

PRESIDENT – LUCINDA SANDON-ALLUM

Operations

Week Zero

I have been in discussions with Jane Neary (Head of Campus Services) to draw up a plan for a potential 'Week Zero' to be held at the beginning of each academic year. The idea is to have students arrive a week early, allowing them to aptly settle in before lectures start the week after. Many Universities have a similar structure to the autumn term which seems to work very well both in terms of the satisfaction and welfare of students. I will be consulting students through surveys and on-the-ground research at lunchtimes, to gain an understanding of how the student body would envisage the week to be structured.

Vice-Provost (Education) Recruitment

I'm part of the appointment panel, which indicates the first time a student representative has been asked to sit on such a panel. It is great to see College's commitment to involving students and the Union in its major decision-making processes.

The applicants for the role have been shortlisted and invited to interview. The Union will be hosting a student panel as part of the interview process. The panel will consist of a diverse range of students, Officer Trustees and Union staff, organised by Chun-Yin.

Student Safety and Security

Last term there were several personal and property security issues, with a number of private student houses burgled. I met with Nigel Ward (Senior Investigations and Crime Prevention Officer at the College) to discuss the best ways of getting a regular crime prevention message out to as many students as possible. We have planned to release seasonal and termly safety messages and reminders through the Unions website, newsletters and media channels.

Union strategy

Joe Cooper and I have been meeting with College staff regarding the new 2016-19 strategy. The aim has been to gain an insight to what College perceive the Union's role as, as well as strengths, weakness and improvements.

ICT and Starfish

The Officer Trustees and I attended a presentation of Starfish by the ICT Department. Starfish is an online personal tutoring system created by the student centric project. The platform definitely has the potential to improve the student-personal tutor relationship, however there has been little to no student consultation. ICT will be sending out a survey to all students using Starfish, to gain feedback needed to improve the platform and adapt it to students' needs.

Objectives

Housing - “Tackle the issue of finding quality, affordable housing in London”

Last term I attended the Citizens UK West London meeting with the three major asks for London’s top housing priorities were ratified for the Mayoral Election debate taking place in April. Two out of the three will have direct impacts for students. These are affordability in the form of a ‘London Living Rent’ and bad landlords in the form of ‘London-Wide Rouge Landlords Taskforce’. In order for Imperial students to get involved in the April debate we will need to become members of the Citizens UK. I will be taking a paper to council to discuss the positive and negatives of becoming a member and assessing the general appetite for such a membership. The Imperial College School of Medicine are already members.

Jennie and I met with the Student Hub to discuss the Private Housing talks for this year. We will be assisting in the organisation and structure of the talks, with it being the first time the Union has been involved with the programme of the talks. This event will form part of our housing campaign taking place this year.

I’ve been speaking with the website Move’m who specialise in landlord accreditation/house ratings for Universities. I have received brilliant feedback from other SU presidents’ who support Move’m and I think this will be a great option for our students to help with finding good private houses. I am hoping to get Move’m onto campus early this year to speak to our students and start to build a housing portfolio for Imperial students specifically.

CSPs - “Deliver new income streams for our Clubs, Societies & Projects”

I’ve started to discuss the possibility of holding a sponsorship fair for clubs and societies, to take place at the end of this term. I’m currently going through several options for dates and structure and will be contacting external organisations and internal clubs and societies to assess interest in the event.

I’ve continued to help societies and projects with finding alternative external income streams, mainly by going through applications and providing advice for finding sponsors.

Feedback - “Produce a simple online platform for students to give their feedback on potential changes that affect them”

We sent a survey out to students via the Union website regarding the development of a Union app. In the survey we asked what they would look for in an app, what features they would like to see and whether they would like to be involved in a focus group following the initial survey. We have received a number of responses with a lot of students interested in having an e-activities, ticketing system and feedback platform on the app. However, some students aren’t sure about an app but would rather we focus on bettering the website and putting the feedback platform on the website, making it more mobile friendly instead. I will be collating all the data next week and discussing next steps with Alex McKee.

Women in STEM and Gender Equality - “Work with the College and external organisations to encourage more women to engage in education and research in STEM”

I've been working with College to organise the 2016 Women@Imperial week. This year we will be celebrating the achievements of female students and staff, as well as having student engagement in a number of exhibitions and events throughout the week. For the main celebratory event interest by College has been expressed to have some of our student clubs perform in the evening; I will be contacting some student clubs this week for availability. Further plans are for the Union to host an after-party for the evening of International Women's Day.

I've sat on several women in STEM related panels over the past few weeks - ranging from panels catered to school girls through to University students, all organised by Imperial.

Community - “Work to create more of a sense of community within the student body”

The Royal Mixer (an event between us, Royal College of Music, Royal College of Art, Royal Veterinary College and the University of Arts) took place on 21st November. It was a huge success and it was fantastic to see lots of mixing and engagement with students between all 4 colleges. Following on from this success the RCMU President and I are planning a black-tie event between the Colleges for summer term.

I've met with the Alumni Team to work on building the relationship between Alumni and current students. Meetings will be held this term to improve engagement between these groups and specifically the constituent unions; and how involvement can be pursued through these channels.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS & SOCIETIES) – BEN HOWITT

Operations

Administration

More and more of the routine queries that enter my inbox have been delegated to various members of staff, particularly in the Student Activities Team. This has let me focus more on the Sports Strategy and other ongoing project work.

Exploration Board

I attended a meeting, of the Exploration Board, which meets twice a year to discuss various expeditions that students undertake during summer breaks. We agreed to fund three expeditions, and offer support and advice to a further proposal from the Faculty of Medicine. This is a really fantastic initiative, with some amazing student stories coming from it, that I am aiming to mention more often.

FATSO – My Annual Objectives

Future – “Ensuring you carry the skills you learn into your future”

Nothing to report.

Activity – “Improving the resources available to support you in your role”

- Individual club reports have been completed by just under 240 CSPs. This is the first time that feedback has been collected in a standardised way from all clubs and societies, and the feedback has enabled a number of positive feedback to go back to clubs, as well as highlighting some areas for improvement in general admin.
- Policies and Workstreams under review
 - Tours Policy
 - NAC & ADC Standing Orders
 - Management Group Structure

Training – “Making CSP Training more relevant and helpful”

- I have been working with the Student Development & Student Activities Teams to evaluate and update our approach to training club volunteers.

Sports Review – “Creating a new Sport Strategy for Imperial that includes all”

- A piece of market research was commissioned and run in conjunction with Youthsight to determine the general attitudes, behaviours and needs of the student population. The market research on the student body has now completed, generating a number of key barriers and student groupings to which we will be tuning further developments.
- There are a planned four focus groups to be run with current participants in sporting activity, with a focus on capturing the value already present in our provision and creating a vision for an offer that appeals to each of the student groups identified by the research.

Outreach – “Making Club, Society & Project activities part of our local community”

- I have been involved on the Committee for societal engagement, a program aiming to broaden and unify the College’s approach to outreach and societal engagement. This is feeding back that many of the outreach problems faced by the College mirror issues in the student body, and I anticipate a strong student voice in any decisions that are taken.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION) – CHUN YIN SAN

Key

	Completed
	Migrated
	In Final Stages
	In Progress
	Stalled
	Dropped

Ideas	Status	Comments
Strengthen the structure of the Representation Network, towards a model where the DPE works closely with Academic Officers		Academic Officers were brought together into a single 'Central Rep Team', and I have been working closely with them as a team and individually to deliver joint objectives
Train and engage at a high-level with the Academic & Welfare Officers of the Graduate School Union		All AWOs received training, and I also organized training and meetings with senior figures from the Graduate School. I have been working closely with many AWOs, especially to deliver Faculty-level student-staff dialogue
Build relations with Postgraduate education staff and attend to a greater range of Postgraduate matters		At the start of my term, I met with as many Directors of Postgraduate Studies as possible, and have made contact with most Department's Directors and Administrators. I have taken a Postgraduate-first approach in my work, as shown by my focus to PG Reps, research supervision issues, and delivering the PRES Response
Engage Reps across a number of platforms that they use		I have engaged Reps across different media based on their preferences, from email to Facebook and dedicated face-to-face meetings
Use active sense when outlining Rep responsibilities, i.e. Reps as problem-solvers as opposed to message carriers		We have stressed that Reps are proactive do-ers and not messengers in the system. This is demonstrated by use of scenarios in training which got Reps to problem-solve, and our support for Rep-led action e.g. CivEng Reps developing new feedback mechanism in their Department, and CGCU AAO making proposals for Panopto availability
Overhaul of the Imperial Horizons Rep system		The Horizons Rep system was overhauled this year with introduction of Departmental Representative and Course Liaison roles
Provide skills-based Rep training program in response to Rep feedback		A new skills-based training program was introduced; we trained >150 Reps with sessions receiving very high ratings and praise for their usefulness. Jane Saffell, Associate Dean, Faculty of Medicine commented that our Reps this year appeared "exceptionally well-trained"
Ensure student-staff dialogue following the National Students Survey results		All Reps were briefed of their Department's NSS results this year and were strongly encouraged to input into their Departments' action plans, which many did
Stronger Faculty engagement		I have regular catch-ups and dialogue with staff in Engineering, Medicine, Natural Sciences and the Center for Languages, Culture and Communication. Rebecca Middleton, FoNS Education Manager, was delighted by the level of dialogue this year between me and the Faculty
Dedicated Rep recognition in Imperial Plus		This idea was replaced by clearer information to Reps about how they record their activities on Imperial Plus through training and Welcome Packs
Produce a minimum		Instead of 'minimum expectations', we have moved to

expectations framework for e-Learning		getting the College to develop an eLearning strategy and to better utilize the broader portfolio of e-Resources that it currently possesses
Produce a minimum expectations framework for Quality Learning		Instead of 'minimum expectations', we have now moved to get the College to embed innovative teaching and assessment methods in its curricula. This intimately ties in with our work on over-assessment and is targeted to the opportunities opened by Academic Standards Framework
Produce a minimum expectations framework for Quality Feedback		A baseline for what feedback should be – information that promotes critical reflection about a student's skills, such through "three skills to be proud of, three skills to improve" is still a key recommendation. However, instead of producing more frameworks that looks good on paper, we're tackling the underlying issues such as stopping over-assessment to free up staff time and encourage more diverse ways of learning and assessing
Easier and better exchange of best practice across different parts of the Rep Network		A Facebook group was created and we are now working to give it a vibrant atmosphere. A 'Rep Mingle' is being planned in conjunction with the Rep Conference that will include Action Learning elements for Reps to learn from one another
Implement better communications solutions to ensure students know about all their Reps and what they do		We plan on reminding all students of their Reps by email, and also to distribute Rep posters to be put up around campuses
Responsibilities of all Reps are clearly and concisely defined, and communicated to students		Briefing document was produced for staff as the first time that the Rep Network and Rep responsibilities have been thoroughly summarized. More work needs to be done in conjunction with Marketing & Communications to ensure more students are aware of their Reps and their responsibilities
Better Union presence at auxiliary hospital campuses		I have been working at Hammersmith Hospital where I've taken the opportunity to meet Reps and staff. We have also been supporting causes over at auxiliary campuses, for example saving the main restaurant at Hammersmith Hospital. More could still be done in a more organized way, as it has been very much my own initiative
Students at heart of College decision-making		So far I have chaired four College committees and projects – the FoNS Staff-Student Committee, Horizons Committee, ICT Student Forum and the e-Resources review project. I am also working closely with College to establish student-chaired meetings including Staff-Student Committees across all Faculties; these will bring closer collaboration between student and staff
Review and restructure the PG Representation system, with a focus on Postgraduate (Research) students		The working group for this was approved at Education & Representation Board, and I am due to convene this starting in January
Outreach and Public Engagement opportunities for students		I have a close dialogue with public engagement staff in the College, including sitting on the Public Engagement workstream, and hope to finalize one or two frameworks for student participation by the end of my term. In addition, engagement is emerging as a major theme in Student Volunteering Week and I will continue to guide the team to realize this
More pervasive e-Learning		I am working with the Education Office, ICT and the Library, alongside other e-Learning stakeholders throughout College, to identify all e-Resources the College currently possesses, to make them more student-facing, and to identify any areas for growth. I have also

		been supportive of new initiatives coming out of the Business School and have had conversations with Horizons on online modules, though this is in very early stages
Over-assessment and over-teaching		Coming out of the NSS Response, I have acquired support from College and Faculty leadership for Imperial to take on excessive levels of assessment. In the new year I hope to talk more with Heads of Departments, though the focus will mainly be getting Reps to recognize the significance of the issue, pushing for innovative teaching and assessment, and better academic timetabling
Transformative learning		We will be carrying out higher education research with the Educational Development Unit, exploring how Imperial prepares students for the future – and I hope this will shine light on ‘best practice’ that will support the innovative learning and over-assessment work
Shaping TEF response		I helped to draw up the TEF Response action plan and will be supporting Jennie in producing the response
Continuation of co-curricular events in a Post-Hub environment		I have been providing strategic guidance to the Student Development team, such as for Student Volunteering Week where I helped to shape the model of student engagement, developing the framework for the Volunteer Projects Incubator, and pitching a Global Challenges event that is currently planned for March
Co-curricular courses for PG students		I have had early conversations with Horizons and the Graduate School and this will be explored further in the new year
Exploring PhD issues		Research supervision will become the key focus for the Education & Representation team come the new year; we plan on launching a campaigns plan that will be coupled with greater engagement with Research-oriented staff, including the new Vice-Provost (Research), to compel them to take action
Construct a modern communications strategy for Rep Network		No time in the team, though this is something that ought to be explored when there’s some free time
Improve quality of academic support provided by personal tutors		No time; however we (EduRep) have been supporting the development of resources for personal tutors from the Educational Development Unit, and we (StuDev) has been developing the Imperial Award
Input into consultation on White City campus		No progress because of uncertainties from College about what is happening to White City
Strategies to boost attendance at Rep training		No time, but worthwhile exploring in the future
Formal recommendation letters to Reps		In the end, determined to have no tangible value; Reps can still get recommendations if they want to (and also through Imperial Plus), and we’ll be doing more to celebrate individual and team successes – as shown through Imperial Plus celebration event
Union providing commercial services at auxiliary campuses		No time, not much initial interest, and rather falls outside the EduRep and StuDev remits
Support promotion of Imperial Plus scheme		Random objective that was put there without much thought; Imperial Plus is already pretty great – but I have been supporting its promotion e.g. making sure to be at events, and telling students about Imperial Plus
Alumni office connections		Had some conversations with Advancement division but this now in Lucinda’s hands

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE & SERVICES) – CHRIS KAYE

I have spent a significant part of December on dealing with the issue of the London Living Wage, which was raised at Council. I formed a 'working group' where interested parties could sit down and thrash out a range of views. I have fed back the views of the working group to Council.

London Living Wage - Working Group report

I've held both sessions of the Working Group on the London Living Wage. I would like to thank those that participated, as well as the Managing Director and Finance Manager who provided us the information we requested.

Here is a summary of the thoughts of the group.

A majority of the group believed there was not sufficient need to introduce LLW as the LLW is based on a calculation not applicable to a typical student, as it takes into account outlays such as on dependents and Council Tax.

The group recognised that the flexibility in shifts offered by the Union is of material benefit to students who choose to work for the Union, and is much greater than would be expected to be given to seasonal staff in the private sector.

There were also concerns raised about the financial impact that increase in wages and therefore bar prices would cause. It was recognised that this would probably reduce the number of employment opportunities available for students at the Union. The extra ~£120,000 cost, if the money could be found by making the necessary cuts, could perhaps be better used on activities or reduced prices that benefit all students, and not just those employed on a casual basis at the Union.

However there was dissenting opinion as well. Some of the group feel that in principle it is right we pay the LLW regardless. The group was aware of potential for reputational damage as well by not paying the LLW, given that some other London student unions have committed to doing.

Some of the group also considered that the ~£120,000 cost was calculated based on retaining the wage differential between different levels. The cost could potentially be reduced if the bands were restructured.

Some of the group also made the point that while the LLW is based on calculations that don't directly relate to students, the same could also be said of any group of society.

The group was unanimous that, regardless of the level of pay for student staff, the Union must continue to push for financial support for all students in financial need through e.g. the Student Support Fund.

Budgeting training

I have delivered or co-delivered 6 sessions of budgeting training to club committee members. I will be doing more in January. This helps student club volunteers learn valuable skills and also help shape the future of their clubs & societies.

Hidden course costs

I had a meeting with College Registry to discuss hidden course costs. These include things that are not provided by the College but that are necessary to complete your degree. Examples are things like rockhammers, paying for field trips, waterproof field notebooks and the like.

I was very clear that I believed the College needs to be more upfront and transparent about this at the point of a student's application to the College. I also stated that I believed the end-game should be for all these necessary costs to be included as part and parcel of the fees they pay for their degree.

I stated that I believe that there also shouldn't be a 'closed shop' on buying such equipment and that students should be free to buy the equipment from any provider they wish.

Registry will keep me in the loop. I've asked Registry to engage with Dep Reps and Year Reps for more information on 'hidden costs' by department and year group.

Dame Julia, Colin and Joe

I would like to thank all three of you for your support and knowledge (and offers of references!) and wish you all the very best. I'm sure our paths will continue to cross around campus!

DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE) – JENNIE WATSON

Campaigning

- Community Welfare Board was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of quorum.
- I have been devoting the vast majority of my time to working on a response to the recent government green paper *Higher education: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice*.
 - This has included discussions with College over which parts of the response we agree or disagree on and how we can support each other.
- In the run up to the end of term I got to work with a few students helping them shape their campaign ideas – these are mostly around gender equality on campus and mental health and wellbeing. Hopefully we will see these come to fruition this term.
- I have been discussing various issues facing PGT/PGR students based at the Hammersmith with the Medicine AWO. These include problems with Hepatitis B vaccinations for students undertaking lab based projects, the quality of gym services at other campuses and a lack of provision of counselling and wellbeing services at the Hammersmith.

Gender equality

- Lucinda and I have attended the second meeting of the Gender Equality and Institutional Culture Steering Group alongside FemSoc committee members and the ACC Chair. Questions have been raised over the balance of focus between staff and students in this study; although personally I believe all aspects and levels of the

College require interrogation, the research so far has been heavily weighted towards academic staff. We have been assured that this terms phase of the research will centre more on students.

- Towards the end of last term I attended the 'Sexual Harassment in Higher Education' conference at Goldsmiths which has proved enlightening and has inspired me to start on this new thread of work.

Housing

- As mentioned in my December report the possibility of College setting up a rent guarantor scheme is being investigated by the College. I am waiting to hear from the CFO and Finance Director again, but I have been informed that the issue is being discussed with enthusiasm.
- Lucinda and I have been invited buy the Hub to personally their annual private housing talks to students in March. They have also extended the offer of a prominent stall for the Union at their private housing exhibition.

Advice Services

- As of this week we have interviewed candidates for the role of Advice Caseworker.
- Since September the Advice Centre has dealt with 119 cases: 41% academic queries; 21% housing queries; 18% money related queries.

Other

- I have been working with the Appointments & Remunerations committee to ensure a robust and student oriented procedure for appointing the new Managing Director, including redrafting the job advert with the support of board members.
- I have attended the Assessment Task & Finish group with Cyin which aims to tackle over assessment at Imperial