

# KCLSU Commercial Services Guidance & Strategy

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## 1. Introduction

The core purpose of KCLSU's commercial services is to generate revenue to fund our activities. However, it must be remembered that this is an addition to our main source of funding - the block grant - and that it cannot be guaranteed.

Unlike many private businesses, we are constrained by several factors:

- a. Our physical location is restricted.
- b. Our customer base is out of our control (although within it we are able to target particular groups).
- c. Our actions are underpinned by a clear set of values, and we wish them to be.

Therefore, we are unable to

- i. position ourselves aggressively with respect to our competition, i.e. make ourselves more attractive than the alternative solely in terms of our product;
- ii. 'drive the market', i.e. we cannot create demand in the way that other commercial concerns can; or
- iii. make decisions based solely on the maximisation of profit, e.g. sell Nestle products or offer volume related promotion of alcoholic products.

Therefore, the surpluses we are able to deliver should be considered a welcome bonus rather than a financial lifeline. But it does not mean that we can do nothing to manage the situation.

Forward planning and the ability to respond to change can effectively maximise our potential and minimise any possible risks. It is imperative first that we learn from our past performance, the information we gather from students and what our partners tell us and use that learning to inform our planning; and secondly, that we build into that planning mechanisms to identify situations that need to be addressed and room to respond.

The fluid culture that exists within KCLSU allows our priorities to be quickly reordered, but if we are to retain this extra source of funding for activity then we must become ever more nimble, coupling an active approach with the ability to react when required.

## 2. Aims & objectives

- To generate surpluses in order to provide additional funding for activity undertaken, supported or facilitated by KCLSU.
- To sustain and increase this additional funding and thereby aid the development of the organisation as a whole.
- To be aware of changes in the student demographic to ensure the services we offer change with demand and are therefore able to sustain and increase the additional funding.
- To be a visible and accessible element of KCLSU.
- To offer employment and therefore personal development opportunities to students.

### 3. Current services

Venues	Retail	Other
Guy's Bar Inverse The Waterfront Tutu's	Guy's Strand Waterloo Online	K4 Cigarette vending Games machines Jukebox

### 4. Who are our customers?

KCLSU offers a range of commercial services, each with a particular primary customer base. Some services will naturally be geared to appeal to a wide cross section of our student demographic; however, other services, notably venues, are focused on a narrower element of the student population. Our activities within the licensed trade sector are primarily directed at catering for younger students, therefore we recognise that we must address their needs not only as students but also as young consumers who have particular standards and expectations.

Our customer bases include:

- Young Students -targeted as a particular sub group of our student body
- Students - covering our broader demographic
- College staff
- KCLSU staff
- General public
- Alumni

### 5. Standards & measurements

#### 5.1. Financial targets

These are set via individual budgets within the department. Internal systems are in place to enable regular monitoring which enables us to take a more dynamic approach. The department works closely with the Finance department to ensure clear guidelines, effective systems and procedures are in place for staff to work within, and that financial information is accurate and in line with that held centrally.

To reach our targets we

- 5.1.1. work within structured procedures for every aspect of our activity;
- 5.1.2. produce annual budgets and forecasts;
- 5.1.3. produce a monthly variance report;
- 5.1.4. produce monthly management accounts reports;
- 5.1.5. produce weekly sales and staffing monitoring documents;
- 5.1.6. produce daily site logs incorporating sales and staffing information;
- 5.1.7. produce monthly stock take reports;
- 5.1.8. monitor trends and patterns via EPOS and Sports Soft;
- 5.1.9. consider and respond to the information we produce; and
- 5.1.10. consider and respond to external information.

#### 5.2. Quality & service standards

We have developed, and regularly review, systems and procedures to ensure we deliver a consistently high level of service. This permeates every aspect of operations as we strive for excellence.

To maintain standards we

- 5.2.1. produce and evaluate departmental systems and procedures;
- 5.2.2. produce and evaluate site and venue Standard Operational Procedures;
- 5.2.3. ensure ongoing staff induction and training;
- 5.2.4. involve all staff in the preparation of service standards with the aim of instilling a sense of ownership;
- 5.2.5. undertake internal spot checks, feedback the results to staff and set deadlines for improvements; and
- 5.2.6. act on feedback and deadlines set by the internal quality audit team.

### **5.3. Legal compliance**

We are fully aware of our legal obligations and are committed to meeting and surpassing statutory requirements. It is our aim to be an example of best practice, working with all relevant bodies to ensure both students and KCLSU operate in the securest environment possible.

We are required to comply with legislation covering:

- 5.3.1. health & safety
  - 5.3.1.1. environmental health
  - 5.3.1.2. fire safety
- 5.3.2. licensing
- 5.3.3. employment
- 5.3.4. contracts
- 5.3.5. copyright

### **5.4. Ethical & environmental**

Corporate social responsibility lies at the heart of our approach to our commercial interests. A balance needs to be struck between the health and welfare of students, our need for commercial revenue, and our responsibilities with respect to the environment.

In order to find this balance we

- 5.4.1. comply with the Human Resources Strategy & Guidelines;
- 5.4.2. ensure our suppliers are reputable and ethical;
- 5.4.3. where possible offer Fairtrade alternatives;
- 5.4.4. take up any opportunities that will enable us to promote and develop practices that take into consideration ethical and environmental concerns;
- 5.4.5. not offer volume or time related promotion of alcoholic products, such as happy hours;
- 5.4.6. host events that encourage and enable all students to participate; and
- 5.4.7. support KCLSU campaigns, especially those relating to corporate social responsibility and the protection of students when using our services.

### **5.5. Marketing & research**

With the Communications Working Group we take collective responsibility for the dissemination of information concerning KCLSU services and facilities, and in particular the promotion of our commercial interests with the aim of maximising our surplus.

We learn from our past performance, the information we gather from students and what our partners tell us and use that learning to inform our planning. Further research is undertaken when necessary.

We will undertake

- 5.5.1. performance reviews;
- 5.5.2. stakeholder research;
- 5.5.3. to form and develop relationships with key partners;
- 5.5.4. sector research;
- 5.5.5. quality audits;
- 5.5.6. promotions, within the parameters of our commitment to corporate social responsibility;
- 5.5.7. to advertise all promotions and events;
- 5.5.8. to ensure appropriate and targeted space for our services;
- 5.5.9. to regularly review our products and pricing; and
- 5.5.10. to put in place mechanisms to collect student feedback.

## **5.6. Staff training & development**

Please also refer to the Human Resources Strategy & Guidelines.

We employ a substantial number of staff with differing levels of experience and expertise. Training analysis and on the job performance are used to establish the needs of each member of staff, and subsequent training and coaching is provided to meet and exceed those needs in order to maximise the individual's potential.

All staff receive

- 5.6.1. induction;
- 5.6.2. departmental training;
- 5.6.3. job specific training;

and members of permanent staff also receive

- 5.6.4. vocational training;
- 5.6.5. personal development opportunities, including time to volunteer;
- 5.6.6. fortnightly one-to-one meetings; and
- 5.6.7. biannual appraisals.

## **5.7. Partnerships & networks**

We have identified certain key relationships that will bring commercial benefit whilst enabling us to share knowledge and expertise, and to improve our reputation and profile. We strive to maintain and develop these relationships, whilst also seeking out new ones.

- 5.7.1. National Union of Students Services Limited (NUSSL)
- 5.7.2. National Union of Students (NUS)
- 5.7.3. Association of Managers in Students' Unions (AMSU)
- 5.7.4. other students' unions
- 5.7.5. promotional organisations
- 5.7.6. King's College London
- 5.7.7. alumni
- 5.7.8. Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)
- 5.7.9. local authorities
- 5.7.10. local police