

Education & Representation Board
Minutes

*The second Ordinary Meeting of the Education & Representation Board for the
2017-18 Session was held on Thursday 23 November 2017.*

Location: Meeting Rooms 1&2

Deputy President (Education)	Nicholas Burstow
Aeronautics Dep Rep	Lachlan Price
Biology Dep Rep	Yizhou Yu
CGCU Academic Affairs Officer	Alejandro Luy
Computing Dep Rep	Martin Zlocha
Design Engineering Dep Rep	Michael Hofmann
Earth Science & Engineering Dep Rep	Beth Holman
GSU President	Luke McCrone
GSU Deputy President	Alexandre Adler
GSU Academic and Welfare Officer- Physical Sciences	Luke Delmas
ICSMSU Academic Officer-Early Years	Lasith Ranasinghe
Materials Dep Rep	Alice Robinson
Mathematics Dep Rep	Michael McGill
Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep	Harry Mitchell
Physics Dep Rep	Michaela Flegrova
RCSU President	Michael Edwards
RCSU Academic Affairs Officer	Abhijay Sood
RSMU President	Rob Tomkies
Observers	
Representation Coordinator	Nayab Cheema
Council Chair	Owen Heaney
Vice-Provost (Education)	Prof Simone Buitendijk

Formal Business

1. Chairs business
 - a. Deputy President (Education) (DPE) welcomes attendees and begins introductions of the board
 - b. It is noted that apologies were received from:
 - Biochemistry Dep Rep
 - Bioengineering Dep Rep
 - CGCU President
 - Chemical Engineering Dep Reps
 - Design Engineering Dep Rep
 - Electrical and Electronic Engineering Dep Reps
 - Electronic and Information Engineering Dep Rep
 - ICSMSU President
 - ICSMSU Academic Officer-Clinical Years
 - ICSMSU Academic Officer-Biomedical Years
 - ICSMSU Academic Officer-Science Years
 - Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep
 - RSMU Academic Liaison Officer
 - c. DPE informs board that agenda item 6 *Learning and Teaching Strategy* will be moved ahead of *Matters for Report*
2. Minutes of last meeting – 12 October 2017, 1 June 2017
 - a. DPE asks board to review minutes from last two meetings-01/06 and 12/10
 - b. Minutes 01/06-
 - i. CGCU AAO asked whether Rep Conference will be happening this year.
 - ii. DPE states that this will be covered in AOB
 - iii. Minutes from the 01/06 meeting are accepted
 - c. Minutes 12/10-
 - i. Minutes from the 12/10 are accepted
3. Matters Arising
 - a. DPE provides update to board regarding action to ensure that CUs are given updates on candidate numbers during the election process. DPE informs board that this will fit into the upcoming governance review and may take time to implement fully
 - b. Representation Coordinator to email board to register their interest in attending SOLE alternatives working group

ACTION: RC to email board asking them to register their interest in attending SOLE alternatives working group

- c. DPE is monitoring the Feedback Traffic Light Audit, liaising with Departmental Representative and Academic Affairs Officers to ensure that Year Reps are filling out the spreadsheets
- d. DPE gives the board an update on current progress of NSS recommendations. Recommendations have gone to the *Learning and*

Teaching committee at College. Recommendations 1-7 have been considered and the remaining 10 will be discussed in the next couple of weeks. DPE will feedback to the board once all recommendations have been discussed.

ACTION: DPE to update the board on NSS recommendation action plan

- e. DPE gives the board an update on issues regarding central timetabling; states that there have been errors in timetabling due to this academic year being the first on which space is being shared more widely across College.
- f. DPE informs the board that there is a College policy on timetable release, students be receiving their timetables four weeks in advance.
- g. Noted that there are a few matters arising from the June
- h. Noted that there is an outstanding action for the *Learning and Teaching Strategy* to be included in Rep Training

ACTION: DPE and Representation Coordinator (RC) to review training ahead of next cycle

- i. GSU President noted that it would be useful to an action tracker which would make it easier for actions to be reviewed and reported on

ACTION: RC to compile ERB Action Tracker ahead of next meeting

- j. RCSU AAO raised the question as to whether the ICT student forums are coming back
- k. GSU President stated that whilst ICT struggled with attendance, the reps who attended enjoyed them
- l. CGCU AAO stated that they went as a Year Rep and enjoyed them
- m. It was noted that these forums needed to be better advertised
- n. RCSU AAO noted that if the forums were coming back, it was on the AAOs to ensure that their reps are attending
- o. Materials Dep Rep stated that they have a ICT rep who attends their SSCs and asked whether any other departments had this
- p. It was noted that whilst there are specific ICT contacts for Faculties, there are few departmental specific one
- q. RCSU AAO asked whether the board would prefer having specific ICT reps on SSCs as opposed to an ICT forum
- r. CGCU AAO noted that it was worth having a standard agenda point on SSCs regarding IT
- s. RCSU AAO noted that it was also worth having an ICT forum at least once a year
- t. GSU President stated that there was no harm in having one

ACTION: DPE to liaise with ICT regarding an annual ICT student forum

Matters for Report

4. Updates from the Deputy President (Education)
 - a. DPE states that the NSS Response was completed in record time, and that the next steps are covered in *Matters Arising*
 - b. DPE confirms that Feedback Traffic Light Audit is underway, a progress report has been covered in *Matters Arising*
 - c. DPE states that he is now working with the GSU President on ensuring Wednesday afternoons are kept free for PGT students. DPE acknowledges that work was done on this project by last year's DPE and that now the next steps are to hold College to account.
 - d. DPE states that he has been working with College on an Exam Timetabling Survey, which was distributed to academic reps. The next steps are to circulate the results around College.

5. Updates from Academic Affairs Officers
 - a. CGCU AAO
 - i. Most if not all Dep Reps are working with their Dep Socs to improve communities.
 - ii. It was noted that there is a restlessness to replace sole with something more effective. If this not done soon, departments are looking for alternatives.
 - iii. Pushing reps to get involved in curriculum review-most are involved or on their way to being involved.
 - iv. Student exchange programmes increasing- good to have increased pressure across college.
 - v. Requested minutes of every meeting as well as annual monitoring reports for each department. Next term, if there is a need, will go to SSCs
 - vi. Prepared and distributed chairing meeting tips hand-out to Dep Reps, awaiting feedback. Can circulate this to the board as it is something that should be covered in training.
 - vii. Looking at setting up Dep Reps with own email account
 - b. RCSU
 - i. Attended the first faculty SSC of the year, set themes for every faculty meeting to make them more effective. Themes include areas of improvement etc.
 - ii. First round of SSCs in departments have happened
 - iii. Joint Rep social reasonably successful. Surveyed attendees, who said that would attend event like that again. Noted that this is a good way of building community and bringing reps together and ensuring more effective reps at a departmental and faculty level.
 - iv. RCSU committee share the workload and ensure that at least one committee member attends every FoNS SSC
 - c. ICSMSU
 - i. It was noted that everything was running smoothly
 - ii. ICSMU AO (Early Years) observed that there have been issues with second year, as several curriculum changes are currently being tested on this cohort, meaning that students are faced with lots of exams.

- iii. Has been told about curriculum review, but hasn't been involved as of yet.
 - a. CGCU AAO raised the question of whether there is a requirement to have students involved in the curriculum review process
 - b. DPE stated that there is student representation at a College level
 - c. GSU President observed that was not the case at local level
 - d. CGCU AAO expressed concerns that students might not be consulted in some cases, unless it is clearly specified
 - e. RCSU AAO noted that Faculty staff are keen to work with students, however, this differs at a departmental level

ACTION: DPE to investigate how College are guaranteeing that students sit on curriculum review panels

- d. RSMU
 - i. It was noted that in the absence of the RSMU Academic Liaison Officer, the update will be provided by the Earth Science & Engineering (ESE) and Materials Dep Reps
 - ii. It was noted that everything was going well
 - iii. Positive communication with reps- both Dep Reps will chase their Year Reps regarding the feedback traffic light audit
 - iv. Had the first ESE SSC of the academic year, it was noticed that in spite of multiple staff changes, the SSC went well
 - v. It was noted that rethinking how SSCs can be more effective is good and both Dep Reps were glad it was a point of discussion for today's meeting
 - vi. Regarding the curriculum review, the ESE Dep Rep has been invited to first stage meeting about what proposals are. The Dep Rep then ran consultation with students, whilst academic staff ran consultation with staff. The Teaching Fellows within the department will bring the two consultations together
 - vii. The ESE Dep Rep observed that whilst some academics didn't seem to consider student views in the review process, the teaching fellows did.
 - viii. Materials Dep Rep yet to be involved in curriculum, however, sits on the departmental UG teaching committee, so will have a chance to feedback on plans in this capacity
- e. GSU
 - i. Distributing Committee responsibilities.
 - ii. The first FoNS SSC flagged issues around more opportunities to collaborate and network with other PG students. As a result of this, GSU have created a FoNS Social Committee, the GSU AWO- Natural Sciences will chair with assistance from resource from the faculty.

- f. RCSU AAO noted that with the curriculum review, important to loop in PG students who have done their UG at Imperial
- g. RCSU AAO also noted that there was a big gulf between SOLE and NSS results, and that maybe College should look at introducing survey similar to the NSS should be introduced in between surveys
- h. It was noted that the *Student Experience Survey* currently given to non-first year and non-final year students was similar to this, however, it was also noted that this was College-wide, and not departmental specific
- i. RCSU AAO questioned whether the *Annual Monitoring Report* was available to all departmental representatives.
- j. It was noted that the Faculty Education Committee was the best place to ask for this
- k. CGCU AAO stated that he was not sure how the reports are scrutinised or passed by College
- l. Design Engineering Dep Rep observed that the reports are useful as they are, in effect, a record of DUGS thoughts
- m. RCSU AAO noted that the 'meeting chairing tips' document mentioned by the CGCU AAO in his update was a good idea. Stated that in some FoNS departments, at the final SSC of the year, they ask the incoming Dep Rep to chair the meeting with the support of the outgoing Dep Rep.
- n. Materials Dep Rep observed that their SSCs were chaired by Year Three reps, not the Dep Reps, so this would be a difficult model to emulate across all departments
- o. CGCU AAO reiterated the point made by the Material Dep Rep
- p. ESE Dep Rep stated that they would feel uncomfortable asking new reps to chair without them receiving the correct training

Matters for Discussion

6. Learning and Teaching Strategy

- a. DPE welcomes Professor. Simone Buitendijk (SB) to the board
- b. SB gives the board an overview of the *Learning and Teaching Strategy*, what College intends to do with the strategy and the role of students and the Union in the delivery of the strategy:
- c. Lead Globally
 - i. There is a desire amongst people at Imperial to lead globally
 - ii. Imperial is the first top research-intensive university to implement evidence based transformation in education
 - iii. A university-wide approach, supported by digital and online technology key to this
 - iv. Working in partnership with students is at the heart of the inception and delivery of strategy. SB has worked closely with ICU Officer Trustees last year and this year.
 - v. College have made a substantial financial investment into the strategy. £8.5mil for the next 2 years, with the view to continue this over the nine year plan the strategy aims to be embedded by
- d. Our Ambition
 - i. College want to deliver a first class education to its students, the recent dip in NSS scores (15/16 results) means that it is being

- i. CGCU AAO questions whether funding was available for students who wanted to design their own course content.
- ii. DPE states that UCL run a scheme called 'ChangeMakers' which allows for funding for student-led initiatives. With the intention to bring a similar scheme to Imperial, the ICU Education and Welfare team went to UCL and observed that what is being done is at a more operational level than what Imperial are looking to do. For example, UCL focus on surveying and community building. We'd like to see students involved in course design and assessment. College is looking to launch our scheme in the near future.
- iii. SB adds to this stating that College are hoping for innovative projects, and are willing to invest in projects that will drive meaningful and sustainable change. Looking particularly at the online and digital sphere, College has an idea of where they want to go, but how they get there and how they work with students is very new.
- iv. CGCU AAO states that it is important that the work being done around the strategy is communicated to students, to avoid duplication of efforts
- v. SB and DPE agree that this will be communicated to students
- vi. Design Engineering Dep Rep observes that there are already many innovative approaches to teaching occurring within Design Engineering, and that students within the department often feel out of place from the rest of College as a result of this discrepancy
- vii. SB states that it is crucial that the change process is managed in order to gradually create and sustain change
- viii. Design Engineering Dep Rep asks how SB envisions industry connections fitting into the strategy
- ix. SB states that College want students to start thinking like experts, and use case studies. The Careers Service are involved in the delivery of the strategy and are planning to involve employers in curriculum design, by relating teaching to graduate attributes.
- x. GSU Deputy President questions the focus on MOOCs within the strategy, stating that they have become outdated
- xi. SB states that online learning is continually evolving, and that MOOCs can be adapted to fit different purposes. College will also be looking to introduce a fully online degree.
- xii. GSU Deputy President questions the potential cost of such a degree
- xiii. SB states that in the interest of time, it would be best to take this discussion outside of the meeting
- xiv. Mathematics Dep Rep states that it seems as if a lot of the onus is on students on the ground to ensure that the strategy is running effectively, and goes on to question whether Faculty staff will have any involvement in this
- xv. SB states that students and staff will be working in partnership with each other, there is a whole department (the Education

Office) committed to ensuring that the strategy is running effectively alongside academic departments, the Provost and President. Students are invited to engage with the strategy to ensure that College is what it should be

- xvi. RCSU AAO asks which areas of weakness that have arisen as a result of the NSS are being addressed in the strategy
- xvii. SB states that last year's NSS feedback (negative and positive) was used as the basis for the *Learning and Teaching Strategy* and a need to improve the experience for our students
- xviii. Design Engineering Dep Rep asks how College plans on tackling challenges around how tacit knowledge and attainment are assessed, specifically in group work settings
- xix. SB states that College needs to consider ways to make students feel comfortable with their knowledge, through alternative assessment methods. There are good examples of alternative assessment methods seen in other institutions, for example, British Columbia.

- i. DPE thanked SB for her presentation

7. Feedback Traffic Light Audit

- a. DPE states that this was covered in *Matters Arising*
- b. DPE asks Dep Reps and AAOs to continue to work with their Year Reps to ensure that the audit is being filled in
- c. Biology Dep Rep questioned what Year Reps should be doing with the *Comments* box in the spreadsheet
- d. DPE stated that this box was for any additional comments that the reps wished to make on their work

8. UROP Bursaries

- a. It was noted that this agenda point was put forward by the Physics Dep Rep
- b. Physics Dep Rep stated that they had originally brought this issue up in their SSC. It was noted that there were discrepancies between the levels of funding available to students undertaking a UROP.
- c. It was noted that those completing their UROP outside of summer receive £290, whereas students working over the summer receive £200
- d. Physics Dep Rep noted that this placed those students at a disadvantage and that one possible solution would be to increase the bursary for these students, however, the Physics Dep Rep also noted that it would be difficult to do this for all students
- e. It was noted that College should be bridging this gap as the financial barrier means that students are unable to conduct their research
- f. It was noted that a possible solution could be the creation of a hardship fund which would allocate needs based funding to students
- g. Mathematics Dep Rep noted that there is Dean's fund where funding is allocated on a case by case basis and that this was open to students wishing to undertake a UROP. This just needs to be publicised more widely

- h. Physics Dep Rep stated that the sole purpose of the Deans Fund is not to allocate funding for UROPs and noted that there needs to be a specific fund for UROPs
- i. Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep noted that College could offer subsidised student accommodation for UROP students over the summer, as many of the halls are empty
- j. ESE Dep Rep commended the Physics Dep Rep for recognising this issue, however stated that it was not this boards role to create a solution to this problem
- k. ESE Dep Rep stated that the board should be informing College of this problem and lobbying College to fix the problem, by paying the £90 gap
- l. DPE asks the board to consider what the intend outcome of this discussion is
- m. It was noted that the board would like College to pay the £90 shortfall
- n. RCSU AAO stated that it was more feasible to bridge the gap for those who really need it
- o. ESE Dep Rep stated that College should be doing this, and it was not this boards role to come up with the solution
- p. Design Engineering Dep Rep noted that if UROPs count as internships that are over 18 weeks, national minimum wage regulations may apply in this case
- q. RCSU AAO stated that UROPs are administered at a College level, so would be difficult to impose national minimum wage in this instance
- r. DPE states that this is beyond the scope of this board, and that the next steps are to wait for the Faculty to respond to the Physics Dep Rep
- s. CGCU AAO states that it is however, in the scope of this board to decide to put pressure on College in this regard.

ACTION: DPE to talk to relevant Faculty staff regarding this

9. SSC discussion (**Paper attached**)

- a. It was noted that this agenda point was put forward by the RCSU AAO
- b. RCSU AAO noted that his agenda point arose out two issues- the way that issues were being dealt with were often inefficient and secondly, the creation of the WBRN has also prompted this discussion
- c. RCSU AAO observed that in Physics, Year Reps will talk with Heads of Year on a monthly basis in between SSCs meaning that there is more time in SSCs to discuss more strategic level stuff e.g. NSS
- d. RCSU AAO noted that this also made SSCs more engaging to reps
- e. Aeronautics Dep Rep noted that they had faced a similar issue in Aeronautics and had dealt with it by providing Year Reps with a 'Rep Guidance Document'. Alongside this, the rep team meet prior to SSC and go through agenda points, often signposting to staff outside of SSCs
- f. RCSU AAO noted that with the introduction of WBRN, some WB Year Reps won't have experience with workings of meetings
- g. It was noted that the accompanying paper outlined suggested approaches to making SSCs more effective

- h. RCSU AAO noted that wellbeing issues are often an afterthought to academic issues and separating academic and wellbeing SSCs means creating a space for wellbeing issues to be aired appropriately
- i. ESE Dep Rep noted that RSM conducted Year Rep training at the start of the year, where they ran a signposting activity to train reps in how best to raise specific issues with relevant members of staff. This has meant that issues are going directly to staff members as opposed to taking up space in SSCs.
- j. ESE Dep Rep states that an open door policy is best when dealing with staff members
- k. RCSU AAO notes that whilst a close relationship with staff is always effective, this may not be the case in other departments.
- l. It was noted that taking minutes during these informal meetings can be useful
- m. GSU President asked whether the RCSU had taken their proposal to the Faculty
- n. RCSU AAO noted that they have brought this issue to faculty SSCs, however observed that the issue should also be raised from reps in departments.
- o. It was noted that using reps to create this structure will ensure that it is sustainable in the long-run
- p. It was noted that separate wellbeing Faculty SSCs are in the process of being created
- q. ESE Dep Rep stated that they have left the DPW, WBRN and CWB to discuss the logistics of the new network
- r. RCSU AAO noted that there is a need to bridge both networks together, as often miscommunications and contradictions can arise.
- s. RCSU AAO noted that many wellbeing reps won't have experience in SSCs, and will need support as they encounter their first SSC
- t. DPE states that with the creation of the new network, it will be good to see how both networks will work together.

10. Recording Rep Activities

- a. It is noted that this agenda point was put forward by the RCSU AAO
- b. RCSU AAO states that this project was carried over from last academic year. The RCSU found that the same issues were coming up every year. The idea behind this project is to build a repository of rep activities to allow for information to be stored for future reps.
- c. RCSU noted that it was important to see where changes have or haven't been made in order to avoid repeated work
- d. GSU President stated that GSU have been using Microsoft OneNote as a place to store minutes from meetings
- e. RCSU AAO observed that the system needed to be set up in a way that was easy for reps to access and use
- f. RCSU President stated that the RCSU were looking for thoughts regarding the project at this stage
- g. GSU President stated that the system needed to happen
- h. RCSU AAO stated that this would be a good way tracking and measuring rep impact
- i. DPE noted the ICSMSU already have a similar structure in place in the form of an action tracker

- j. ICSMSU AO (Early Years) stated that ICSMSU have a Google Doc where actions from every SSLG are logged and colour-coded accordingly. The AOs adds and logs actions as they arise
- k. DPE observed that the goal is to make it easier for reps to engage with the system
- l. DPE stated that by leaving the senior reps to record the 'big issues', it is more likely that the system will be populated as these reps are the most engaged
- m. RCSU AAO noted that this may be unfeasible in some Faculties due to size, and that sometimes action trackers and minutes aren't enough
- n. RCSU AAO noted that implementing a system through eActivities would be effective
- o. RCSU President noted that a similar 'You Said, We Did' platform once used by CSPs on eActivities could be useful here.

11.AOB

- a. Rep Conference:
 - i. DPE confirmed that there will be a Rep Conference this year
 - ii. DPE stated that the Education and Welfare team will begin planning meetings for the conference in the next couple of weeks
 - iii. RCSU AAO asked if AAOs can be invited to these planning meetings
 - iv. DPE noted that AAOs will not be invited to the first planning meeting, but maybe asked for input at subsequent meetings
- b. GDPR:
 - i. It was noted that the upcoming changes to data protection regulation could have an impact on the way in which reps work

ACTION: DPE and RC to look into the possible impact of the new legislation and circulate this to the board

- c. SACAs:
 - i. DPE confirmed that SACAs nominations will be opening on the 11 December.
 - ii. DPE noted that the 11 Dec launch will be a 'soft launch' with a hard push for three weeks w/c 22 January
 - iii. CGCU and RCSU AAOs asked why there was going to be a 'soft launch', raising concerns that the nominations period would be too long for a successful campaign
 - iv. DPE stated that if we received under 25% of the total votes during this period, then the soft launch period won't be done for the next SACAs cycle
- d. Design Engineering Dep Rep stated that they were eager to gather views on the perception of their department.
 - i. DPE stated that the best route would be to conduct a survey to gather views.

Key Dates

Next meeting: Thursday 18 January 2018, 6pm. Location: Meeting Rooms 1+2

Meeting concluded at 19:58