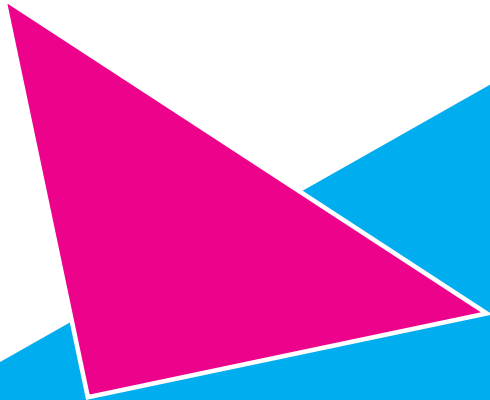


Campus Outreach Strategy

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Introduction

Welcome to Imperial College Union's first ever campus outreach strategy. Imperial is a growing and changing institution, not least in the number of students located away from the main campus at South Kensington. Setting aside the exciting future developments at Imperial West, 23% of the Union's postgraduate members are based permanently at sites away from South Kensington. Until now the Union has had very little practical presence or visibility at other campuses.

This strategy outlines the Union's plans for campus outreach over the period to 2016. This work is referenced in the Union's main strategic plan in the section on Building a Student Community. The campus outreach strategy is arranged in three sections: Support for Student Involvement; Ensuring a local community is fostered and campaigning for an equitable experience. Over the coming years the Union will be publishing annual plans to enable this strategy to be achieved, as well as reporting on progress towards the measures which are outlined in each section.

The plan is ambitious and challenging, but we are confident of our ability to achieve the aims, objectives and measures presented. The publishing of this plan marks the beginning of far greater support for our members who study and research at Imperial's campuses away from South Kensington. Consider important should be considered in this context – small achievements do make a tangible difference to the quality of campus life.

For a digital copy of this report and accompanying information go online to

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All information correct at the time of going to print March 2014.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This strategy outlines the Union's strategy for campus outreach over the period to 2016. This work is outlined as objective SC6 in the Union's strategic plan. A reflection of the Union's activities and participation levels at campuses away from South Kensington is provided, followed by a description of the activities which were undertaken to understand student life away from SW7.
- 1.2. Feedback from students and student groups operating at campuses away from South Kensington has provided the bulk of the ideas which have led to three themes of this strategy, together with a number of enablers. Under each theme we define a strategic aim for the next three years, together with a number of goals and measures for each theme. The implementation plan for this year is provided in the final section.
- 1.3. The overarching message of this strategy is that life away from South Kensington is different to the experience that many closely associated with the Union may consider the norm. The student populations at some of the campuses are equivalent to mid-sized departments at South Kensington and the factors which students consider important should be considered in this context – small achievements do make a tangible difference to the quality of campus life.
- 1.4. 23% of our postgraduate members are now based away from South Kensington. According to the latest HESA information

virtually the same numbers of Imperial postgraduate students are based at a London campus away from South Kensington (1374) as study at the Royal College of Art (1315).

2. Current situation

- 2.1. Imperial College London, since its establishment in 1907, has operated from a base in South Kensington. Over one hundred years later the College now has eight formal campuses, has a presence in a number of hospitals across West London, has students on learning and research placements at institutions all over the world and is embarking on the development of a major new campus at White City – Imperial West. With the exception of Silwood Park (acquired in 1947), the College's campuses away from South Kensington were established as a result of various medical school mergers between 1988 and 1997.
- 2.2. Imperial College Union represents all students of Imperial College London, including those at other campuses away from South Kensington. With the exception of Silwood Park, the Union currently has little practical presence or visibility at other campuses. While students receive information from the Union at the start of their studies and via email, there is little regular presence of the Union in any form beyond activities such as sabbatical election campaigning. Indeed no one has been able to cite an instance of the Union undertaking at activity at the Brompton campus despite it being less than a mile from the Union Building.

- 2.3. While nearly all of the students at the hospital campuses belong to the Faculty of Medicine, the ICSMSU does not have representative or extra-curricular jurisdiction for these students as they are postgraduates, with the notable exception of the Graduate Entry Medicine course at Hammersmith. With the last merger of medical schools some fifteen years distant the Union has not until recently clarified the representative structures for postgraduate students in the Faculty of Medicine. This situation is arguably reflective of support which has been afforded to the students based at these campuses until recently.
- 2.4. The Graduate Students' Union, while having a remit to support all postgraduates, currently engage in virtually no activity beyond South Kensington. By definition the Representative Network covers all students on all courses and thus has presence at campuses, but the remit of this network is very specific in nature and does not cover the full breadth of the Union's engagement possibilities.
- 2.5. At Silwood Park the Constituent Union (the Silwood Park Union) has operated for many years, offering a number of activities suitable for the unique nature of the campus, including a twice weekly minibus service to the supermarket for students without transport and the opportunity to care for the Union's chickens. Life at Silwood Park is very different to that at the London campuses. The Silwood Park Union has operated in a relatively self-sufficient way for a long time, without some of the development opportunities which has been provided to student groups operating from South Kensington in recent years.
- 2.6. There are challenges at Silwood Park, particularly in the provision of services and facilities, as the student body is currently small, at 151 students last year. In the past year we have helped the students at the campus in developing a proposal for new equipment for the Gym and evaluating the financial case for an additional minibus.
- 2.7. Imperial's campuses away from South Kensington fall into two groups, other London campuses (Hammersmith, Chelsea, Brompton, Charing Cross and St. Marys) as well as Silwood Park. Brompton is home to the National Heart and Lung Institute; the other Schools, Institutes and Departments of the Faculty of Medicine have students located at each of the other London sites.
- 2.8. Student numbers quoted in this strategy are from the last College census date (31/12/12). At the other London campuses, 757 students were postgraduate researchers, while the remaining 617 studying on postgraduate taught programmes. 811 students were located permanently at Hammersmith, 196 registered on the Graduate Entry Medicine programme and the remaining 615 postgraduates registered on a mixture of taught and research programs. The other London sites are exclusively postgraduate, 555 students located at St. Marys, 39 at

Chelsea, 88 at Brompton and 77 at Charing Cross. Medical students who are following the 6-year MBBS medicine programme are registered as being located in South Kensington for the purposes of the College's reporting; they do however have teaching at a number of hospital sites, particularly at Charing Cross.

2.9. At Silwood Park all but five of the 151 students located there were drawn from the Division of Ecology & Evolution, part of the Department of Life Sciences. The remaining five being research students connected to the Centre for Environmental Policy. The students at Silwood are split equally between taught and research postgraduates. It is worth noting that many of the students at Silwood undertake fieldwork at some point in a year, so the actual number of student present on the site fluctuates.

2.10. Student numbers at London campuses away from South Kensington have increased by 30% since 2007/08 to 1,570 last year, while students based at South Kensington have increased by 18% and student numbers at Silwood Park have remained static during the same time period. Of the 1,570 students at London campuses away from South Kensington 1,374 are postgraduates, the remaining 196 undergraduates are part of the Graduate Entry Medicine Programme. Students located away from South Kensington now represent 11% of the Union's membership, while only an increase of 1% since 2007/08 it is prudent to be planning for the future given the

impending development of Imperial West.

2.11. Participation in the Union's activities from students away from South Kensington is currently not one of our success stories. 195 of the postgraduates based at a London campus away from South Kensington chose to join a Club, Society or Project last year, a participation rate of 14%. At South Kensington 32% of postgraduates opted to join at least one Club, Society or Project last year. During the sabbatical elections 18% of postgraduates at South Kensington voted, compared to 14% at the other London campuses.

2.12. There is no benchmark data available from other Students' Unions to provide a comparison for these numbers, indeed for many unions a 14% turnout in sabbatical elections where the student body was nearly 45% postgraduate would be considered a ground-breaking achievement.

2.13. It is useful however to reflect upon our comparative numbers for undergraduate participation – 74% joined a Club, Society or Project last year and 59% voted in the sabbatical elections. It is also useful to reflect that 23 of the 83 Union Awards presented in June went to postgraduates – only two were for postgraduates based at a London campus which wasn't South Kensington.

3. Route to understanding life at the campuses

3.1. Nearly two years ago the Union identified the engagement of students at the campuses away from South Kensington as a challenge which needed understanding. While engagement of students at these campuses has been building over the past five years it was felt we didn't truly understand student life beyond South Kensington and our setup at Silwood Park. Indeed this was reflective in the culture of the organisation – few of the Union's staff had ever visited a campus away from SW7 despite some being within 20 minutes' walk away.

3.2. The bulk of the initial work in developing this plan involved looking specifically at data from surveys and other feedback mechanisms from the recent past to help to build a picture of the current levels of engagement and participation in student activities, feedback on campus life, availability of services and governance such as elections. One of the outcomes of the survey analysis work was specific campus-related recommendations in the Union's first response to the College's annual Student Experience Survey, which is conducted every December. The survey's focus is on the College's support services for students, including elements delivered by the Union.

3.3. Two semi-formal student communities currently exist at other campuses, namely the Silwood Park Union and the Hammersmith Student Community. These

have provided a very useful sounding board in understanding the challenges that students face at campuses away from South Kensington, both generally and in specific relation to delivering activities 'of the Union'. We cannot underestimate how importantly face-to-face support is perceived by the students running these groups and how difficult College and Union processes can be to navigate as a volunteer when attempting a task or activity for the first time. The need for the Union to develop and maintain relationships with College staff at other campuses was underlined when following up on situations regarding access for student-run events – while very simplistic in nature it is these relationships which are required to allow activities to flourish.

3.4. During the last academic year the Union began to provide some physical visibility at other campuses, particularly Hammersmith, taking elections campaigning, information stands and the Union strategy ideas day to the campus at different times. The visibility that these events brought led to a number of conversations, particularly at Hammersmith, involving opening times of the catering facilities and funding for a football league. While it is hard to say whether these situations would have been raised through other means, the students involved credited it to the visibility of the Union on the campus previously. While small in nature, numerous changes the Union can instigate could potentially make the difference to campus life.

- 3.5. A similar approach was taken with a number of the other campuses, co-delivering a series of visits “Hub-on-Tour” with colleagues from the Student Hub, taking services provided by the Union & College at South Kensington elsewhere. This format provided a slightly different mechanism to gather student feedback.
- 3.6. Visits to campuses were followed with surveys specifically of students at St. Marys and Hammersmith, the biggest student populations away from South Kensington, asking for ideas on how campus life could be improved in these locations. The concept of providing tailored campus email newsletters from the Union was trialled for both St. Marys and Hammersmith with mixed success – having enough local information to communicate on a regular basis proved a challenge particularly for St. Marys.
- 3.7. Researching student life at the other campuses has given us an insight into these locations. Without daily presence at these sites it is hard to determine the current real campus view of the Union, but it is felt we have enough information to establish a strategic way forward and a plan for implementation in year one. Along the way we have provided some services, new to the students at these campuses, enabling us to expand the visibility of the Union, but acting as a useful trial of ideas for working with student communities which in South Kensington would often be considered a mid-sized department.

4. Summary of findings

- 4.1. The Union has a few student groups which operate exclusively away from South Kensington and are predominantly made up of Masters’ Students; the overarching theme from discussions with these already established groups was the concept that successive committees never meet their predecessors as they have left the College. The evidence is that the lack of formal handover anecdotally leads to a lack of understanding of systems, processes and relationships.
- 4.2. There is some good practice in this area from the Students’ Union at the LSE and from our Representation Network where the Union acts as a “middleman” between elected officers to facilitate a more detailed handover, rather than just relying on training sessions. In developing larger numbers of groups tailored exclusively towards Masters’ students, for example the course equivalent of a Departmental Society, this will be an important consideration in ensuring longevity of the groups. Another specific finding relating from groups run by predominantly Masters’ students was that an operating year tagged to the financial year was not ideal for their smooth running. While the financial year cannot be changed there may be other models be can be employed here to aid development of certain student groups.
- 4.3. For student groups to be able to operate smoothly within any College environment certain ‘hygiene’ factors need to be in

place, specifically access to space and facilities. This is both a practical and psychological situation, College staff need to understand the role of student-groups and be confident in allowing them to use space for non-standard activities, even if they are extremely low risk. Often these very simple relationships have never been established, and it is for the Union corporately to build and maintain these as we do extensively at South Kensington. Communal spaces often aren't extensive and some creativity is required in making events happen, again requiring the confidence and support of campus staff.

- 4.4. Having support available to those students who volunteer their time for us was perceived by them to be an important factor in future plans. A style of the face-to-face support available at South Kensington was considered by many to be important, despite advances in online support over the past few years. Indeed the results of the last Union survey tell us that students undertaking a role away from South Kensington are less likely to undertake our training, despite much of it being available in online only format.
- 4.5. Every day during the winter months the Union's Clubs, Societies & Projects undertake a vast array of activities, and a fair number take place a few minutes walk away of campuses away from South Kensington. Indeed, until recently, much of our training sessions for indoor sports took place in Paddington, with no membership of those groups coming from students at St. Marys. Some work was undertaken

to sample the location of club activities and their proximity to other campuses, a reasonable variety are taking place within walking distance. Proximity is arguably only one factor why postgraduates based away from South Kensington are not participating, but there is certainly work to do in breaking down the notion that activities just take place in South Kensington.

- 4.6. Over the past four years the Union has begun to offer a greater diversity of opportunities – no more are our non-commercial activities exclusively related to Clubs & Societies. This programme is set to accelerate over the next year and some reflection within the organisation has highlighted the need to include all our campuses in these activities, in particular in the execution of Union campaigns and the Community Volunteering Scheme. On a purely numerical basis one could expect each of the Union's committees which meet monthly to meet at another campus once in an academic year.
- 4.7. Awareness of who constitutes the campus cohort, when they start and whether they are students or staff members appeared to be causing some confusion. The general feeling was that many research students did not start in October leading to a lack of induction information being available to them, though we have been unable to substantiate this. While there is a clear definition of students based at a campus permanently there appeared to be a strong desire to involve transient undergraduate medical students on placements and BSc years in campus activities, as well

as College staff and visiting researchers. There also appeared to be confusion as to whether College staff could become involved in Union activities.

- 4.8. In a survey specifically of students at the St. Marys campus the students cited that they wanted opportunities to meet other students based on the campus, this notion was supported by feedback from the Hub-on-Tour events at this site. In some ways the result is not unsurprising as the campus has over 500 students and no campus social system. The underlying theme from many of the discussions with students was that there is a distinct need for social interaction, both with course/group colleagues but with a wider community. Communities don't always just appear. The Graduate School has also considered this scenario within research groups over the past year, coining the term cohort leader, someone being responsible for establishing the framework of events to build communities. This is a useful model which could be applied at the campuses.
- 4.9. The visits work as previously discussed gave an insight into the potential power of a regular visible presence at other campuses, indeed during the ideas day at Hammersmith the feedback was that they had very little knowledge of what the Union did, despite receiving arguably more information about the Union in the preceding few months. Face-to-face contact is important in turning the Union's message from paper and email into something real on the ground for students, and dispelling the notion that the Union is just for students at South Kensington as

the students at Hammersmith cited in a campus specific survey.

- 4.10. Understanding feedback and demonstrating the impact of our development activities will become more important as we undertake some of the actions outlined within this plan. While the Union has highly developed ways of capturing some feedback and participation information more work needs to be done to standardise this, for example not every survey can be broken down by campus and currently no participation information is gathered from Silwood Park. Work also needs to be undertaken to share this information easily with the College and student body so it can be used to its full potential.
- 4.11. Developing a real understanding of life away from South Kensington will become a key to developing activities and services which suit students at these campuses. For example, in work to establish the style of activities campus-based postgraduates wished to see the Union provide, they were more interested in casual style sporting activities rather than formal and regular team systems. On the face of it this is a very simplistic conclusion, but it will be important in determining how we might fund and organise future sporting provision, or how we might encourage our established student groups to do this. Building and sharing information about life on the campuses is likely to be key in moving many of our student delivered activities to a situation where they suit the needs of this sector of the student body.

4.12. Becoming recognised by the students away from South Kensington as their voice is probably best tackled the communication of positive actions undertaken to improve campus life. Qualitative feedback received indicated that students away from South Kensington lacked interest or much engagement in the governance of the Union. This is demonstrated in particular by the turnout in the 2013 Big Elections. It is useful to reflect that the only campus currently specifically represented on Union Council is Silwood Park.

4.13. A number of College services currently offer a reduced provision to students located away from South Kensington - services which students at these sites felt the Union should be lobbying on for more appropriate provision. Very few felt that a completely equivalent service was appropriate or necessary. Views were expressed that given the small size of the campuses that student views on how the sites are run should be considered in a formal manner, in areas beyond the scope of the Representation Network, building in the local knowledge of those based on those campuses.

4.14. Imperial West is the College's major new campus in White City, co-locating world class researchers, businesses and higher education partners. The plans for the campus are still being developed. Earlier in the year the College unveiled its vision for the campus. Given the establishment of research activities, the presence of the postgraduate only Wood Lane Studios and undergraduate accommodation in

North Action, together with the site's proximity to the Hammersmith campus the site is likely to become a hub for student life.

5. Strategy

5.1. The findings from the work undertaken have been developed into a strategy for campus outreach over the next three years. Following the same format as the main Union strategy this work develops under three themes:

5.1.1. Support for student involvement,

5.1.2. Ensuring a local is community is fostered,

5.1.3. Campaigning and lobbying for equitable experience.

5.2. Each theme is outlined in the subsequent sections, providing an overarching strategic aim, with a number of goals and measures for each one.

5.3. Various enablers have been identified which will allow the Union to understand more fully our membership going forward, these will be built into the Union's on-going work streams.

6. Enabling work - understanding our membership

6.1. While developing this strategy a number of pieces of enabling work have been identified to ensure we have an on-going understanding of our membership. We believe we must be the experts in student life across the complete spectra of the College.

6.2. Key to this is having a core understanding of student life from all campuses, enabling us to make informed decisions and lobby for change, be receptive and responsive to our members, whether they student in South Kensington or elsewhere. This understanding is necessary to underpin our approach to representation, activities and services at campuses away from South Kensington.

6.3. All students should feel able to participate in feedback mechanisms and the Union should be able to distil the views of students by the locale in which they study. Campus visibility of the Union currently exists in a fragmented manner beyond the boundaries of SW7. Part of the route to understanding student life elsewhere will be a consolidated approach to providing

visibility of the Union's activities at each campus, in a structured and planned way, building campuses into the psyche of the organisation.

6.4. It is proposed that through the period to 2016 we will have undertaken the following work to enable us to be understanding our membership more fully:

6.4.1. Developed ways of collecting and publishing campus specific information from our surveys and other feedback mechanisms.

6.4.2. Be capturing and analysing participation information across the range of our activities from students at each campus.

6.4.3. Be operating a programme of weekly visits to campuses away from South Kensington to gather on-going information and feedback.

6.4.4. Be publishing at least annual engagement guidance about campuses to our student volunteers, and have been including visits within indication programmes for some time.

6.4.5. Be operating campus specific communication streams.

6.4.6. Understand and have a plan in place for the Union's presence at Imperial West

▲ Support for greater

Student Involvement

▲ The Union plays an important role for all students during their time at the College, especially through our programme of extra-curricular activities. It is our intention that location will not be a barrier to participation in these activities, nor will it cause a substantive difference to the support or development opportunities those students who volunteer their time to be involved in running these activities receive. We will work on building and sustaining productive relationships with College staff at each campus to enable student-led activities to take place more easily. Our intention is that a version of the current services offered to student groups and volunteers at South Kensington will be available at all campuses, to both students studying there permanently and to those living locally. We recognise that the financial year does not align to the life cycle of some student groups, in particular for one-year Master's students, a growing sector of our membership. During this strategic period we will be evaluating the most appropriate cycle for student-led groups. Student-led activities are only one part of a profile of activities offered by the Union, our programmes such as the Community Volunteering Scheme and our campaigns will be present at all campuses by 2016, offering the full range of services to students located there.

▲ Strategic Aim



By 2016 we will be recognised as supporting student involvement in a greater range of our activities at all Imperial's campuses

▲ Goals - By 2016 we will:

- S11 ▼ Publish where our Club, Society & Project activities are taking place and be able to link that information to students at all campuses.
- S12 ▼ Be delivering at least one element of Union campaigns, programmes and cross-cutting activities at all campuses, including 10% of opportunities within the Community Volunteering Scheme.
- S13 ▼ Be providing regular in-person support, training and development for students organising activities at all campuses away from South Kensington and made recommendations for the long term need for a physical support presence at each site.
- S14 ▼ Have enacted measures to manage the handover between single-year cohort groups.
- S15 ▼ Have evaluated whether the financial year remains the appropriate annual cycle for student groups by considering alternative models.

We will know we have succeeded when:

- At least 70% of the students located away from South Kensington agree that the Union has a positive impact on their time at Imperial.
- Participation in Clubs, Societies & Projects from students located away from South Kensington is 25%.
- Every campaign, programme and cross-cutting the Union operates has an element focused away from South Kensington.

▲ Campaigning and lobbying for

Equitable Experience

Student life exists well beyond the confines of the laboratory or library, and the Union has a role in campaigning for improvements in all aspects of it to ensure all our members receive an equitable experience. Our intention is to establish well researched feedback from students located away from South Kensington to enable us to contribute positively and robustly to College projects and work streams concerning all campuses. The other campuses can sometimes be forgotten, our intention is that this should not be the case and through suitably supported student representation we believe the Union has a role to play in championing the student view on the management group of each site. The Union also has a role to play in influencing decision makers external to the College who can also have a substantive impact on local student life, this we intend to pursue over the coming years, communicating the impact as we advance our influence.

▲ Strategic Aim



By 2016 we will have made a tangible impact on the experience of our members studying away from South Kensington

▲ Goals - By 2016 we will:

- EE1 ▼ Have undertaken tangible lobbying activities for non-academic facility improvement on each campus away from South Kensington.
- EE2 ▼ Be delivering at least one element of Union campaigns, programmes and cross-cutting activities at all campuses, including 10% of opportunities within the Community Volunteering Scheme.
- EE3 ▼ Have been successful at lobbying for student support services and those providing mandatory training to be offering sufficient presence at each campus.
- EE4 ▼ Communicate successes of campaigning and lobbying on a campus specific basis quarterly.
- EE5 ▼ Have robust student representation as part of the management group of each campus away from South Kensington.
- EE6 ▼ Have implemented strategic objective SV5 with specific relation to each campus.

We will know we have succeeded when:

- We publish at least one change delivered by the College to each campus as a result of lobbying activities in one academic year.
- At least 70% of the students located away from South Kensington agree that the Union is the voice for all students at Imperial.
- The turnout in sabbatical elections of the students located away from South Kensington is 20%.

▲ Ensuring a local

Community is Fostered

Student communities are best fostered by students; supporting these communities to flourish should be the role of the Union. Ensuring every student has the opportunity to meet socially those who they study alongside before and during their time as a student will be key to fostering campus communities over the coming few years. Our intention is to create recognised student communities at each campus, through a programme of development activities and by reviewing their place within the way the Union is governed. Inevitably this cannot be done without the support of students in creating their own communities, taking on roles as volunteers and feeling valued in doing that through schemes such as the Union's awards. We are not ignorant to the fact that in research-focused environments with few undergraduates the campus community generally extends to College staff. We will be reviewing the mechanisms for College staff to be involved in our activities to aid the establishment of these communities and recognise their place in community activities.

▲ Strategic Aim



By 2016 we will be recognised as a significant part of an enhanced student community at all campuses

▲ Goals - By 2016 we will:

- CF1 ▼ Have developed a recognised student community with a future development plan at each campus and have provided a range of extra-curricular activities to establish that community.
- CF2 ▼ Be supporting welcome events for new students on all campuses including pre-arrival activities.
- CF3 ▼ Have reviewed how College staff can be involved with our activities to create a learning community at campuses away from South Kensington.
- CF4 ▼ Have a scheme in place which recognises the achievements and contributions of students at all campuses.
- CF5 ▼ Have reviewed our governance arrangements and practices to ensure suitable representation of students from all campuses is taking place
- CF6 ▼ Ensure students away from South Kensington vote in our elections at comparable rates to those who are.

We will know we have succeeded when:

- We have a recognised and operational student community at each campus away from South Kensington.
- At least 70% of the students located away from South Kensington agree that the Union plays a fundamental role in creating a positive student community.
- At least 75% of the students located away from South Kensington have at least one interaction with the Union.

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