a small planned deficit)
- Reserves strengthened
- Strong working capital position
- Forecast adjusted slightly to allow additional investment in marketing and campus engagement

Trustees endorsed the revised financial forecast for 2025/26.

### **c. Reserves Policy**

The Reserves Policy was reviewed and approved, with a minor amendment to reference cyber security risk as a financial consideration.

The policy continues to link reserve levels to block grant value rather than setting a fixed amount, ensuring flexibility as funding changes.

Reserves policy was approved by the Trustee Board.

## **5. People & Culture**

Trustees received an update on the draft People & Culture Plan (currently in consultation) and a new Pay, Reward & Grading Decision Framework.

HR policies will be brought to the April Board meeting.

## **6. Governance**

### **a. Byelaws**

Minor technical updates to Union byelaws were approved. No democratic structures were changed.

Updates to the Byelaws were Approved.

### **b. Associate Members Review**

Trustees discussed a proposal to remove the Associate Membership category from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026, following safeguarding concerns and sector learning.

The proposal will now move to consultation before any final decision is implemented.

### **c. Trustee Board Code of Conduct for Directors and Trustees**

A new Trustee Code of Conduct was approved, outlining expectations around legal duties, behaviour, conflicts of interest, and board responsibilities.

All Trustees will formally sign the Code.

**Trustee Board Code of Conduct was approved.**

**d. Trustee Recruitment & Resignation**

The Board approved the appointment of Dr Gordon Laing as External Trustee, subject to onboarding.

Trustees also formally noted the resignation of KOD and recorded their thanks for his contribution.

**e. Review of Elected Officer Structure**

Trustees considered whether to change the current four full-time Officer roles. There is no intention to increase the number of roles.

However, Trustees supported refining role titles and clarifying portfolios to better align with JMSU’s evolving strategy.

Further proposals will come to the next meeting.

**7. Health & Safety – Risk Register**

The Board reviewed organisational risks, including:

- Cyber security
- Representation gaps (e.g., apprenticeships, postgraduate students)
- National Union of Students (NUS) engagement

A full paper on NUS membership options will be presented at the April Board meeting.

**8. AOB**

The board would like PC to write to the VC to formally congratulate the University on the recent award.

**9. Date and time of next meeting**

| Trustee Board                                     | Finance, Audit, & Risk Sub-Committee | Governance & Policy Sub-Committee | HR & Remuneration Sub-Committee     |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2026             | Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2026   | TBC                               | Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 |
| <b>ASMM</b>                                       |                                      |                                   |                                     |
| Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> April 2026 (5:15-6:15pm) |                                      |                                   |                                     |

**The meeting closed at 4:00pm.**