# Minutes

In person

Anna Bryson (AB), Simon Flacks (SF), Sabrina Germain (SG), Alex Green (AG), Elisabeth Griffiths (EG), John Harrington (JH) Arwen Joyce (AJ), Lara MacLachlan (LM), Emma Milne (EM), Colin Moore (CM), Raza Saeed (RS), Mini Saxena (MSa), Marie Selwood (MSe), Mitchell Travis (MT), Emily Walsh (EW)

Online

Daniel Bedford (DB), Philip Bremner (PB), Marie Burton (MB), Beverley Clough (BC), Richard Craven (RC), Matt Howard (MHo), Smita Kheria (SK), Kay Lalor (KL),

Kirsten McConnachie (KM) Rebecca Moosavian (RM),

## 1. Apologies

Ciara Fitzpatrick (CF), Marie Hutton (MHu), Emma Jones (EJ), Mark Simpson (MSi)

## 2. Approval of Minutes and outstanding Action Points

### 2.1. Meeting 11 May 2023

Board approved the minutes.

### 2.2. Action points from previous meetings

### 2.2.1. 11 May 2023

Board reviewed the action points and were satisfied with the outcomes.

### 2.2.2. 12 January 2023

Board reviewed the action points and were satisfied with the outcomes.

## 3. Charity law – role of trustees (Dr John Picton)

The Board heard from Dr John Picton about nonprofit regulation and trustee duties.

**Action**: JH, MSe, EG and MB to create a pack on the role of trustees.

**Action**: EM to edit the recording of John Picton’s talk and make available on the SLSA YouTube site as an unlisted file.

## 4. New and updated initiatives and policies

### 4.1. Learned Societies/Interdisciplinarity (JH)

AB and JH provided verbal update of the pilot work being done to set up connections with other learned societies, including the possibility of one-day conferences, co-badged events. The team have a number of organisations that they are approaching to pilot events, will then monitor the outcome and see about rolling out further.

### 4.2. Socio-Legal Education Project (DB/EW)

EW and DB gave an overview of the project, including the funding that has been applied for to support the work. Confirmed that if the funding does not come through then will present amended plans to the Board.

DB advised he has spoken EJ who confirmed the ALT would be happy to be involved.

SK asked about why the focus was on UG studies, rather than PG taught and encouraged the inclusion of PGT curriculum and teaching. Also asked if the survey would be open to all socio-legal scholars, rather than just members or individuals in certain job roles.

EW and DB confirmed the survey would be open to all and the SLSA conference in Portsmouth would offer a great opportunity to obtain a good response rate.

Also advised the survey was written with an attempt to manage the of length, which is why the focus is on UG. However, they will amend and redraft to include PGT.

AG noted that the table may produce some confusing data due to the way different law schools structure their teaching of the foundational subjects. Also noted it is very England-centric, which will require consideration of specific circumstances in other parts of the UK.

CW suggested including a question asking which country the participant’s law school is based in. JH suggested engaging with Board members based in Scotland and Northern Ireland before launching the survey.

EW noted they wanted to get an idea of whether there were varying levels of socio-legal content across the curriculum. Confirmed they would rethink how to approach this.

**Action**: DB and EW to revise the survey and present back to the Board in January.

## 5. Conferences

### 5.1.1. Ulster (MSi/CF)

JH talking to MSi W/C 18 September 2023 and will obtain an update on the surplus and report for the Board on the conference.

**Action**: CF and MSi to produce the final report for the Ulster conference for the January Board.

### 5.1.2. Portsmouth (DB/EW)

DB advised the Board the plans for the Portsmouth conference are going well. The main issue the team are grappling with is the hybrid format plans. Had planned to borrow equipment from Ulster and then buy further items. However, the 2025 conference organisers have confirmed that they plan to employ externals to run their hybrid element – so any equipment purchased by Portsmouth will not be used the following year.

DB presented information about how other organisations are approaching their conferences, showing that very few are offering hybrid as an option at all, or that their hybrid delivery is much more limited compared to the in-person conference delivery. Presented the costs of quotes that the team have obtained for external company to run the hybrid element, noting that this cost would have a significant impact on the surplus that would be donated to the SLSA.

The Board discussed the balance between the conference being inclusive through hybrid provision, the surplus available to the SLSA from the conference, and also the quality of the experience of those joining online, as well as the considerable burden placed on conference organisers.

The Board discussed the possibility that the SLSA could hire out any equipment that we purchased. However, DB advised the equipment is not high-spec and so would be of limited value to those wishing to hire. SK also noted that hiring out equipment would be a large undertaking and one the SLSA is not equipped for.

The Board discussed the possibility of reducing the hybrid provision so that it does not cover the whole conference.

DB and EW noted that changing the number of sessions that are hybrid (reducing from the full conference to perhaps the first day) could be done, but would take work as this is not the model plans are built upon.

JH advise that such a change in plans at this point is not feasible, so hybrid provision would be for the whole conference.

DB noted capacity for the whole conference in persons is 900.

SK noted that at some point the Board needs a broader discussion as to how we want our conferences to be delivered in the future, the nature of the hybrid provision and consequently what we ask from host institutions – rather than agreeing a host institution and then working out the hybrid later.

**Action**: The Board will keep options for the delivery of future conferences and hybrid provision under ongoing review, in light of planning for (and experience) at Portsmouth.

PB confirmed that from a financial point of view, the external events company would reduce the contribution from the conference to SLSA significantly, while renting the equipment would ensure the contribution is secure.

JH also expressed the need to pay attention to the financial contribution to the SLSA and any impact on our ability to complete our other functions.

The Board agreed to Portsmouth hiring the mics with some support from external bodies and students.

**Action**: Portsmouth team to progress the plans for conference in light of discussions and agreement from the Board. To bring a full briefing to the January board and keep JH and PB updated as plans progress.

**Action**: DB and EW to review the provision of support from external technicians and students.

**Action**: JH and PB to engage with conference organisers of 2025 re costings for hybrid and impact on surplus.

CM asked if the app DB is developing for the conference could become an SLSA app that has life beyond the conference.

**Action**: DB to bring the app proposal to the January Board.

### 5.1.3. Future conferences (JH)

See Chair report (6.1.).

### 5.2. Postgraduate Conference (MM/LM)

Board reviewed the proposal from Northumbria University team. LM noted no space allocated for the VSR students and no breakfast included due to budget restrictions.

Board agreed the budget could be increased to £7,000, but that this needs to include breakfast for students.

SK reminded the Board that a separate budget has been reserved to pay for the catering of the VSR students.

**Action**: EG, LM and MSa to feedback to the Northumbria team on these points and revised budget.

SK asked if the sessions are co-run and if a call will be sent to SLSA members, as previously discussed at Board meetings.

EG confirmed sessions will be co-run, that Laura Graham has spoken to people who have co-run sessions before.

**Action**: Northumbria team (with support from PGR Reps and MSe) to put call out for co-run sessions.

EM asked if attendees need to be members. LM advised not.

The Board discussed the approach to allocating places (previously on a first-come-first-served basis, but with limit on the number of PGRs per institution).

**Action**: Northumbria team to work with PGR reps to manage inclusivity and registration process, plus the admin support that can be provided to the PGR reps.

### 5.3. One Day Conferences (JH)

RC confirmed the team are processing the conference and arrangements. Really good response to the CfP, so have amended the plan for the day in response.

**Action**: After the conference has run, RC to produce a report for the Board.

JH reminded the Board that the One Day Conference is an option for Board members due to not being eligible for other funding. Usually no funds attached, but SLSA support can assist in obtaining other funds to fund a conference. Board members are encouraged to submit proposals to the Board.

## 6. Officer Reports

### 6.1. Chair (JH)

The SLSA’s annual return Charity Commission was submitted on the 25th July 2023. Confirmation of the return is stored in the SLSA Sync folder.

### 6.1.1. Nomination of AcSS Fellows

JH explained that we follow the process that the AcSS request.

The Board agreed they were happy with the approach that we take.

**Action**: MSe to tweak the language for the call to make the approach clear.

### 6.2. Vice-Chair (SK)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.3. Treasurer (PB)

The Board discussed PB’s proposal for the savings account and approved the approach PB proposed.

**Action**: PB to implement the savings plan.

### 6.4. Membership and data protection (CM)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.4.1. Changes to SLSA Privacy Policy

Board agreed the proposed changes to the policy.

**Action**: MSe to upload new version of the Privacy Policy to the website.

**Action**: CM to revise privacy policy so we don’t need to update it every time we want to use a new system. Bring revision of policy to the January Board.

### 6.5. Recruitment (RM)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.6. EDI (BC/AJ)

### 6.6.1. Gathering EDI data

AJ and JH explained that feedback from the Board on the proposed EDI questionnaire is requested. The questionnaire will be circulated by email for consultation and JH will request feedback via email, which will be reported on an anonymous basis.

**Action**: JH to conduct email consultation on the survey and report back to AW and BC.

**Action**: AJ and BC to implement the EDI survey in line with results from the consultation. CW to provide digital support.

The Board approved the administrator processing the EDI data collection.

**Action**: EM to work with AJ, BC and CW to develop and deliver the process for implementing EDI data collection.

### 6.6.2. Mentoring

SF outlined that mentors and mentees had been matched and the pilot scheme was underway. However, noted that the planned plenary session was hard to organise online. Board agreed that happy for BC to bring mentors together in online session, and then they can meet their mentees individually.

**Action**: AJ/BC and MSe to liaise about inclusion of information about the mentoring scheme in the newsletter.

**Action**: EW and DB to advise AJ and BC about the bursaries for the Portsmouth conference.

### 6.6.3. Requirement for conference attendance for prize nomination

The Board reviewed the proposed changes to the Prizes rules.

AJ confirmed the change is for next year and rules will stay as are for the 2024 prizes.

SK suggested some change to the wording about attendance, outlining the value of attending the conference, to build community.

SK noted that the amendment that both a nominator and the nominated person are members is not a clarification but a change of policy.

The Board agreed that nominators and nominees should both be members and that to manage the process, non-members must join the SLSA within 2 weeks of their application being received; if they do not join in that timeframe then the application will be rejected.

SK to complete a review of the Prize rules following completion of this round.

**Action**: SK to complete review of Prize rules and report back to Board in May.

**Action**: MSe to remove content from the website about how to nominate for the Prizes following the close of the 2024 round.

See 6.15. for discussion of publishers’ nominations to the Book Prize.

### 6.7. Precarity (AJ)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.8. Newsletter and Web Editor (MSe)

**Action**: MSe to present info on carbon footprint implications of hardcopy newsletter at January Board.

**Action**: MSe to send information to all members that they can opt for an online version of the newsletter through the member’s area of the website. Include a note to contact the administrator if uncertain how to login.

### 6.9. PGR Representatives (LM/MSa)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.10. International Liaison (SK)

The Board approved the SLSA hosting a joint event with USAID focussed on developing socio-legal studies in Ukraine, at no cost to the SLSA. Main role of the SLSA is to release a call for speakers and help arrange speakers. Administration will be undertaken by USAID.

**Action**: SK and MSe to liaise about sending out a call for speakers.

### 6.11. Webmaster (DB)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.12. Social Media (EG)

Nothing to add to the report.

The Board briefly discussed if we should have an online presence on any other social media platforms, other than Twitter. AG noted that LinkedIn is good for legal professionals.

**Action**: Fundraising group to consider the role of LinkedIn in future fundraising activities.

### 6.13. Blog Editor (MHu/EJ)

Not present.

### 6.14. YouTube Channel (EM)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.15. Publisher’s Liaison (RS)

RS confirmed he has completed handover of the role and will be working with the Portsmouth team to assist in arrangements of publishers’ attendance.

RS will be considering how to take forward relationships with publishers, notably beyond the conference.

The Board discussed the role of publishers’ nominations to the Book Prize.

**Action**: RS and CM to bring proposal to the next board for how to manage publisher nominated book prizes, in particular financial support provided to SLSA in those cases (sharing proposal with JH for comment in advance of the meeting).

**Action**: EM to provide data on the number of nominations received from publishers.

**Action**: EM to include item on agenda for discussion of the management of publishers’ nominations for the Book Prize.

**Action**: EM and SR to liaise to create an alias email address for the publisher’s liaison.

### 6.16. Open Access (SF)

Nothing to add to the report.

### 6.17. Stream Secretary (BC)

JH noted that BC has done great work taking this forward. The Board expresses their huge thanks.

### 6.18. Fundraising Group (SK)

SK updated the Board on the technical options for a donate button on the website (off-site and on-site). The fundraising group agreed that off-site was better as it will not cost us anything.

DB is looking into adding a donate option when paying membership fees. Estimated cost from the CRM is about £570 ex. VAT.

Board approved general donation page “off-site” and agreed that the group should continue working to implement extra donations to the membership fees.

**Action**: Fundraising group to report back to the Board on progress in January.

**Action**: Board to send ideas for fundraising to SK.

**Action**: Once donation page set up, SK to provide EM with text to include in emails to members after they renew their membership fees.

### 6.19. Administrator (EM)

EM and DB outlined the need to move away from the Gmail account. DB exploring using Mailchimp. EM asked if Mailchimp will interact with Outlook, so we can mail merge. DB to investigate.

**Action**: DB and EM to implement new email system.

## 7. Prizes and Competitions

### 7.1. Book prizes (SK)

Nothing at this time.

### 7.2. Article prizes (JH)

Nothing at this time.

### 7.3. Grants (RM)

Board agreed we should write-off the one outstanding grant from 2015.

EM suggest moving to online database in the Sync folder.

**Action**: EM to set up database for grants and funding awards, share with relevant people so they can input relevant data.

CM provided a brief update on the plans to move to online system for applications, noting his full report would be provided in January. Can’t add a save button to Qualtrics, and this may not be the correct software due to cost. CM to investigate others and bring to Board as part of his report.

### 7.4. Seminars (SF)

Nothing at this time.

### 7.5. Impact Fund Awards (MT)

Board agreed that the proposals submitted to be Board could be funded.

**Action**: MT to progress the awards.

**Action**: MT to liaise with MSe about announcing the successful proposals in the newsletter.

MT reported that the Impact subcommittee continue to work on the proposed event on ‘understanding impact’ and are considering other methods of communicating core messages to members.

**Action**: MT to submit proposal to January meeting from the Impact subcommittee on the event ‘understanding impact’ and proposals for other methods of communicating core messages.

Board discussed the resource implication of reviewing impact case studies from last REF. Board agreed we do not have the resources for a full analysis.

JH suggested instead the analysis could focus on the impact work that has come out of SLSA impact prizes and grants.

Impact subcommittee to consider further and report back to the Board.

**Action**: MT to report back to the Board in January about proposals for analysing impact work by SLSA members.

**Action**: Board to send MT “dos” and “don’ts” of impact. Aim is to include in the newsletter (MT liaise with MSe to disseminate).

### 7.6. Contributions to the socio-legal community (JH)

JH confirmed we have extended the deadline and currently have two nominations. The vote will take place online.

**Action**: EM to administer online vote.

## 8. Any Other Business

EM advised the January Board meeting needs to be rescheduled.

**Action**: EM to determine new time/date for the January Board via poll and then communicate with the Board.