

IMPACT

Report

2012/13



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Welcome

TO OUR IMPACT REPORT

The academic year 2012/13 has been a successful year of growth and change for Imperial College Union. Through a range of new initiatives like the Student Academic Choice Awards, Stress Less and #AgainstActon to revamped services like the Union website, we certainly have lots to shout about. Structurally, the Union's governance has been overhauled and we are now a registered charity, with new governing documents and long-term agreements in place with the College.

Our annual Impact Report is a mere snapshot of the work Imperial College Union does throughout the year – always aiming to better the student experience and represent the student body as best we can. I hope in this Report we can give you a flavour of what we've achieved this year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Beaumont', located below the introductory text.

Paul Beaumont
President 2012/13





Anju's YEAR

2ND YEAR UNDERGRADUATE MEDICINE
Academic Rep

“Being an Academic Rep has given me a chance to help and listen to my fellow students.”

As a Fresher, last year, I was elected to be the Academic Rep for first year Undergraduate Medicine. This year I was keen to stand again! The Faculty of Medicine are great at listening to feedback and making changes as a result. When we had two major exams scheduled for consecutive days we let the Faculty know and they added a day between for us. Being an Academic Rep has given me the chance to help and listen to my fellow students, I've already been elected to a position for next year!

Amplifying

THE STUDENT VOICE

One of our primary functions is to represent our members to the College and the wider community. The Union should be champions for excellent teaching, research and feedback, and play a key role in helping the College improve students' experiences in this area.

#AGAINSTACTON

College's decision to purchase a new 700-bed hall of residence in North Acton was announced in February. Within 24 hours we had launched our #AgainstActon campaign which quickly gathered over 400 tweets, 18,500 page views and 650 student and staff signatures on our online petition. Our ability to quickly launch a well-planned and research-driven campaign prompted College's Management Board to respond to our five requests in an unprecedented move. The College have now committed to consultation with student groups about the impact of the new hall as well as the future of other halls of residence close to campus. #AgainstActon was undoubtedly the most effective campaign run by the Union in the last decade.

#AgainstActon

Read more about the campaign



£1,015,000

Sum of money taken online since the new Union website launched. This is up 16% on the same period last year!

400+

Uses of the #AgainstActon hashtag in support of our campaign.

1,050

Students visited the 'Stress Less' Petting Zoo on the Queen's Lawn.

3,030

Students voted in our Academic Rep Union Council Elections, our highest ever.

73%

Of students were satisfied or better with the Academic Rep system.

89%

Of students were satisfied or better with our Student Activities program.

NEW WEBSITE

Our new website, launched in September, was designed to enable our users to get to the information and services they needed quickly and hassle-free. New features such as a database-driven A-Z list of all our Club, Societies & Projects made it easier for students to get involved with activities. Our sector-leading Rep Finder also helped students discover who represented them in all areas of their College life. Finally, a streamlined and improved shopping process made it easier for students to purchase memberships products for tickets for events.

Since the website's launch, over £1m of transactions have been completed by over 188,500 visitors: an increase on the same time last year of 16%. Satisfaction ratings for the website also improved by over 9%, with 74% of students satisfied or better with the service.



STRESS LESS CAMPAIGN

During our Strategic Review and in responses to the Union Survey our members told us that the exam period was the most stressful time of the year for them. To help relieve this stress we launched Stress Less, a series of events and activities aimed at letting students take a break from revision. The biggest event of the campaign was the petting zoo on the Queen's Lawn. 1,050 students came to hold and pet the miniature ponies, goats and rabbits, making it the largest welfare event we have ever held.



REP WEEKS

Rep Weeks in November and February highlighted the great work done by our Academic Reps across College in their departments. The impact of the great work done by the Academic Reps was detailed in our You Said, We Did website and encouraged students to give us even more feedback. The weeks attracted 715 suggestions of how College could improve departments and courses.

715

The number of suggestions collected across our two Rep Weeks, suggestions that helped Academic Reps and Departments work together to make College a better place to learn and research.

IDEAS DAYS

Our Ideas Days allowed us to get a better idea of issues facing Imperial students and get feedback on some of the themes of our strategic plan. Days at South Kensington and Hammersmith campuses alongside an online survey helped us gather hundreds of students' thoughts and ideas. The findings and feedback from these days have played an important role in the creation of our Strategic Plan and each of the Union's departmental action plans for next year.

WHO IS MY REP?

Our 'Who is my Rep?' online tool, a first for a Students' Union, allows students to quickly see who their year, departmental and faculty representatives are. All they have to do is log in! This tool has increased students' awareness of their rep to over 70% and overall satisfaction with the Academic Reps system to 73%.

Who represents me?

MY DEPARTMENTAL REP

Athanasios Bourtsalas
DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVE

MY FACULTY REP

Nicholas Ng
ACADEMIC & WELFARE OFFICER

MY SABBATICAL

Doug Hunt
DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)

STUDENT SUPPORT

The Advice Centre helped hundreds of students with various issues that affect life as a student. From helping students in accommodation disputes to academic appeals we have saved students money and also managed to help their academic careers through the support we give.

£13,000

Sum of money saved for students in council tax and deposit disputes through support from The Advice Centre.

RECORD BREAKING ELECTIONS

More students took part in elections this year than ever before. 3,030 students voted in the Academic Reps & Union Council elections, our highest ever, electing over 150 volunteer positions. The Big Elections 2013 saw more records beaten with 59% of Undergraduates voting for their new Sabbatical Team. Overall 6,496 students voted in The Big Elections 2013, giving an overall turnout of 41% and maintaining our position as the highest turnout in England and Wales for the second year running.



Of Undergraduates voted in The Big Elections 2013, the highest in our history.



Of all students voted in The Big Elections 2013, passing 40% for the second year running.

#1

In Students' Union election turnout in England and Wales for the second year running.



See our fancy election stats



STUDENT ACADEMIC CHOICE AWARDS

Our inaugural Student Academic Choice Awards celebrated excellence in teaching and academic support across the College. 557 nominations were submitted with one member of staff receiving 70 recommendations! The award ceremony was held in May, attended by the short listed academics and support staff, senior College staff, Academic Reps and student nominators. The awards were featured on the home page of the College website and gave us a unique opportunity to create a positive dialogue with academics and to share best practice.

"All the staff at the Silwood campus put a huge amount into teaching the Masters courses here, so I'm delighted that the students appreciate it."

PROFESSOR ANDREW PURVIS, ECOLOGY & EVOLUTION



Read more about the awards here



557

Number of nominations received.

27,494

Number of words written by students praising academic and support staff.

FAIR ACCESS FOR ALL!

We successfully campaigned for the removal of an auctioned internship in the Institute for Biomedical Engineering after it was made available to students at Westminster College as part of an auction. Our campaign was supported by prominent Twitter users and featured on the Times Higher Education website.



Auction of Internship



THE HIGHEST NSS TURNOUT YET

The National Student Survey (NSS) is increasingly becoming one of the most important tools for measuring student satisfaction available to the Union and the College. Last year's turnout of 71% was already a massive jump on the year before but we wanted to increase it further.

By working with our Academic Rep system, Registry and College departments we were able to increase turnout to 81%, an increase of 10%. Initiatives such as great incentives for filling out the survey and our regularly updated departmental turnout graphs have enabled next year's feedback from the NSS to be even more accurate and important. This data will form the major part of our third NSS Response, to be published in November.

SOLE PARTICIPATION

College's Student Online Evaluation (SOLE) received its highest turnout in the Autumn and Summer surveys through coordinated promotion between departments, Academic Reps and our Sabbatical Team. Our year reps were given access to regularly updated turnout results on our website encouraging them to improve their turnouts compared to others. SOLE is an important tool to help College complete the feedback loop between teaching staff and students. This year's higher turnout increases the accuracy of the feedback, and how seriously the findings are taken across College.

Callum's YEAR

3RD YEAR UNDERGRADUATE MEDICINE
Raising and Giving (RAG) Treasurer

“Raising money for charity isn't just about standing in the cold rattling a bucket!”

I got involved with RAG because I felt I wanted to do something charitable during my time at university. This year we managed to really change the perception of raising money for charity across campus by holding lots of exciting fund raising events. Raising money for charity isn't just about standing in the cold rattling a bucket! Our biggest event of the year was bungee jumping on the Queen's Lawn, there wasn't a person on campus who didn't see, talk about or take part in it. We managed to raise four times what we did last year and have already started planning events for the future!

ENHANCING THE Student Experience



Imperial College Union plays a key role in how students learn, develop and grow during their time here, especially through the skills that they learn through involvement in our activities.

RAISING AND GIVING

2012/13 was a superb year for Raising and Giving. A fresh new brand and a driven set of student volunteers managed to raise a staggering £54,239 for charities such as Children in Need, the Poppy Appeal and the Kenyan Orphan Project. The focus this year was on specific events as well as the annual RAG week. The biggest event of the year had fund raisers bungee jumping on the Queen's Lawn!

Medics RAG continued traditions such as the RAG Fashion Show and RAG Dash raising £47,076. In total both RAG groups raised over £100,000 for charities, a record for the Union.

In December the Islamic Society raised £46,369 as part the national Charity Week. This huge total place Imperial's ISoc third in the UK behind King's College and UCL.



£147,684

Total amount of money raised for charitable causes by RAG, ICSMSU RAG and Islamic Society during Charity Week.

TRIPS AND EXPEDITIONS

We worked with the IC Trust to increase the amount of money awarded for Club & Society tours by almost 50% to £27,000. This enabled almost 50 tours to destinations such as Norway, Sardinia and Iceland. The Caving Society discovered Slovenia's largest cave system during their tour gaining national and international recognition. The range of activities supported by this funding is a credit to Imperial College; you can read reports of all the tours online here.

Read some reports of the tours here



200,000

Miles were travelled by our fleet of 16 minibuses.

1,281

Students went on tours.

680

Party-goers attended our two "Soc-off" events.

FRIENDS ON ARRIVAL

Our buddy scheme entitled "Mums and Dads", which matches returning students to incoming first year students based on their department and interests, saw its biggest year yet with 862 starting students signing up. These friendships were further encouraged with two "Soc-off" events where the Departmental Society with the most members attending won a share of the event entrance fee.

"Mums and Dads is an incredibly important first point of contact between freshers and existing students. The freshers still refer to their assigned parents as 'Mum' and 'Dad', even after nearly a year! There was already a buddies scheme in ESE, but Mums and Dads has made the link between new and existing students even stronger from day one."

SIMON STEPHENSON,
EARTH SCIENCES & ENGINEERING ACADEMIC REP

WELCOME TO IMPERIAL

Our biggest Welcome Week ever started with sell-out Mingle events, the welcome parties for new students, across the Union Building on the first weekend of term. The Postgraduate Mingle on the second Saturday was attended by over 1,100 students making it the largest social event of the year for PGs.

Freshers' Fair featured over 300 stalls of our Clubs, Societies & Projects They were joined by local and national companies, College departments and services in welcoming the new and returning student population back to South Kensington.

The Union's #helloicu hashtag and Welcome Week blog captured hundreds of photos, comments and tweets, displaying them in the bars and adding to the welcoming atmosphere around College.



3,107

Starting students attended one of our welcome 'Mingles' at the Union during Welcome Week 2012.



8,500+

New and returning students visited one of 382 stalls at the Freshers' Fair 2012.

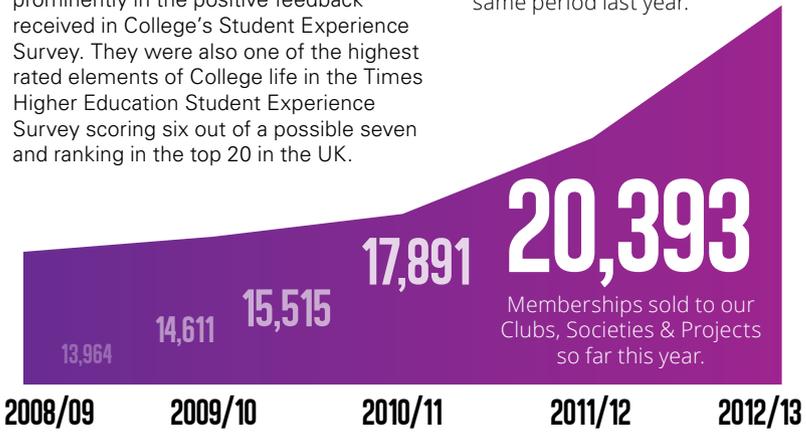
OVER 320 OPPORTUNITIES

Involvement with our student activities program continues to grow with subscriptions passing the 20,000 mark for the first time ever. In total 9,107 individuals joined one or more of our 325 Club, Societies & Projects with a total of 20,393 memberships!

Clubs, Societies & Projects again featured prominently in the positive feedback received in College's Student Experience Survey. They were also one of the highest rated elements of College life in the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey scoring six out of a possible seven and ranking in the top 20 in the UK.



Increase in memberships sold compared to the same period last year.



A BETTER STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Times Higher Education's (THE) Student Experience Survey 2012, which was published in April, measured students' opinions of their university experience. This year Imperial was amongst the top 10 most improved institutions, rising from 71st to 41st and second overall for an institution in London. The Union continued to be ranked higher compared to previous years too, improving from 81st in 2010 to 36th in 2012. This improvement makes us the fourth most improved Students' Union during this period. In an article featured in the THE's report, the College's Pro Rector (Education), Debra Humphris 'credits Imperial's improvements in community atmosphere and social life scores to the students' union's "You said, we did" campaign, as well as provision of music and arts facilities that give students an experience "that's more than a rigorous and demanding education".'

#4

Most improved Students' Union in the UK over the last two years.



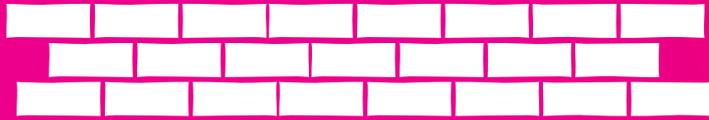
Graces' YEAR

3RD YEAR BIOCHEMISTRY
Venue Staff Member

“Working at the Union has helped me pay my rent as well as leaving a little extra money for me to enjoy myself.”

I've been working in the bars at the Union for over two years now. I joined when I lived in Beit Hall and wanted a sociable job that was flexible around my College work, especially around exam time. Working at the Union has helped me pay my rent as well as leaving a little extra money for me to enjoy myself. Everyone is really fun and I've made lots of new friends!

BUILDING



a Student Community

The Union should be the hub of the student community – ensuring that students are happy in their surroundings; feel supported by their peers and can seek advice when they need to.

NEW EACTIVITIES

eActivities, our web-based management system for student volunteers and groups, received a major relaunch at the same time as the new Union website. A new and easier to use design included in-line help for all the key tasks users complete on the system, enabling them to get on with what they need to do without referring to training manuals. A regular user group has seen continued updates throughout the year including a new search feature, useful links box for key tasks and most importantly speed increases. eActivities was moved to a new server in April to address the major request from the group for a faster user experience.



eActivities was also expanded to include features and functionality for our Academic Reps. In a first for a UK Students' Union, Academic Reps are able to record and monitor their progress on SMART goals for the year. The system also allows them to upload papers and minutes from Staff-Student Committees, Departmental Meetings and student forums, helping us to create the only comprehensive College-wide repository.

YOUR FEEDBACK IN ACTION

Capturing feedback from the Union Survey, departmental staff and our Academic Reps, You Said, We Did features all the positive changes made across the Union and College as a direct result of student feedback. Over 70 examples have been listed on the You Said, We Did website since its launch attracting over 7,000 views. The positive impact of this campaign has gained praise from academics and was cited as one of the main drivers of College's improvement in Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2012 by Debra Humphris, Pro-Rector (Education).

70

You Said, We Did examples of positive change on our website.

8,123

Views of the You Said, We Did examples on our website.

£384,609

Paid out in reimbursements to 3,562 individuals directly to their bank accounts through eActivities.

2,718

Student volunteers logged in to use eActivities.

£3,395,837

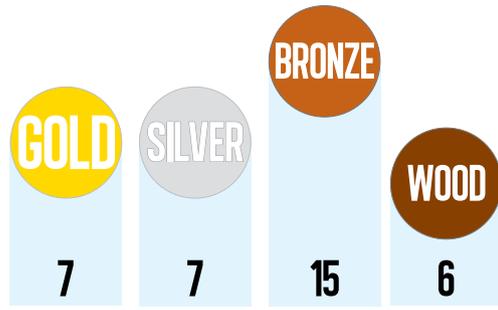
In turnover processed through eActivities including purchase orders, invoices, claims for reimbursements, banking records, credit card requests and more!

“YOU SAID”

WE DID

OUR RESPONSES

The Union continued to publish responses and reports of key College and Union surveys. The National Student Survey 2012 Response reflected on the progress made by College on the recommendations last year, awarding a ranked medal for each one. Clear progress has been made as a result of the 2011 response with seven of the recommendations receiving a gold and silver medal.



Read the response



In November the Union launched our first ever International Mobility Survey looking at how College can create a diverse and internationally mobile student body. The response, published in March, listed 15 recommendations. We presented the response and recommendation at the College's Education Day to key academics from every department. Through using this data the College has set up funded summer research placements at Nanyang Technological University, Seoul National University, Hong Kong University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

12,353 Total times our four responses for 2012/13 have been read on our website.

The Student Experience Survey 2012 was completed by 4,528 students answering a collective 337,087 questions. The survey gathered student opinion on the services offered by both the Union and College. The results of the survey were analysed and formed the basis of our first ever SES Response. The response detailed 42 recommendations to the College and ourselves of positive changes that should be made to improve the student experience across College. In May the findings and recommendations were presented to College Tutors, Hall Wardens, key College staff and academics.



Read the response



Read the response



In October the Union was the only Students' Union in the UK to file a response to the Institute for Public Policy Research's (IPPR) commission into the future of higher education in England.

Read the response



STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

2,953 volunteer positions were filled by 2,336 individuals within the Union this year. These students led the Union in roles as diverse as our Interfaith Officer to Chair of the Cheese Society, Student Trustee to RAG Chair. This number is an increase of 26% compared to the last year.

26%
Increase in individual student volunteer positions in the Union.

2,953
The number of volunteer positions filled in the Union.

478
The number of Academic Reps elected, up from 456 last year.

325
The number of Clubs, Societies & Projects.

BEYOND SOUTH KENSINGTON

This year saw a renewed focus on understanding the unique needs and issues face by students at outlying campuses. Our Sabbatical team have attended three Silwood Executive Committee meetings and four with the Hammersmith Student Community. Campus specific surveys were conducted with students at Hammersmith and St Mary's to increase our understanding of the unique experiences these students have and the opportunities they would like to see. Election turnouts at these campuses and amongst students at the Business School have seen an average increase in turnout of 7.4% percentage points compared to the elections in 2012.



Percentage point increases in turnout at campuses in The Big Elections 2013 compared to the same election the year before.

IMPERIAL HUB

In the second year of our strategic partnership with Student Hubs we have seen a large number of events take place and engagement increase. The events focused on social action, entrepreneurship and citizenship. Over 750 students have been directly involved with the programs and activities facilitated through Imperial Hub. Highlights include Student Volunteering Week, the London Climate Forum (attended by over 400 students) and the successful bid for our social entrepreneurship initiative ICStartup.

The Schools Plus programme has seen 136 Imperial students provide support to young people facing educational disadvantage in 16 projects across the UK logging upwards of 2,700 volunteer hours.

"The after-school Discovery Club allowed the children to explore practical applications of ideas they study in maths, technology and science. The club proved to be successful and some weeks we would have 20 students attending."

JOSEPH RUXTON, SCHOOLS PLUS PROJECT COORDINATOR

THE ARTS EXPERIMENT

In February a range of student clubs were involved the Imperial Fringe. Imperial Fringe is a series of public events exploring the unexpected side of science, based on Imperial's groundbreaking research. Groups such as Juggling, Chamber Music and our Dance societies joined in one event in the series entitled "The arts experiment" in the College Entrance.



Our new volunteering opportunities partnership

The Climate Forum conference in November was attended by 400 students over two days featuring talks from leading thinkers in science, business and politics and interactive breakout sessions. Speakers included:

- Professor Lord Robert Winston, Professor of Science and Society at Imperial College London
- Carmel MacQuaid, Climate Change Manager, Marks & Spencer
- James Cameron, Founder and Director, Climate Change Capital.



12

Student Volunteering Week events.

172

Volunteering opportunities for students in the local community.

96%

Of attendees rated the speakers at the London Climate Forum as good or brilliant.

2,700+

Hours volunteered by students in the Schools Plus scheme.



Adam's YEAR

4TH YEAR PHYSICS
Arts & Entertainments
Management Group Chair

"The Imperial Fringe event was superb with over ten arts clubs involved and thousands of visitors!"

I have been involved with many societies during my time at Imperial: Wind Band, Drama Society, Choir and Musical Theatre; and I wanted to give something back, so I stood for Arts & Entertainments Chair. There has always been so much potential for more exposure of the arts around campus. The events we ran this year fulfilled this potential. The Imperial Fringe event, part of ArtsFest, was superb with over ten arts clubs involved and a thousand visitors. We also packed out Metric for a dance club night and the Union Concert Hall with a night of vocal music!

Creating a

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION



Imperial College Union should be recognised as a charity that is financially sound, is a great place to work, and makes the most of the resources that are available to it.

A NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

During 2012 the Union reviewed its governance structures to reflect the fact that the Union has grown into a dynamic organisation with a £5 million pound turnover and 100 staff, running a broad range of services for its growing and diverse membership. In addition, the Union was required to become a registered charity and the Union's governing documents needed to ensure that they complied with charity law and best practice. The new arrangements ensured that students remain at the heart of decision-making for the Union, and ensure that the governance processes, especially the Board of Trustees and its new sub-committees, are efficient, effective and credible and continually add value to the Union's decision-making processes.

The new structures and constitution were approved by the membership, the College and the Charity Commission and the Union became a registered charity in March 2013.

#1151241

Our Registered Charity number.

A CLEAR FUTURE

The new Code of Practice (as required under the Education Act 1994) and Partnership Agreement – setting out the key relationships between the College and Union has this year been agreed by the Union's Trustee Board and College Council. The agreements set out the Union's block grant arrangements for the next three academic years, the use of and right to tender for space for the Union and the key performance indicators the Union will achieve on behalf of the College as part of the College's strategic plans.

NEW STAFF

We have increased the number of staff employed in providing services directly to our members. New areas of focus such as campus outreach, student development and improving the support for our representation network have allowed us to increase engagement in all those areas.

£1.4M
ANNUAL GRANT
FROM COLLEGE

15%

Increase over the last two years for specific student-facing staff and initiatives.



CAMPUS OUTREACH

COMMUNICATION

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION & WELFARE

WEBSITES

RECEPTIONIST

THUMBS UP FROM OUR MEMBERS

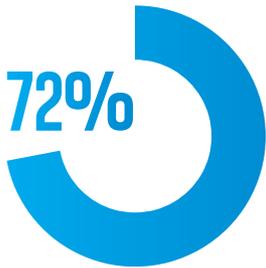
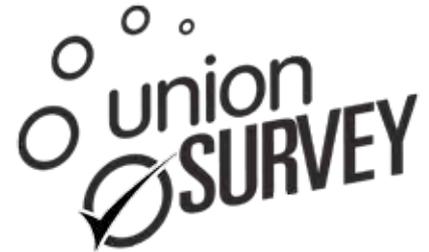
This year was the first time that the National Student Survey contained a question specifically about Students' Unions. The question referred to terms such as 'academic representation', 'activities' and 'support'. Overall students ranked us in the top quartile of UK Students' Unions: a placing that matches our improved THE SES ranking and highlights the need for continuous improvement.

Read more
about this



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Our bi-annual membership survey was held in October and May this year. An increased number of students completed the survey about their opinions and experiences of the Union's services. 15 changes have been made this year as a direct result of the findings of the surveys. Changes including our new 'Who is my Rep?' functionality on the website, more regular drinks offers in the bar and our Stress Less campaign. Overall satisfaction with our services rose by 17% between the end of last year and the beginning of this year showing a positive reaction to the changes made.



72%
Of students think that Imperial College Union has a positive impact on their time at Imperial.



60%
Of students think that Imperial College Union is a not for profit organisation.



55%
Of students think that Imperial College Union is the voice for students at Imperial.



50%
Of students think that Imperial College Union enhances their employability.

Imperial College Union

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