



Education & Representation Board  
Minutes

*The third Ordinary Meeting of the Education & Representation Board for the 2017-18  
Session was held on Thursday 18 January 2018.  
Location: Meeting Rooms 1&2*

Deputy President (Education)	Nicholas Burstow
Biochemistry Dep Rep	Lidia Ripoll Sanchez
Biology Dep Rep	Yizhou Yu
CGCU Academic Affairs Officer	Alejandro Luy
Design Engineering Dep Rep	Anna Bernbaum
Design Engineering Dep Rep	Michael Hofmann
Electrical and Electronic Engineering Dep Rep	Karmanya Sareen
Materials Dep Rep	Alice Robinson
Mathematics Dep Rep	Michael McGill
Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep	Girija Mohandass
Physics Dep Rep	Michaela Flegrova
RCSU Academic Affairs Officer	Abhijay Sood
RSMU President	Rob Tomkies
RSMU Academic Liaison Officer	Alice Bennett

Observers

Representation Coordinator	Nayab Cheema
Council Chair	Owen Heaney
Physics PG Dep Rep	Lloyd James
Academic Registrar	David Ashton
Registry	Robert Cashman
Director of Student Services	Hannah Bannister
Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)	Alan Spivey

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## **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:
    - Bioengineering Dep Rep
    - CGCU President
    - Chemistry Dep Rep
    - Deputy President (Clubs and Societies)
    - Deputy President (Welfare)
    - Earth Science and Engineering Dep Reps
    - Graduate Students' Union President
    - Graduate Students' Union Academic and Welfare Officer-Life Sciences
    - ICSMSU President
    - ICSMSU Academic Officer-Early Year
    - RSMU Academic Liaison Officer
  - c. DPE informs board that agenda items 6 *Presentation from Registry* and item 7 *Curriculum Review* will be moved ahead of *Matters for Report*
2. Minutes of last meeting – 23 November 2017
  - a. DPE asks board to review minutes from last meeting-23/11
    - i. Noted that a revision to minute 8.c need to be made, clarifying point that it is stated on College's website that students receive £290 of funding, when they do not in actuality.
    - ii. Correction noted and made
    - iii. Minutes are accepted

**ACTION: Representation Coordinator (RC) to place page numbers on minutes in future.**

3. Matters Arising
  - a. Action Tracker noted and discussed
    - i. DPE informs the board that the draft NSS action plan has been completed. It will now go to Provost Board for final approval. DPE will circulate the final action plan to the board once completed.

**ACTION: DPE to circulate final NSS Action Plan to board.**

- ii. Education and Welfare team are reviewing Rep Training ahead of next cycle
- iii. Action tracker has been completed
- iv. DPE asks for board's thoughts on the potential frequency and mode of IT student forums
  1. The board discussed various options, before deciding that having a standing item for discussion on IT on departmental

SSC agendas with an IT representative on every SSC would be sufficient. Alongside this, the annual IT forum was still of use, and having one in week 7 or 8 of the second term was appropriate.

- v. DPE asked the Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching) to present to the board on the curriculum review. DPE noted that there was a desire for more student focus groups and asked for the board's thoughts on the presentation
  - 1. It was acknowledged that there were concerns amongst board members as to the extent to which departments will have students involved in the curriculum review process
  - 2. It was noted that whilst College may be pushing for student involvement, the same may not be said for departments. Both College and students should be placing pressure on departments to involve students
  - 3. The board observed that the level of student involvement varies from department to department with some Departmental Representatives noting that it had been difficult to get involved in the review process
  - 4. The board discussed the possibility of Departmental Representatives running focus groups ahead of curriculum review panels, noting that this would ensure that students are able to input on the review
  - 5. Concern was expressed over the time constraints that these focus groups could place on students, noting that Dep Reps are best placed to represent the views of students in this regard
  - 6. Board members discussed how best to ensure that College is taking on this feedback on. Various methods were discussed such as flagging this at Faculty Teaching Committee meetings
  - 7. The board observed that the Union should look to provide additional guidance and framework on student involvement in the curriculum review process, and agree with College on a minimum set of standards for every department to follow with guidance on how to include students.

**ACTION: DPE to work with Reps to compile guidance and circulate to the board**

- vi. DPE has escalated this issue to staff at a Faculty level, however, there is yet to be clear ownership of the issue
- vii. DPE and RC circulated guidance on changes to GDPR legislation to the board.
  - 1. It was noted that when distributing this information more widely, the Union should be explicit in warning students against the use of GoogleDocs

## **Matters for Report**

4. Updates from Deputy President (Education)
  - a. It was noted that the NSS had been covered in *Matters Arising*. DPE informed the board that meetings regarding PRES recommendations were taking place with the Graduate School and GSU.
  - b. DPE updated the board on the ongoing development of the Student Shapers scheme, including the recruitment of a director to oversee the scheme. The board discussed the new scheme in relation to the curriculum review process, where it was noted that the Student Shapers scheme would be more of a UROP for education related matters where students would be able to produce new content for their course.
5. Updates from Academic Affairs Officers
  - a. RCSU Academic Affairs Officer (AAO)-
    - i. RCSU AAO is working with Faculty staff to put together a NSS style survey for non-final year students, in order to gauge student opinion on a more holistic basis.
      1. RCSU AAO will circulate this survey to the board once complete.
      2. The point was raised that multiple surveys could lead to students feeling 'over-surveyed'. It was noted that his particular survey could form a part of current surveys to mitigate this, and would also allow for the opportunity to ask questions that may not be covered by SOLE.
    - ii. It was noted that there was a new Head of Department in Physics
  - b. RSMU Academic Liaison Officer (ALO)-
    - i. RSMU ALO updated the board of the progress of the curriculum review process in the RSM. Earth Science and Engineering have begun arranging focus groups, and will be following up with the new Director of Undergraduate Studies to ensure that students are continually involved in the process.
  - c. CGCU Academic Affairs Officer (AAO)-
    - i. CGCU AAO updated the board on the CGCU restructure which will see the current Academic Affairs Officer position becoming 'Vice President Education'. Alongside this, an 'Education Officer' role will be introduced to support the work of the VP Education.
    - ii. CGCU AAO is looking at potentially dividing these two remits to cover a distinct set of departments, for example, SEQ clusters, however, this is on hold pending constitutional requirements.
    - iii. CGCU has been reviewing Annual Monitoring reports for engineering departments, and will be sending these reports to the relevant Departmental Representatives. It was noted that these reports contain lots of useful information and other AAOs should look towards gaining access to them.
  - d. Graduate Students' Union (GSU)-

- i. GSU is continuing to work with Graduate School on forming committees for postgraduate students where they can raise and discuss any issues that arise.

### **Matters for Discussion**

#### 6. Presentation from Registry

- a. David Ashton, Academic Registrar (DA) and Robert Cashman, Registry (RC) presented the board with an overview of the work that Registry is doing on *'Enhancing the student lifecycle- Improving student information'*
- b. The presentation covered the following:
  - i. Vision
  - ii. Student communication
  - iii. Website development
  - iv. Enquiry management
- c. As part of wider work being done on 'SIMP' (Student Information Management Programme), Registry is looking at website development and the way in which information is shared
- d. Registry focussed in particular on the student administration lifecycle, following students from recruitment through their studies until graduation, going through the activities and administrative processes that happen to students through this journey. It was noted that there wasn't any central oversight over this process
- e. This has led to the identification of the need for a uniform, student-centred service that will look at two main areas to the project; how College communicates with students and how students communicate with College.
- f. Within this, there are different strands; a new students record system, central services communications to students, an enquiry management system and information provision to students
- g. Looking at website development, DA and RC presented the current [imperial.ac.uk/students](http://imperial.ac.uk/students) page where students can access relevant information regarding their course and various support services and asked the board to consider the ease of use, relevance, layout, accessibility of the current site
- h. DA and RC informed the board that the aim for the website is for it to be student focussed, one service, and coherent. Key insights such as analytics, internal search and web-search data, commonly-asked Student Hub questions and staff feedback have been used to guide work done so far
- i. The work done so far has focussed on the level of information available to students, looking at categorising the services that students need into broad categories:
  - i. Information for new students
  - ii. Academic support
  - iii. Health and wellbeing support
  - iv. Extra-curricular opportunities
  - v. Administration

- vi. Student finance
  - j. The next steps are to set-up focus groups, establish categories, check terminology and ensure that the site is usable for the student population.
  - k. DA and RC asked the group for their input and feedback on the website as a whole and the helpfulness of the categories.
  - l. It was noted that it would be worth expanding the student lifecycle beyond graduation day to focus on 'graduation and beyond'
  - m. The board observes that it was sometimes difficult to find departmental specific things on the [imperial.ac.uk/students](http://imperial.ac.uk/students) page and it would be useful to have a more bespoke user experience
  - n. It was noted that students already use Blackboard for academic related issues and that it would be useful to indicate what can be found within each category
  - o. It was noted that whilst students may know that the page exists, they may not necessarily know what information is on there. The page should be signposted to more and its usefulness communicated more widely
  - p. The board observed that a few of the headings were quite vague and did not offer much indication of what students could find within that. The point was also raised that international students may not have much need to access the 'Student Finance' subpage, but that there was access to additional support services contained within that page. It was noted that altering the name to 'Student Finance and Support' would give students a better idea of the levels of support available to them.
  - q. The board questioned how this page relates to the existing 'e-service'. It was noted that information available from other sites would sit beside this page. This will get rid of the notion that students need to know the structure of College in order to readily access information
  - r. The board were asked to register their interest in attending focus groups

**ACTION: Representation Coordinator to email reps regarding focus groups**

- s. DPE thanked DA and RC for their presentation
- 7. Curriculum Review
  - a. DPE welcomed the Assistant Provost (Learning and Teaching) Alan Spivey (AS) to the meeting to talk about the upcoming Curriculum Review process
  - b. AS began by providing the board with background information on the *Learning and Teaching Strategy*.
  - c. The *Learning and Teaching Strategy* launched in June 2017, supports the introduction of evidence-based innovation in education across the College.
  - d. There are four key priorities of the strategy:
    - i. A review of curricula and assessment
    - ii. An evidence-based transformation of pedagogy, making teaching more interactive
    - iii. The fostering of an inclusive and diverse culture
    - iv. The development of online and digital tools to enhance curricula, pedagogy and community.

- e. AS gave the board an overview of current cross-College projects related to the *Learning and Teaching Strategy*:
  - i. Academic Standards Framework which will look to introduce a single set of new student regulations for all taught programmes
  - ii. Student Information Management Programme (SIMP) which is currently being prepare for launch in September 2018.
  - iii. Curriculum Review which will look to review and redesign of curriculum and assessment, with the potential to create a modular system where students are allowed to take 'pathways' through their degrees. The curriculum review process will run from January 2018 until March 2019; all departments will be looking at their undergraduate offerings and how they can transform that to a modular format
  - iv. Pedagogy transformation which will provide resources and funding for departments to make teaching more innovative and interactive
- f. It was noted that whilst postgraduate courses are part of the curriculum review process, they will not be modularising due to the similarities between PGT and UG teaching
- g. AS informed the board that it is expected that the new modular curriculum would be in place to first year undergraduates starting in 2019
- h. Regarding student involvement in the curriculum review process, it was noted that departmental representatives should be involved in the review process within their departments
- i. The board observed that there some departments have already begun running focus groups with students
- j. The concern was raised that modularisation could be difficult in first year curriculum where incoming first-years may not know what they want to study. It was noted that there will be a single degree, with preferred pathways in the later stages of the degree
- k. The board questioned the meaning of 'curriculum inclusivity', which was clarified as meaning looking at language used within the classroom, slide accessibility, and how to maximise experience that people have to improve the learning for others
- l. The board observed that different lecture styles are often at discretion of individual lecturers, making it difficult to mandate a specific style of lecturing. It was noted that a wide range of approaches to teaching work best, but College will be encouraging departments as a whole to be adopting new approaches to teaching.
- m. The board questioned whether there will be any particular guidelines on how curriculum review panels will be run in terms of staff membership. It was noted that there be multiple staff members with varying views on the panel; HoD, DUGs and two new teaching fellows and any other key teaching individuals. It was noted that it was important for these panels to involve the whole department
- n. The board questioned how these panels will be different to departmental teaching committees. It was noted that the remit of these panels is different

and the timescales surrounding are very tight. It was noted that CMA guidance means that curriculums need to be confirmed for prospective students.

- o. The board observed that whilst it was good that departmental representatives will be involved, it would however be good to see further guidance on other forms of consultation that departments could take. Alongside this, the board expressed concerns that student involvement in this process should look beyond departmental reps and include year reps and the wider student body
  - p. The board debated as to the potential biases that could occur with only having one student in the room
  - q. Linked to this, concerns were also raised regarding the level of experience students have in determining their new curriculum. To mitigate this, it was suggested that students are involved later in the process, however, some board members noted that involving students later in the process could mean that it may be too late for them to make any significant change
  - r. It was noted that it was important that the success of implementing active learning methods are evaluated
  - s. It was also noted that industry links should also be considered in the review process.
  - t. DPE thanked AS for his presentation.
8. Feedback Traffic Light Audit Update
- a. DPE thanked the board for their work in encouraging their Year 1 reps to complete the audit
  - b. DPE provided an update to the board on the progress of the audit, stating that he was currently in the process of writing up the data to present to College after which it will be circulated widely
  - c. It was noted that the reasoning behind the audit was to show College that monitoring feedback across departments is possible and can be done. The end goal is for College to commit to monitoring feedback at a departmental level, with Vice-Deans asking DUGs to ensure that it is done.
9. SACAs
- a. It was noted that the SACAs were currently open, and the three week hard push 'Emerald City' was approaching
  - b. DPE asked the board for their assistance in promoting the SACAs as well as submitting nominations before the deadline

## **AOB**

### 10. Leadership Elections

- a. DPE encouraged board members to consider running for the role and to speak to him if they would like to do so. It was noted that as AAOs and Departmental Representatives, they were best placed to run for the role.

### 11. Sports strategy



- a. DPE asked the board to register their interest in attending a consultation on the new Sports Strategy on the 24 January from 3.30-5pm

12. Meeting in March

- a. It was noted that an additional meeting of ERB will be scheduled in March, details to follow shortly

**ACTION: Representation Coordinator to schedule meeting in March**

13. Common room space

- a. It was noted that some departments were in the process of trying to acquire a common room space in their departments and asked the board for their input on how best to go about this
- b. It was noted that other departments were able to acquire such space by using other departments as an example and by reinforcing the importance of building a sense of community as a driver
- c. The point was raised that with the White City expansion, there was the scope for departments to acquire freed up space that is made available.

Meeting concluded: 8.04