

Royal College of Science Union Report



A note by Luke Kanczes, RCSU Vice-President of Operations

Overview

Overall RCSU clubs and societies have been very successful this Autumn Term, particularly as a result of the incredibly dedicated members of the different departmental society committees. This year there has been a real emphasis on the buddy system. In particular a Buddy Scheme was launched in the mathematics department. This means every fresher in the RCSU now has an allocated buddy. The DepSocs have been extremely active, making numerous successful events happen during Freshers Week and up until Christmas. These events have ranged from not only social events incorporating the Buddy Schemes, but also Christmas Dinners, Club Nights and academically inspired and career-orientated events. MathSoc has had numerous problems throughout the year, culminating in a Vote of no Confidence against former President Rishi Sethi. This was taken to a vote by RCSU Exec who unanimously voted to uphold the Vote of no Confidence. An AGM to elect a new President for MathSoc is due to take place on February 1st. Until then the society has been successfully managed by Vice Presidents Kelvin Wong and Maria Veiga. With the enthusiasm and commitment of the members in the DepSoc committees and a new President for MathSoc due to be elected I am certain the next term will be even better than the last.

Financial Summary

No major financial issues have arisen this year.

Club Activities

Below is a highlight of the events held by the DepSoc's. Two DepSoc meetings were held last term and attendance was as expected.

PhySoc

Summary

A very successful year with a number of well attended events and several upcoming events this term.

Social Events

PhySoc Freshers Welcome Drinks

The year started on a good note with the PhySoc Fresher's Welcome Drinks where fresher's had the chance to mingle and get to know the committee. This was held in Mango Lounge Bar and Nightclub. The event was hugely popular with attendance exceeding 150 people and the event made a profit of over £150.

Search for Secret Santa

This was Christmas game designed to encourage interaction between Physics students of all year groups. A £50 prize was awarded to the winner with other small prizes available for participants. Overall the event had a number of enthusiastic participants.

Mulled wine and mince pies

These were sold during lunchtimes for the final two weeks of term and was well received.

Buddy Events

Joint PhySoc/MathSoc Buddy Quiz Night

The Quiz night was designed to allow freshers to meet and socialise with their buddies. Despite having free entrance and free food and drink there was a lower than expected turnout of 50 people. This was due in part to Math fresher's having a test the following day. Overall, however, the event was enjoyed by those that attended.

Talks

Guest Lectures

PhySoc arranged 4 guest lectures given by professors and doctors in the Physics department about their fields of research, topics included quantum entanglement and space physics. Fairly low attendance at the first event was due in part to short notice given for the event, however subsequent lectures were better publicised resulting in increased attendance.

ChemSoc

Summary

ChemSoc committee members have worked enthusiastically on the planning, organisation and running of each of their events. There were some problems at the beginning of the year after the resignation of the ChemSoc webmaster, however a new webmaster was elected shortly after. One of ChemSoc primary aims was to hold an event fortnightly which they have succeeded in.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship negotiated with TeachFirst, GSK, Sigma-Aldrich and in negotiations with Syngenta. Proctor and Gamble also agreed to donate £250 towards the Chemistry Quiz.

Social Events

Chemistry Quiz

This was organised in conjunction with the Chemistry PG committee. The quiz was attended by both students and staff and sponsored by Proctor & Gamble. Had an excellent turnout at over 150 people and was well received.

Tug of War and Bar Night

Annual tug of war was held in prince's gardens, followed by a bar night at the union bar; organised jointly with CivSoc. There were some difficulties keeping count of the number of tickets sold but these were resolved following effective communication with the CivSoc committee.

Christmas Dinner

This was held at Eastside Bar Restaurant and proved to be a success with 80 people attending the Dinner. Initially the number of people who would be interested was overestimated; however this was resolved after the committee met with the restaurant manager. The Dinner, in particular, was good value for money.

Buddy Events

Buddy Lunch

Fresher's were introduced to their "Families" over a free lunch. The event was attended by over 140 fresher's and 80 parents. The event was a great success, with a number of people expressing their gratitude.

Buddies Pub Crawl

Buddy families and non-buddy scheme students were invited to join a pub crawl across central London. The event was on a smaller scale than the lunch, as expected, and was well received by those who attended.

January 24, 2011

Buddy Quiz

Joint quiz held with BioSoc with teams consisting of members of buddy families. The event was attended by over 100 people. Both committees worked extremely well together and the quiz had numerous positive feedback.

Talks

Summer Placements Talk

An informal talk was given by 3rd year students who had recently completed placements and internships. Turnout was small but expected at about 15 people. Overall a success with lots of networking afterwards and food and drink available.

Careers Talk

A talk was given by chemistry alumni who now work in a variety of sectors. The event turnout was good for a small event.

MathSoc

Summary

There were problems with the Presidency towards the end of last term. Among the problems highlighted was an apparent uneven distribution of the workload, with the President neither appearing to be taking an active role nor taking an interest in a number of the activities run by the Society. This cumulated in a Vote of no Confidence and the President's resignation. A new President is due to be elected on February 1st. Despite problems concerning the Presidency last term, MathSoc has been extremely active, organising 2 events during the course of Fresher's Week, the introduction of a new buddy scheme, the running of a Euro Trip, Christmas Dinner and sponsorship secured from Ernst and Young.

Sponsorship

Negotiated £1000 sponsorship from Ernst & Young and £200 Sponsorship from Teach First, a considerable increase on last year.

Social Events

Leavers BBQ

The first event was organised at the end of the last academic year. The BBQ was held for final year students and was overall well received by students and lecturers alike, despite its lower than expected turnout, mainly due to it being held during exams.

January 24, 2011

Fresher's Party

A chance for the Fresher's to mingle with each other and the committee. The event had a good turnout, due in part to it taking place just before the Fresher's Ball. Free food and drinks were provided and the event was a fantastic start to the year despite drinks starting to run low towards the end of the night.

Bar Night

This was held at B@1 on a Sunday night where several tables were booked. The event didn't have any associated costs, however turnout was lower than a usual bar night in the Union. In particular a lack of 3rd and 4th year mathematics students was noted.

Christmas Dinner

This event was held in MedKitchen. Funding from the Mathematics Department and Ernst and Young allowed ticket prices to be heavily subsidised at only £10 for a 3 course meal and a glass of wine. The event was attended by 100 people including students, staff and a E&Y employees. Overall a fantastic end to the year.

Euro Trip

A weekend trip to Amsterdam and Bruges, this was the first time that such an event has been run by MathSoc. Much of the organisation was done between the Head of Social Events and the Treasurer. The work involved was underestimated from the start and as a result, insufficient resources were allocated to the organisation putting a large strain on the Treasurer. In addition, advertising was left too late, resulting in too few people booking places, and thus the reservation allocation had to be reviewed and reduced in order to reduce liability for losses. In future organisation for such an event should be started much further in advance, taking advantage of the Winter Tours budget. However, despite heavy snow on the day of departure delaying proceedings, the trip ran smoothly. It was enjoyed by those who went and was overall a success despite these initial problems.

Buddy Events

Freshers Tea Party

This was aimed at Maths Freshers and was the first chance for them to meet their Maths parents. It proved to be a good way of allowing the fresher's to settle in and was generally well received despite food and drink supplies running low towards the end.

Joint PhySoc/MathSoc Buddy Quiz Night

This event was designed to allow freshers to meet and socialise with their buddies. The turnout was lower than expected at 50 people, partially due to Maths fresher's having a test the next day.

Careers

E&Y Application Session

January 24, 2011

This event was held in conjunction with sponsors, Ernst & Young. The event ran as a drop in session, where potential summer internship applicants could attend and speak to representatives from Ernst & Young. Unfortunately poor publicity resulted in lower than expected turnout.

E&Y Business Game

This event was a business game organised in conjunction with Ernst & Young. Students had the opportunity to network with employees from the company over food and drinks after the event. Good publicity resulted in high attendance and the event was well organised.

BioSoc

Summary

The academic year has been very good so far with the committee working well together. A joint buddy quiz with ChemSoc, in particular, proved to be very successful.

Sponsorship

Currently in the process of negotiating sponsorship with Ernst & Young who would like to hold a few business workshops aimed at biologists in the coming weeks.

Social Events

Christmas Neon Rave: Metric

Following the opening of Metric BiomedSoc and BioSoc organised a joint club night. As some of the first societies to take advantage of the new venue the night proved to be popular.

Christmas dinner

The dinner was held at Eastside Bar and Restaurant. It was well attended and was a good end to the year.

Buddy Events

Buddy Quiz

Joint quiz held with ChemSoc with teams consisting of members of buddy families. The event was attended by over 100 people. Both committees worked extremely well together and feedback from biologists indicated that the quiz night was fun and a similar event would definitely be welcome.

Future Events

Debate: Has the media failed science?

BioSoc are currently organising the main event of the year which is going to be a debate carrying the title 'Has the media failed science?'. They have secured the attendance of Simon Singh, Andrew

January 24, 2011

Cohen the head of the Science unit at the BBC, Hannah Devlin the Science Editor of the Times Newspaper, Gareth Mitchell and Richard Black the BBC's Environmental Correspondent.

BiochemSoc

Social Events

Club Night

During the second week of term, BiochemSoc organised a casual club night for freshers to meet fellow Biochemists. Buddies were also encouraged to meet up. The night was a moderate success and generated a profit.

Winter Ball

Organised in conjunction with EESoc and PhySoc, the ball was held at Studio Valbonne. Despite three societies publicising the event the turnout was lower than expected with slow ticket sales. Coursework and application deadlines were a significant deterrent, and generally, morale was quite low due to the restructuring of the Life Sciences department.

Careers

Proctor & Gamble Careers Talk

A talk was given by Dr. Cannon from Proctor & Gamble to answer questions regarding possible internships and employment. It was a good opportunity for students who are taking part in the "year in industry" program to learn more and was well attended.

Trip

Cambridge Sanger Center Trip

BiochemSoc organised a trip to the Sanger Center in Cambridge. This was targeted towards second year Biochemists who will be taking two courses this year that regard genome sequencing technology. The day was spent touring around the Sanger Center and attending lectures regarding core topics in these courses. A similar trip has previously been organised; however, it targeted first year students who did not fully appreciate the trip and the lectures. This year's trip was very well received.

This report was compiled from individual contributions by each of the departmental societies. Special thanks to Olutunmike Kuyoro (President – BioSoc), Wei Choong (President – BiochemSoc), Joanna Cai (President – ChemSoc), Maria Veiga and Kelvin Wong (Vice Presidents – MathSoc), Elwin Carlos (President – PhySoc).