

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

British Universities and Colleges Sport
1 August 2023 – 31 July 2024



Introduction

British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) is a registered company and Charity. It is subject to the Charity Governance Code and Sport England / UK Sport A Code for Sports Governance. As such BUCS is committed to embedding the principles of good governance in its practices.

This Annual Governance Statement aims to provide members and stakeholders with an annual update on BUCS operations in accordance with its governance requirements. It should be read in conjunction with the BUCS Annual Report.

This report covers the period from 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2024.

Board of Trustees

The Board is the overarching decision-making body of BUCS and as such has the ultimate responsibility for governing BUCS. The Board can consist of up to 11 individuals with a range of knowledge, skills and experience from within and outside of Higher Education to guide the delivery of strategy and the work of the Executive Team. The Board meets at least four times per year for the conduct of business. Some members of the Board also have additional responsibilities.

The Chair

Amanda Broderick was appointed to the position of Chair of the Board of Trustees on 8 January 2024 and brings with her a wealth of experience of Board-level executive and non-executive roles. As Chair of the Board, Amanda provides leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees, ensuring that the Board and BUCS are operating for the public and member benefit. She also supports and empowers Trustees to fulfil their responsibilities and duties to drive effective governance and the strategic direction of BUCS and enables the Trustees to engage in well-rounded and carefully considered strategic decision-making, utilising individuals experiential and cognitive diversity. More about Amanda's appointment can be read [HERE](#).

The CEO

Will Roberts joined BUCS as Chief Executive Officer on 3 June 2024. Will is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the day-to-day management and running of BUCS and to our members, ensuring that BUCS continues to drive achievement its ambition and mission. Since joining BUCS, Will has worked with the Board to ensure there are clear metrics aligned to the delivery of BUCS strategy. The role of the Chair and CEO are separated and exercised by different individuals. More about Will's appointment can be read [HERE](#).

Senior Independent Trustee

Russell James joined the BUCS Board on 28 April 2022 and has the additional responsibility of acting as Senior Independent Trustee. In this capacity, Russell acts as a sounding board for the Chair and an intermediary for Trustees when necessary. As Senior Independent Trustee, Russell also acts as an alternative contact for stakeholders to share any concerns or issues if they feel the Board Chair or Senior Leadership Team fail to resolve the matter, or in cases where such contact is inappropriate.

Elected Trustees

BUCS has a number of elected positions on the BUCS Board, in the form of the Student Directors, Chair of Advisory group and Chair of the Senior Managers Executive. Individuals are elected to these positions by a vote of the BUCS Members. Their role on the Board is to utilise their expertise to advocate on behalf of BUCS members to provide advice, counsel and constructive check and challenge, to support the Board to operate effectively in overseeing the delivery of BUCS strategy.

During the reporting period, Alexandra Duggan was elected to the position of Student Director and replaced George Christian following the end of his tenure.

Independent Trustees

BUCS Board also has several individuals appointed for their specific skillsets, knowledge and experience which they bring to the Board. Their role is to draw on this to provide advice, counsel and constructive check and challenge, to support the Board to operate effectively in overseeing the delivery of BUCS strategy.

The following will be implemented in the recruitment of independent appointed Board Trustees to promote opportunities for all and a Board that is representative of the sector which BUCS operates within:

- Open advertisements for vacancies will be made publicly available.

- Consideration of candidates on merit and against objective criteria with due regard for a wide range of backgrounds, the benefits of diversity, and sector representation on the Board.
- Appointments will be based on the knowledge, skills and experience which the individual possesses in line with the Trustee role specification approved by the Governance and Nominations Committee

During the reporting period Kathleen Russ and Amanda Broderick were appointed to the board.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

Kath Russ was appointed to the Board and brings a wealth of experience working with equity, equality, diversity and inclusion. As the lead on the Board in this space, Kath acts as an advocate for BUCS compliance with its obligations under equality legislation and BUCS' commitment to treating people equally and fairly. Kath also supports BUCS' commitment to the promotion and maintenance of an inclusive and supportive environment, that is free from discrimination, that all stakeholders can expect to experience when engaging with BUCS.

Board Trustee	Start date as a Trustee	Current Term start date	Trustee Term number	Additional Roles
Amanda Broderick <i>Chair</i> <i>Appointed Non-executive Trustee</i>	8 January 2024	8 January 2024	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Trustees Chair • Governance and Nominations Committee Member • Remuneration and Staffing Committee Chair
Cathy Gallagher <i>Elected</i>	4 December 2018	6 July 2022	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Managers Executive Chair • Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Member
Chris Anthony <i>Elected</i>	28 April 2022	28 April 2022	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Group Chair • Interim Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Member
Katy Storie <i>Appointed Non-executive Trustee</i>	5 December 2017	12 December 2023	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Nominations Committee Member
Russel James <i>Appointed Non-executive Trustee</i>	28 April 2022	28 April 2022	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Independent Trustee • Governance and Nominations Committee Member
Simon Wilson <i>Appointed Non-executive Trustee</i>	9 December 2020	12 December 2023	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Chair • Remuneration and Staffing Committee Member
George Christian* <i>Elected</i>	6 July 2022	6 July 2022	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Welfare Lead • Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Member • Student Officer Network Co-chair
Ella Williams <i>Elected</i>	26 July 2023	26 July 2023	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Officer Network Co-chair
Carrie Stephenson <i>Appointed Non-executive Trustee</i>	26/07/2023	26/07/2023	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Nominations Committee Chair • Interim Welfare and Safety Co-Lead
Kathleen Russ <i>Appointed Non-executive Trustee</i>	13/11/2023	13/11/2023	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Nominations Committee Member

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Member Interim Welfare and Safety Co-Lead
Alexandra Duggan <i>Elected</i>	31 July 2024	31 July 2024	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Officer Network Co-chair

* The following trustees stepped down from the Board of Trustees during the reporting period:

- George Christian (tenure ended 31 July 2024)

During the reporting period, Fiona Dick attended the BUCS Board in Cathy Gallaghers absence, to represent the views of the Senior Managers Executive and Network.

The Board of Trustees is made up of over 25% independent Directors and does not consider any of its elected Member representatives 'independent'. In line with the BUCS Articles of Association, individuals who are appointed to the Board, who also work for a member institutions are deemed to be independent members of the Board.

The Board of Trustees regularly reviews its policies to ensure they remain aligned to best practice.

Board Activity

The Board met 7 times during the reporting period. Attendance is detailed below.

Meeting Date	Trustees in attendance	Apologies	Absence
29 September 2023	7	1	0
13 November 2023	9	0	0
22 February 2024	8	2	0
13 March 2024	7	1	1
31 July 2024	8	2	0

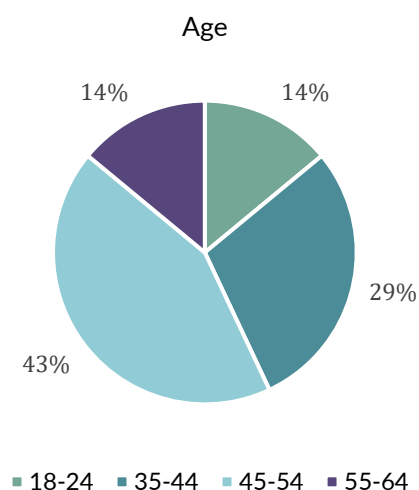
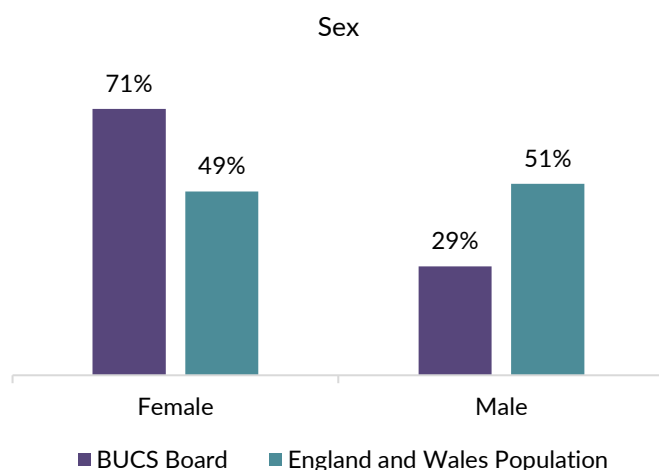
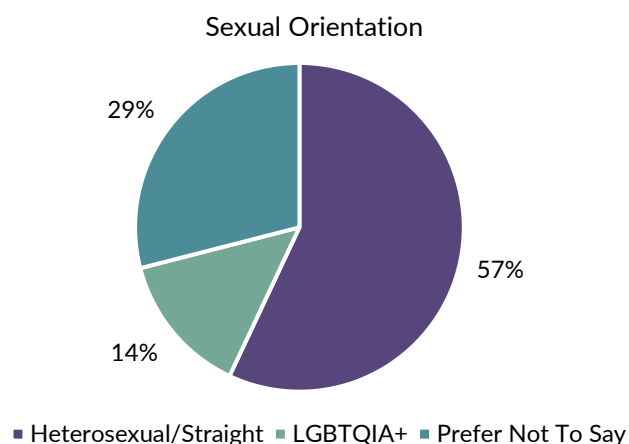
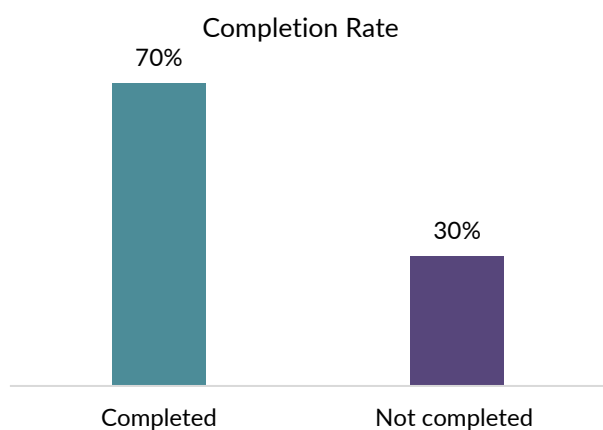
Board Areas of Focus

- Recruitment of a new Chair:** The Board, led by the Governance and Nominations Committee and in partnership with Perrett Laver, completed successful recruitment of a new Chair of the Board. In the interim between the previous Chair stepping down, and the new Chair being appointed, Russell James, as Senior Independent Director adopted the responsibility of chairing meetings. Since her appointment, Amanda has provided clear leadership and direction for the Board and will continue this in her initial tenure.
- Recruitment of a new CEO:** The Board, led by the Governance and Nominations Committee and in partnership with Perrett Laver, completed successful recruitment of a new Chief Executive Officer, Will Roberts. Will joined BUCS in July 2024, and since starting has been working closely with the Board to identify key performance measures for the year ahead aligned to the BUCS strategy. This will enable BUCS Board to receive assurance of BUCS progress towards achieving the ambition of delivering exceptional student sporting experiences that inspire, develop and unite.
- Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan:** During the reporting period BUCS worked with AKD solutions to develop our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) which outlined the key milestones BUCS wants to achieve in it's Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion journey. The Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan has been submitted to Sport England, and once approved will be published on our website.
- Risk Management:** During the reporting period the Board adopted a new risk management policy which aligned the measurement of risk to the delivery of BUCS strategy. The Board continue to use risk to inform their discussion and decision making and will be providing constructive check and challenge to the BUCS Executive as work continues to evolve in this area.

Board Diversity

The following information pertains to the demographics of the BUCS Board.

Information declaration is optional and therefore the below information is not representative of the full Board (70% completed).



Board Evaluation

The Board understand the importance of regular evaluation of their individual performance as Trustees, but also as a Board as a collective. The Board have received approval from Sport England to delay the External Evaluation to February 2025, allowing for a more effective review in line with the tenure of the Chair. Completion of the external evaluation will support compliance with the Charity Governance Code and A Code for Sports Governance.

BUCS also recognises the importance of the individuals on the Board and the impact that they have on BUCS. To promote good governance and better support of our Trustees BUCS completed a composition assessment of it's Board, exploring knowledge, skills and experience areas aligned to the BUCS strategy. The data analysis is complete, and the individual Trustee appraisal process will be delivered in November 2024.

The composition assessment explored the following themes:

- Strategy
- Finance
- IT
- Operations
- Commercial
- HR
- Governance, Risk and Compliance
- Industry Experience
- Behaviours
- People Skills

The insight gained from the composition assessment will be utilised by the Governance and Nominations Committee to ensure that effective succession planning occurs, and an appropriate balance of knowledge, skills and experience is maintained within the Board. It will also be used to support annual Trustee appraisals.

Board Remuneration

Board Trustees are not remunerated for their services to BUCS and offer their time on a voluntary basis. Reasonable travel expenses are reimbursed when accompanied by required receipts.

Sub-committees and Commission Groups

During the reporting period, BUCS had a range of Sub-committees, Commission Groups, and Member Networks which report into the Board and support the Board of Trustees through their delegated Authority.

Sub-committees

- Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- Governance and Nominations Committee
- Remuneration and Staffing Committee

Commission Groups

- Advisory Group

Member Networks with Board Representation

- Senior Managers Executive
- Student Officer Network

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

Chair: Simon Wilson

Members

- Cathy Gallagher
- George Christian (until 31 July 2024)
- Chris Anthony (interim from 13 March 2024)
- Kathleen Russ (interim from 13 March 2024)

The purpose of the Finance, Audit and Risk committee is to oversee, analyse and advise on BUCS budgets, financial activities and risk landscape, ensuring that it is appropriately managed, and that good governance and risk management is used to inform decision making.

The Board delegate authority to the Finance, Audit and Risk committee to undertake work relating to the integrity monitoring of financial statements and announcements relating to BUCS financial performance, reporting judgements on these publications, and providing advice to the Board on matters relating to BUCS financial position, performance, business model and strategy.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee will also undertake work to ensure the appropriateness of BUCS internal controls, advising on risk appetite aligned to the strategic direction of the organisation.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee met six times during the reporting period, including meeting with BUCS external auditors Haysmacintyre to discuss the results of BUCS financial audit, ahead of presentation to the Board and publication of the annual accounts at AGM. The Committee also met with a representative from CCLA Investment Management to review the performance of BUCS investment portfolio. Work continues on BUCS risk management approach, with the Committee providing check and challenge to the BUCS executive on the information available and the risk management approach.

Governance and Nominations Committee

Chair: Carrie Stephenson

Members

- Katy Storie,
- George Christian (until 31 July 2024)
- Amanda Broderick
- Russell James
- Kathleen Russ

The purpose of the Governance and Nominations Committee is to oversee, analyse and advise on BUCS governance and undertake work relating to its governance structure, governance policy and processes, board composition and effectiveness, compliance with external governance requirements and the appointment of BUCS Board Trustees and Senior Leadership Team.

During the reporting period the Governance and Nominations Committee met four times. Carrie Stephenson was appointed to the position of Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee and brings a wealth of experience from her legal and governance background to the role. The Focus of the Governance and Nominations Committee was to drive the recruitment for the positions of Chair of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, which was done in collaboration with Perrett Laver. The committee made successful recommendations to the Board for both positions. The Committee also supported the development of the BUCS composition assessment and maintained strategic oversight of BUCS delivery against the Governance Action Plan issued by Sport England.

Remuneration and Staffing Committee

Chair

- Russell James (interim until 22 February 2024)
- Amanda Broderick (from 22 February 2024)

Members

- Simon Wilson
- Chris Anthony

The purpose of the Remuneration Committee is to oversee, analyse and advise on the performance of the CEO (including remuneration) and to consider and have oversight of the remuneration of the Executive and all staff, ensuring transparency and accountability are seen and adhered to.

The Remuneration Committee met once during the reporting period to discuss remuneration of the BUCS Executive. Following a meeting of the Remuneration Committee, the Board approved the change of remit to Remuneration and Staffing Committee, allowing elements linked to BUCS people development to be discussed.

Advisory Group

Chair: Chris Anthony

The purpose of the Advisory Group is to support and assist the BUCS Executive by representing the voice of the Membership to advise and make recommendations on the delivery and implementation of BUCS strategy, as well as taking on specific challenges as directed by BUCS Executive and Board. The Group represents the primary route for consultation with Members, by providing a platform to facilitate feedback from Regional and National groups.

The Advisory Group met five times during the reporting period. During the reporting period the Advisory group provided insight to the BUCS Executive on areas such as BUCS research and insight, BUCS conference and annual awards, the impact of the cost of living, BUCS annual subscription fees, student behaviour, and the value of sport in Higher Education Institutions.

Senior Managers Executive

Chair: Cathy Gallagher

The BUCS Senior Managers Executive is one of two primary member executive groups and is responsible for the strategic oversight of the BUCS vision and strategy. The group provides support to the BUCS Executive on progress against the strategy objectives and collaboration with other strategy areas. The group coordinates the engagement of senior managers across the BUCS membership, hosting networking events throughout the year to discuss key sector priorities and share expertise and best practice and represents the voice of the membership at a Senior Manager level.

The Senior Managers Executive met four times during the reporting period, with Fiona Dick acting as Interim Chair during Cathy Gallagher's absence. During the reporting period, the Senior Managers Executive engaged in discussion and information sharing with the BUCS Executive on Home Nation competition, BUCS Operations and Facilities Forum, the Complete Universities Guide, BUCS annual subscription fees, student behaviours, and organisation of the Senior Managers Network events.

Student Officer Network

Chairs

- George Christian (until 31 July 2024)

- Ella Williams
- Alexandra Duggan (from 31 July 2024)

The Student Officer Network offers all Student Officers and Sabbatical Officers the chance to speak with people in similar roles, sharing information, practice and ideas. The Student Officer Network is designed to support any student officer from a BUCS Member institution to fulfil their roles by:

- Providing the Student Officers with regular and current updates on the work of BUCS.
- To enable collective sharing of information and resources between the Student Officers.
- To provide a safe and supportive environment for Student Officers to discuss their roles and share experience with people in similar roles.
- To share good practice across the network of Student Officers.
- To act as sounding board to the BUCS Executive Team to ensure the views of students and Students' Unions are taken into key decisions.
- To share insight into the opinions and views of the student body involved in BUCS.

The Student Officer Network met four times during the reporting period. Key areas which the Student Officers Network have discussed this reporting period include: supporting recruitment of BUCS CEO, Advisory Group updates, review of BUCS Awards, BUCS demographic research and insight gathering, BUCSPlay and creation and circulation of newsletters for the network.

Member Groups

In addition to the sub-committees of the Board, BUCS is informed by several member groups that provide operational support to the BUCS Executive and enable a flow of information and insight from members into BUCS strategic and advisory groups and the BUCS Board. The groups are chaired by members of BUCS and operate in line with agreed terms of reference. The member groups supporting the BUCS Executive staff during the reporting period were:

- National Competitions Group
- Subscription Fee Working Group
- Sport Review Implementation Group
- International Advisory Group
- Senior Managers Network
- Regions and Nations Network
- Sport Advisory Groups
- Event Management Groups
- League Management Committees

Governance Framework

BUCS is committed to complying with the Charity Governance Code and A Code for Sports Governance. Following internal assessment BUCS completed a statement of partial compliance to A Code for Sport Governance. Following this BUCS has been working with Sport England to deliver against an agreed Governance Action Plan to ensure that it reaches compliance with its governance requirements and to deliver excellence in its governance practices and procedures. The Action Plan is due to be completed by December 2024.

Annual General Meeting

In accordance with the Articles of Association BUCS is required to hold an Annual General Meeting each year. The 2023 Annual General Meeting was held on 12 December 2023, with representation from 53 Members.

Signature

This Annual Governance statement is approved by the Board and signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board.



Amanda Broderick
Chair of the Board of Trustees