

Graduate Students' Association
Constitution
Updated 15 September 2010

1. Name and Status

- 1.1. The name of the Association shall be the "Graduate Students' Association", hereafter referred to as the "GSA".
- 1.2. The GSA is a Standing Committee of Imperial College Union, hereafter "Union".

2. Membership

- 2.1. All postgraduate students currently enrolled at Imperial College London, hereafter "College" are Full Members of the GSA.

3. Aims and Objects

- 3.1. The aims and objects of the GSA shall be:
 - 3.1.1. To support excellence in postgraduate teaching and work to improve postgraduate education for GSA members.
 - 3.1.2. To work to improve the postgraduate education of GSA members.
 - 3.1.3. To promote, without prejudice, the welfare of GSA members at all times.
 - 3.1.4. To represent both the academic and welfare interests of its members to College, Union and external bodies.
 - 3.1.5. To develop, coordinate and maintain a cohesive representation network within Union and College.
 - 3.1.6. To facilitate the interaction of GSA representatives and members with College staff to plan future services and resolve issues.
 - 3.1.7. To ensure appropriate marketing and delivery of services provided by Union, College and the GSA to members.
 - 3.1.8. To make members aware that they can directly influence what services Union, College and the GSA deliver to them and how they are delivered.
 - 3.1.9. To make new postgraduate students feel welcome and help them settle in.
 - 3.1.10. To create, maintain and improve a cohesive postgraduate community at College.
 - 3.1.11. To stimulate and support student-led initiatives, where students can develop and improve their soft skills.
 - 3.1.12. To bring together members from different disciplines and stimulate networking, discussion, debate, knowledge transfer, collaboration, camaraderie, empathy, vision and innovation.
 - 3.1.13. To facilitate interaction between GSA members and postgraduates from other Universities.
 - 3.1.14. To help plan, coordinate, publicise and support events for postgraduate students.
 - 3.1.15. To promote continual interaction of Alumni with each other and current students.

4. Officers of the GSA

- 4.1. There shall be the following officers of the GSA:
 - 4.1.1. President;
 - 4.1.2. Treasurer;
 - 4.1.3. Marketing Director;
 - 4.1.4. Academic and Welfare Officers:
 - 4.1.4.1. Engineering;

- 4.1.4.2. Physical Sciences;
- 4.1.4.3. Life Sciences;
- 4.1.4.4. Medicine;
- 4.1.4.5. Business;
- 4.1.4.6. Humanities.

5. Managers of the GSA

- 5.1. There shall be the following Managers within the GSA
 - 5.1.1. Sports Manager;
 - 5.1.2. Clubs, Societies, Projects and Arts Manager;
 - 5.1.3. Forum Manager;
 - 5.1.4. Services Manager;
 - 5.1.5. Events Manager;
 - 5.1.6. Publicity Manager.

6. The GSA Council

- 6.1. The GSA Council shall:
 - 6.1.1. Advance the Aims and Objectives of the GSA.
 - 6.1.2. Decide which activities and events the GSA supports.
 - 6.1.3. Set GSA policy.
- 6.2. Members of the GSA Council shall be:
 - 6.2.1. Permanent Members:
 - 6.2.1.1. All GSA Officers;
 - 6.2.1.2. All GSA Managers
 - 6.2.1.3. All GSA Centre/Campus/Institute/Department Representatives (CCID Reps);
 - 6.2.2. Invited Members:
 - 6.2.2.1. All GSA Postgraduate Taught Course Representatives (PGT Reps).
 - 6.2.3. Permanent Observers (non-voting and do not count toward quorum):
 - 6.2.3.1. Union Deputy President (Education);
 - 6.2.3.2. Union Deputy President (Welfare);
 - 6.2.3.3. Union Representation Coordinator, who shall act as Secretary.
- 6.3. Rules and Regulations that GSA Council meetings shall follow are:
 - 6.3.1. A GSA Council meeting shall be called:
 - 6.3.1.1. By
 - 6.3.1.1.1. The GSA President, or
 - 6.3.1.1.2. Any Officer of the GSA or Union upon receipt of a request by:
 - 6.3.1.1.2.1. 10 Permanent Members of the GSA Council
 - 6.3.1.1.2.2. 20 Full GSA Members
 - 6.3.1.1.2.3. The Executive Committee of the Union
 - 6.3.1.1.3. Who shall act as Chair.
 - 6.3.1.2. Once per term, or more.
 - 6.3.1.3. At least two weeks before the meeting is set to commence.
 - 6.3.2. Attendance requirements shall be:
 - 6.3.2.1. It is mandatory for all GSA Council Permanent Members, to attend, if they are unavailable, they must send apologies and arrange for an 'alternate' (any GSA member) to attend in their place.
 - 6.3.2.2. Notified by at least two emails before the meeting commences.
 - 6.3.2.3. Any member of the GSA can attend the GSA Council, but they will not count toward quorum.
 - 6.3.2.4. Quorum is a minimum attendance of the chair and 1/5 of the Permanent Members.

6.3.2.4.1. If a meeting is not quorate, then any actions that are planned must be confirmed by emails from enough members to make quorum.

6.4. Reporting of GSA Council meetings shall be:

6.4.1. By the secretary circulating a draft of the Minutes to Council members, within one week of the meeting.

6.4.1.1. Members shall have the opportunity to amend the Minutes by email or at the next meeting.

6.4.2. By the secretary posting the accepted Minutes on the GSA's website, within 1 week of the following meeting.

7. Executive Committee of the GSA

7.1. The GSA Executive Committee, hereafter referred to as the "GSA Exec", shall:

7.1.1. Advance the Aims and Objectives of the GSA.

7.1.2. Have an overview of all affairs of the GSA.

7.1.3. Be responsible for all affairs of the GSA.

7.1.4. Manage the day-to-day functions of the GSA including strategy, finance and communication.

7.1.5. Establish principles for the fair allocation of resources available to the GSA, upon consultation with the GSA Council.

7.1.6. Have the power to create or disband sub-committees.

7.1.7. Review and amend the GSA Standing Orders.

7.2. Members of the GSA Exec shall be:

7.2.1. Permanent members:

7.2.1.1. All GSA Officers.

7.2.2. Permanent Observers (non-voting and do not count toward quorum):

7.2.3. The Union Representation Coordinator, who shall act as Secretary.

7.3. Rules and regulations that GSA Exec meetings shall follow are:

7.3.1. A GSA Exec meeting shall be called:

7.3.1.1. By

7.3.1.1.1. The GSA President, or

7.3.1.1.2. Any Officer of the GSA or Union upon receipt of a request by:

7.3.1.1.2.1. Half of the GSA Officers

7.3.1.1.2.2. 10 Full GSA members

7.3.1.1.2.3. The Executive Committee of the Union

7.3.1.1.3. Who shall act as Chair.

7.3.1.2. Once per term, or more.

7.3.1.3. At least two weeks before the meeting is set to commence.

7.3.2. Attendance requirements shall be:

7.3.2.1. It is mandatory for all GSA Exec Permanent Members to attend, if they are unavailable, they must send apologies and arrange for an 'alternate' (any GSA member) to attend in their place.

7.3.2.2. Notified by at least two emails before the meeting commences.

7.3.2.3. Any member of the GSA can attend the GSA Exec, but they will not count toward quorum.

7.3.2.4. Quorum is a minimum attendance of the chair and half of the Permanent Members.

7.3.2.4.1. If a meeting is not quorate, then any actions that are planned must be confirmed by emails from enough members to make quorum.

7.4. Reporting of GSA Exec meetings shall be:

- 7.4.1. By the secretary circulating a draft of the Minutes to Council members, within one week of the meeting.
 - 7.4.1.1. Members shall have the opportunity to amend the Minutes by email or at the next meeting.
- 7.4.2. By the secretary posting the accepted Minutes on the GSA's website, within 1 week of the following meeting.

8. Sub-committees of the GSA Executive Committee

8.1. Academic and Welfare Committees

- 8.1.1. Each GSA Academic and Welfare Committee, hereafter referred to as "GSA AWC", shall:
 - 8.1.1.1. Be responsible for all academic and welfare issues of GSA members in the CCIDS that it represents.
 - 8.1.1.2. Advance the Aims and Objectives of the GSA.
- 8.1.2. Members of a GSA AWC shall be:
 - 8.1.2.1. Permanent members:
 - 8.1.2.1.1. All appropriate AWOs
 - 8.1.2.1.2. All appropriate GSA Centre/Campus/Institute/Department Representatives (CCID Reps);
 - 8.1.2.1.3. All appropriate GSA Postgraduate Taught Course Representatives (PGT Reps).
 - 8.1.2.2. Permanent Observers (non-voting and do not count toward quorum):
 - 8.1.2.2.1. Union Deputy President (Education);
 - 8.1.2.2.2. Union Deputy President (Welfare);
 - 8.1.2.2.3. Union Representation Coordinator, who shall act as Secretary.
- 8.1.3. Rules and Regulations that GSA AWC meetings shall follow are:
 - 8.1.3.1. A GSA AWC meeting shall be called:
 - 8.1.3.1.1. By
 - 8.1.3.1.1.1. Any appropriate GSA AWO, or
 - 8.1.3.1.1.2. Any Officer of the GSA or Union upon receipt of a request by:
 - 8.1.3.1.1.2.1. 10 Permanent members of a GSA AWC
 - 8.1.3.1.1.2.2. 20 Full GSA members
 - 8.1.3.1.1.2.3. The Executive Committee of the Union
 - 8.1.3.1.1.3. Who shall act as Chair.
 - 8.1.3.1.2. Once per term, or more.
 - 8.1.3.1.3. At least two weeks before the meeting is set to commence.
 - 8.1.3.2. Attendance requirements shall be:
 - 8.1.3.2.1. Mandated by the individual who calls the meeting.
 - 8.1.3.2.2. Notified by at least two emails before the meeting commences.
 - 8.1.3.2.3. If a member's attendance is mandatory they must attend the meeting or, if unavailable, send apologies and arrange for an 'alternate' (any GSA member) to attend in their place.
 - 8.1.3.2.4. Any GSA AWC can be attended by any member of the GSA, but they will not count toward quorum.
 - 8.1.3.2.5. Quorum is a minimum attendance of the chair and 1/5 of the GSA AWC Permanent Members, whose attendance was mandated by the individual who called the meeting.
 - 8.1.3.2.5.1. If a meeting is not quorate, then any actions that are planned must be confirmed by emails from enough members to make quorum.
- 8.1.4. Reporting of a GSA AWC meeting shall be:

- 8.1.4.1. By the secretary circulating a draft of the Minutes to AWC members, within one week of the meeting.
 - 8.1.4.1.1. Members shall have the opportunity to amend the Minutes by email or at the next meeting.
- 8.1.4.2. By the secretary posting the accepted Minutes on the GSA's website, within 1 week of the following meeting.
- 8.1.4.3. By the Chair reporting to the next GSA Council.

8.2. GSA Colours Committee

- 8.2.1. There shall be a GSA Colours Committee.
- 8.2.2. The GSA Colours Committee shall consider recommendations for and grant Full and Half GSA Colours Awards upon majority vote.
- 8.2.3. The GSA Colours Committee shall consist of:
 - 8.2.3.1. GSA President;
 - 8.2.3.2. GSA AWOs;
 - 8.2.3.3. Up to 6 AWC members.
- 8.2.4. It shall be chaired by a GSA member chosen by the GSA Exec.
- 8.2.5. A Secretary shall be appointed by the Chair.
- 8.2.6. Quorum is 4 members.
- 8.2.7. If an individual who is nominated for a Colours award sits on the committee, then he or she must leave the room while their award is discussed and voted upon.

9. Duties and Roles

9.1. The GSA President shall:

- 9.1.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.1.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.1.2. Be responsible for the effective co-ordination of the College's and the Union's services and activities for GSA members.
- 9.1.3. Be responsible for the development and preliminary interpretation of the GSA Standing Orders.
- 9.1.4. Be responsible to the Deputy President (Finance and Services) for all aspects of the GSA's finances.
- 9.1.5. Be responsible to the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) for the duty of care and health and safety of their members.
- 9.1.6. Be responsible to the Deputy Presidents (Education) and (Welfare) for the academic and welfare issues of GSA members.
- 9.1.7. Be accountable for the activities of the GSA Managers:
 - 9.1.7.1. Ensure that the GSA Managers are liaising with Union and College staff as appropriate.
- 9.1.8. Represent the Union on external committees as appropriate.
- 9.1.9. Motivate and support the activities of GSA Officers, Managers and Representatives where appropriate.
- 9.1.10. Keep GSA members informed of GSA activities.
- 9.1.11. Respond to members' requests for GSA action.

9.2. The GSA Academic and Welfare Officers shall:

- 9.2.1. Chair or co-chair an AWC.
- 9.2.2. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School

committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members within their Faculties or CCIDs.

9.2.2.1. Report to committees as appropriate.

9.2.3. Be responsible to the Deputy Presidents (Education) and (Welfare) for the academic and welfare issues of GSA members within their Faculties or CCIDs.

9.2.4. Liaise with Union and College staff as appropriate.

9.2.5. Represent the Union on external committees as appropriate.

9.2.6. Motivate and support the activities of GSA Officers, Managers and Representatives where appropriate.

9.2.7. Keep GSA members within their Faculties or CCIDs informed of GSA activities.

9.2.8. Respond to requests for action from GSA members within their Faculties or CCIDs.

9.2.9. Be responsible to the GSA President.

9.3. The **GSA Departmental Representatives** shall:

9.3.1. Attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members within their CCID.

9.3.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.

9.3.2. Be responsible to their GSA AWO for the academic and welfare issues of GSA members within their CCID.

9.3.3. Liaise with Union and College staff as appropriate.

9.3.4. Motivate and support the activities of GSA Officers, Managers and Representatives where appropriate.

9.3.5. Keep GSA members within their CCID informed of GSA activities.

9.3.6. Respond to requests for action from GSA members within their CCID.

9.3.7. Be responsible to their AWO.

9.4. The **GSA Treasurer** shall:

9.4.1. Be responsible to the GSA President and Deputy President (Finance and Services) for all aspects of the GSA's finances.

9.4.2. Attend GSA, Union and College committee meetings as appropriate.

9.4.2.1. Report to committees as appropriate.

9.4.3. Review and advise on budgets for GSA events.

9.4.4. Teach GSA members how to utilise Union finance systems.

9.5. The **GSA Marketing Director** shall:

9.5.1. Attend GSA, Union and College committee meetings as appropriate.

9.5.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.

9.5.2. Work closely with the GSA President and Treasurer.

9.5.3. Attempt to raise money for the GSA by assisting in the timely creation of applications for Union grants.

9.5.4. Attempt to raise money for the GSA through alumni, companies and other external bodies.

9.5.5. Attempt to raise money, moral and a feeling of community by selling GSA merchandise.

9.5.6. Be responsible to the GSA President.

9.6. The **GSA Secretaries** shall:

9.6.1. Attend all meetings of their committees.

9.6.2. Maintain email lists for their committees.

9.6.3. Receive and report apologies from committee members who cannot attend meetings.

- 9.6.4. Ensure all meetings are advertised at least two weeks in advance.
- 9.6.5. Ensure agendas and papers for every meeting are circulated 1 week before a meeting.
- 9.6.6. Minute the meetings of their committees, or nominate an alternate to do so.
- 9.6.7. Be responsible for archiving of papers and minutes relating to their committee's business.

9.7. The **GSA Sports Manager** shall:

- 9.7.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.7.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.7.2. Be responsible for the effective management of all GSA sporting activities.
- 9.7.3. Work closely with Sport Imperial and other GSA members to create and support both social and competitive sporting events.
- 9.7.4. Be responsible to the GSA Marketing Director and GSA President.

9.8. The **GSA Clubs, Societies, Projects and Arts Manager** shall:

- 9.8.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.8.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.8.2. Be responsible for the effective management of all GSA art related activities.
- 9.8.3. Work closely with Union Clubs and Societies, Art Imperial, and the RCA to support artistic activity among GSA members.
- 9.8.4. Be responsible to the GSA Marketing Director and GSA President.

9.9. The **GSA Forum Manager** shall:

- 9.9.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.9.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.9.2. Be responsible for developing and monitoring the GSA's forum.
- 9.9.3. Be responsible for promotion of the forum to GSA members.
- 9.9.4. Work closely with Union and College staff to ensure the forum adequately covers issues that GSA members would like to discuss.
- 9.9.5. Be responsible to the GSA Marketing Director and GSA President.

9.10. The **GSA Services Manager** shall:

- 9.10.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.10.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.10.2. Work closely with Union and College staff to ensure they are serving the postgraduate community.
- 9.10.3. Be responsible to the GSA Marketing Director and GSA President.

9.11. The **GSA Events Manager** shall:

- 9.11.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.11.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.11.2. Be responsible for the effective management of all GSA events.
- 9.11.3. Work closely with the Publicity Manager & Treasurer.
- 9.11.4. Ensure that the Treasurer receives budgets for GSA events.
- 9.11.5. Be responsible to the GSA Marketing Director and GSA President.

9.12. The **GSA Publicity Manager** shall:

- 9.12.1. Call and attend appropriate GSA, Union, College and Graduate School committee meetings and represent the interests of GSA members.
 - 9.12.1.1. Report to committees as appropriate.
- 9.12.2. Be responsible for the effective advertising of all GSA events.
- 9.12.3. Be responsible for promotion of the GSA to postgraduate students within Imperial College London.
- 9.12.4. Be responsible for promotion of the GSA to Alumni and other bodies external to Imperial College.
- 9.12.5. Be responsible to the GSA Marketing Director and GSA President.

10. Training

- 10.1. Training shall be as is detailed in the Imperial College Union Representation Policy.

11. Elections

- 11.1. All Elections shall be conducted in accordance with Regulation Two of the Imperial College Union Constitution.
- 11.2. The GSA Officers and Managers shall all be elected by secret ballot in the academic spring term.
- 11.3. Elections should be publicised via email and a news article on the Union website.
- 11.4. If a position is not filled, then a suitable candidate should be sought and elections shall be run again in the next term.
 - 11.4.1. In the interim, a candidate can be elected to 'act' in the role by majority vote by the GSA Council, until the next elections are run.

11.5. Those eligible to stand for:

- 11.5.1. President include:
 - 11.5.1.1. Current GSA members.
- 11.5.2. Treasurer, Marketing Director or any of the Manager positions include:
 - 11.5.2.1. Current GSA members and
 - 11.5.2.2. College undergraduates who have applied for postgraduate study at College.
- 11.5.3. AWO include:
 - 11.5.3.1. Current GSA members enrolled in the relevant Faculty or Department and
 - 11.5.3.2. College undergraduates who have applied for postgraduate study at College in the relevant Faculty or Department.

11.6. Those eligible to vote for:

- 11.6.1. GSA President, Treasurer, Marketing Director and Managers:
 - 11.6.1.1. Include all current GSA members and
 - 11.6.1.2. College undergraduates who have applied for postgraduate study at College.
- 11.6.2. AWO include:
 - 11.6.2.1. Current GSA members enrolled in the relevant Faculty or Department and
 - 11.6.2.2. College undergraduates who have applied for postgraduate study at College in the relevant Faculty or Department.

12. Censure and Dismissal of Officers, Managers and Representatives

- 12.1. The GSA Exec may censure and dismiss any GSA Officer, Manager or Representative via the following process:
- 12.2. Grounds for censure & dismissal:
 - 12.2.1. If a GSA Officer, Manager or Representative does not send apologies and an alternate to a meeting where their attendance is mandatory, then they should be censured with the possibility of dismissal.
 - 12.2.2. If a GSA Officer, Manager or Representative does not reply to an email after it has been sent 3 times and if the 1st email was sent over 21 days ago, then they should be censured with the possibility of dismissal.
 - 12.2.3. If 10 GSA members sign and present a petition to a GSA Officer, requesting censure of an individual, then that individual should be censured with the possibility of dismissal.
- 12.3. To censure & dismiss a GSA Officer or Manager:
 - 12.3.1. Any GSA Officer must send the offending individual an email, on behalf of the GSA Exec. (GSA Exec members should be cc'ed.)
 - 12.3.1.1. The email shall clearly explain why the individual has been censured and request an explanation for their behaviour.
 - 12.3.2. If a reply is not received by the censurer within 4 days, then the censurer must send a second email.
 - 12.3.3. If an adequate reply is not received within 2 weeks from the date that the 1st email was sent, then the censurer will arrange a meeting of the GSA Exec, where a motion to dismiss the censured individual will be voted upon.
 - 12.3.3.1. The meeting must be set to convene no earlier than 2 weeks from the time a 3rd email is sent to the censured individual explaining that they have the opportunity to defend themselves.
 - 12.3.3.2. This meeting can be convened by conference call using Skype or other similar tool.
 - 12.3.3.3. A motion for dismissal of the individual may be passed by two-thirds majority.
 - 12.3.4. The individual must be notified by email from the chair of any decisions made within 7 days of the meeting.
 - 12.3.5. Any decision may be appealed to the Union Council within 5 college days of the appellant being notified of the decision of the GSA by emailing the Union Council Chair.
- 12.4. To censure and dismiss a GSA Representative:
 - 12.4.1. Similar steps to those above must be followed...
 - 12.4.1.1. Except that the appropriate AWO, must send the offending individual the emails, on behalf of the appropriate Faculty or Department. (Members of the GSA AWC for the appropriate Faculty or Department should be cc'ed.)
 - 12.4.1.2. Plus the AWO must contact and discuss both the situation and the GSA's censure and dismissal process with the appropriate Director of Postgraduate Studies (DPS).

13. Interpretation

- 13.1. These Standing Orders are enacted under Regulation Five Part E of the Union Constitution and as such is bound by the Union's Constitution, regulations and policy.
- 13.2. All matters not explicitly covered by these Standing Orders shall be conducted according to the Union's constitution, regulations and policies.

13.3. Preliminary interpretations of these Standing Orders shall be made by the GSA President.

13.3.1. Appeals against interpretations can be made to the Union Exec, and

13.3.2. Ultimately to the Union Court, whose decision is final.

13.4. Any GSA member may propose an amendment to this constitution.

13.4.1. Amendments may be approved by GSA Exec.

13.4.2. After approval at GSA Exec, amendments will need to be approved by the Union Exec, though a decision to approve or reject.

13.4.3. A decision to approve or reject may be overturned by Union Court.