

**A change to the ICU Beit Master-plan**  
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**ICU Notes:**

1. The master plan was drawn up as a result of the consultation carried out within the strategic review. This consultation process showed that students wanted an alcohol-free area.
2. This alcohol-free area has since been provided by college by upgrades to the JCR, Library, Ante-Room, Ethos and a new coffee shop in the old media centre which, whilst not for students directly, will relieve some of the pressure on the SCR and therefore allow more post-graduate students to use this area.
3. Further coffee shops are available in the Mech Eng Café, Tanaka Café, SAF Café and the Electrical Engineering Café.
4. It is the recollection of this former trustee that the meeting where the café principle was approved occurred before any of these changes within college catering took place. At the time it was viewed as a novelty on campus, and one that could potentially be very successful financially (since it had no competition from Ethos, the Library, Ante Room and less from the SCR). It was further agreed that it should be possible to open up the north side of the building to allow access to the Café for people from the Royal Albert

Hall. It has been suggested since that this opening up to the north would be difficult (planning permission problems) and very expensive. In short it is now questionable whether this café principle is still justified financially or in the best interest of our members.

5. Further to this, the business plan as it was then presented to Exec assumed that there would always be one seat filled within the café, with associated profits based on this assumption. It did not go further than that, nor did it ask the essential question – “will people come to the café”. I submit that this is a very serious omission.
6. Recent large scale events within the Union have all sold out. This is due both to a fundamental lack of space within the Union, the quality of large events that are being run, and the quantity of party-hard students that we also now appear to have.
7. A new venue, which could hold an extra 450, would allow more people into the Union at its busiest moments (and hence retain them through the year) allowing Ents to make a bit more money. Note that it would not have been possible to clear the café quite in this manner, and that while it could be open, it would be a chill out space and so likely to be used to a much lesser degree than a large open space would be.
8. ACC Dance, RCC Dance Company, RCC Bellydance & RCC FuNkoLogy have a current combined membership of 494 (note that we’re not yet completely through the year).
9. Further to this, many other clubs are involved in dance, since as a core cultural activity it features highly within East meets West, international night and many other OSC events. As such, the provision of a floor suitable for dancing on and wall-mirrors would be of great benefit to these clubs.
10. Such large space may also be of great use the arts clubs, providing a second venue (when the concert hall is filled) to be used by them. The provision of thick curtains in front of any mirrored walls would be of benefit here to hold down the sound that would otherwise be reflected by the mirrors. Curtains would also be required to protect mirrors during events, although these may not prove to be adequate, requiring further protective measures.
11. A space such as this would also be of use to many other clubs, since it is a very high space (i.e. it has good natural ventilation) and is of size. Other clubs to which this may apply include fencing, fashion, Indian, EMW, Chamber Music<sup>1</sup>
12. Large space is difficult to book within college, with one of the previous justifications to college that we wish to re-build the building being one of “we can build some large space in”.
13. This year has seen an increase in the number of clubs within ICU, and we soon expect to break the 300 mark.
14. As a consequence the provision of more bookable space would be a major asset. It is suggested that the inclusion of folding walls be investigated, since this could effectively double the number of Meeting Room 1 sized rooms available.
15. Further, while not being used by ICU clubs this room could be hired out externally (much like the Hampshire schools currently use our gym). Back of the envelope internet searches reveal:

7m x 9m Marylebone

£15 /hr + VAT

[londondance.com](http://londondance.com)

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<sup>1</sup> This only applies to clubs who would have a low impact on the floor, i.e. it specifically excludes matted martial arts clubs. On occasion other restrictions may be put in place – e.g. when a play is going on in the UCH, directly above.

8m x 8m	Kentish Town	£15 - £20 / hr	Jumpanddance.com
7m x 14m	Battersea	£20 /hr	rad.org.uk
13 x 15m	Battersea	£30 /hr	rad.org.uk
11m x 7m	Kentish Town	£18 - £26 /hr	expressionstudios.com
14m x 16m	Ethos <sup>2</sup>	£40	Imperial.ac.uk/sports

16. For comparison the proposed new dance floor is 29m x 10m (although the suggestion is to remove the last 7m, creating a space 22m x 10m).

17. Further the position of the sabbatical offices on the top floor is far removed from the students, and the student activities centre. The switch between the games room and the sabbatical offices would affirm a strong link between these two areas, allowing a one stop shop for students.

### **ICU Believes:**

1. That we would be better representing our members by scrapping the concept of a café on the first floor, directly above da Vincis.
2. That the inclusion of a dance studio within the Union would be a great benefit to our current clubs. It is noted that this increase in dance clubs may be a consequence of strictly come dancing running on TV.
3. That the inclusion of such space would be extremely useful as an extra venue on nights when the Union is busy (it is to be expected that this would be Freshers' week, and the Christmas, Easter and Summer carnivals).
4. That such space is incredibly flexible, and would be of great use to the Union in future years. Such space would be able to change as the Union's needs change, which would not be possible were the Union to build a coffee shop.
5. That the position of the offices should be directly next to the student activities centre. Their position, either above or below, is not a decision for this forum, since this would depend on an arrangement for the most efficient use of space.

### **ICU Resolves:**

1. To switch the positions of the games room and the offices, providing open plan office space under the mezzanine floor so as not to obstruct the feeling of open space.
2. To remove the Coffee Shop from the master plan.
3. In its place to build the following:  
A large mirrored dance studio with a sprung wooden floor.
4. Changing rooms and storage space as may be required to ensure that this area is run as efficiently as possible.
5. The determination of the above split in space to be made (as a minimum) in conjunction with the Chairs of all the above mentioned clubs, with the consultation process to be finished (regardless of who has been consulted) by May<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> It is noted by the author that college may ask themselves "why are we building two dance studios". The answer is that we cannot afford to use the one within Ethos.

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<sup>3</sup> This arbitrary deadline has been drawn to ensure that work is started to define this space more fully within the master-plan.