Imperial College Union Communications Committee

12 September 2018

AGENDA ITEM NO.	12
TITLE	Autumn Elections Working Communications Plan
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	A working document for planning Communications for Autumn Elections 2018. The plan is being reviewed and amended by the Working group to ensure it is fit for purpose to achieve the metrics for the elections.
PURPOSE	For Committee to note the plan and provide feedback.
DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED	Feedback or questions about the plan

Autumn Elections 2018 Communications Plan

Overview
Autumn Elections (AE18) aim to elect the following positions:

- UG Academic & Wellbeing Reps
- PGT Academic Reps
- Ordinary Members of Council
- Open CU Committee positions
- Open CSP Committee positions

In the following timeframes:

Date	Event
12:00, Saturday 29 September	Open nominations
12:00, Wednesday 10 October	Close nominations
13:00, Wednesday 10 October	Candidates' briefing
12:00, Thursday 11 October	Manifesto deadline
7:00, Friday 12 October	Manifestos published online and campaigning begins
12:00, Monday 15 October	Voting begins
12:00, Friday 19 October	Voting closes

And for CSPs, to allow time for new membership to get into the electoral roll and stand for positions:

Date	Event
12:00, Monday 08 October	Open nominations
12:00, Wednesday 17 October	Close nominations
12: 00, Friday 19 October	Manifesto deadline
	Manifestos published online and campaigning begins
12:00 Tuesday 23 October	Voting begins
12:00 Tuesday 25 October	Voting closes

With the following aims, relative to previous performance:

KPI	Measure	Previous
Turnout	30 percent	Average 26% last 4 years
Higher satisfaction among candidates	Evidenced by the post-election Candidates' Survey	No previous Survey data
Speedier and more transparent handling of complaints	Complaints log	Report to be pulled

More candidates standing per position	An average of 2 per position	Report to be pulled
Training attendance	Online & candidates' briefing numbers	No Training Hub last year or record of attendance figure, but we know it was low to non-existent.
All vacancies filled	Nominations	
Higher votes per person	Votes: voter ratio	# of votes decreased? (Systems explanation)

Through the following planning method:

- A project management team convened 9 weeks before the elections comprising Head of Student Voice & Communications (chair), Union President (co-chair), Systems Lead, Senior Designer, Digital Marketer, Education & Welfare Manager, and the Activities Manager, meeting every Thursday for an hour and a half until a week after the election.

Background and Risks

Autumn Elections have ordinarily been the more low-key of the two main elections conducted by the Union annually. It's averaged a turnout of 26 per cent in the last four years and suffers the following historic problems:

- Only Undergraduates elect all their Academic Reps via the Union's online system and a few PGTs. Since half of Imperial students are PGs, this presents both a representation problem for the Union, as well as a turnout problem for these elections. Effort is being made to bring PGs into the existing networks through meetings with departments. Receptivity is low but deadline to confirm all positions in 21 September.

- These elections open at the start of the academic year. This necessarily allows students to choose their Reps for a whole year, however:

  o Messaging for these elections is more challenging because it occurs during Welcome, the busiest time on campus when there is a lot of competing information.
  o The Systems team has to spend more time refreshing the electoral roll for CSPs which tend to gain a lot membership at the start of year and therefore will have uncertain numbers throughout the elections.
  o First years do not quite understand the Union's complex governance structure and therefore, there is a greater demand on the communications plan to achieve awareness, generate interest in standing for positions, and also emphasise the importance of voting in a very short space of time.
  o Key members of the Elections Team are also key members of the Welcome Team and therefore have less time, energy and focus to expend on these elections.

    o   The above is even more acute for Marketing & Communications which has to meet demand in every Union project and team during this period.
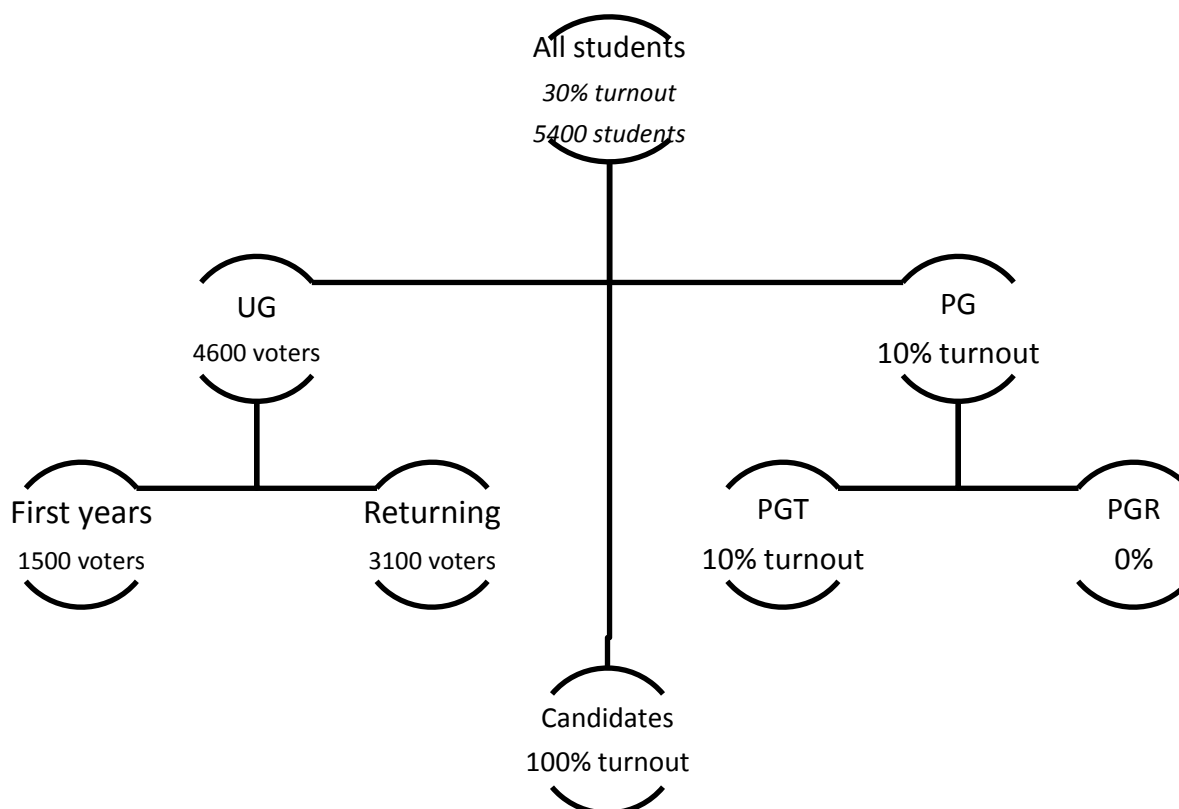
Audiences:
All Union elections target the full membership since democracy and representation are important to our overall remit, and full participation is desired. However the student body is diverse in needs, behaviour and motivations. Therefore, proper segmentation and tactics become necessary to achieve better outcomes.

For the purposes of this section, College demographic data for the previous year (2017/18) will be used, as at the time of writing, the 2018/19data from College had not yet become available. Unless there are radical changes in capacity or retention, trends should remain consistent and the 17/18 data is therefore useful as a planning tool. However, this section will be updated as soon as the Registry publishes current information.
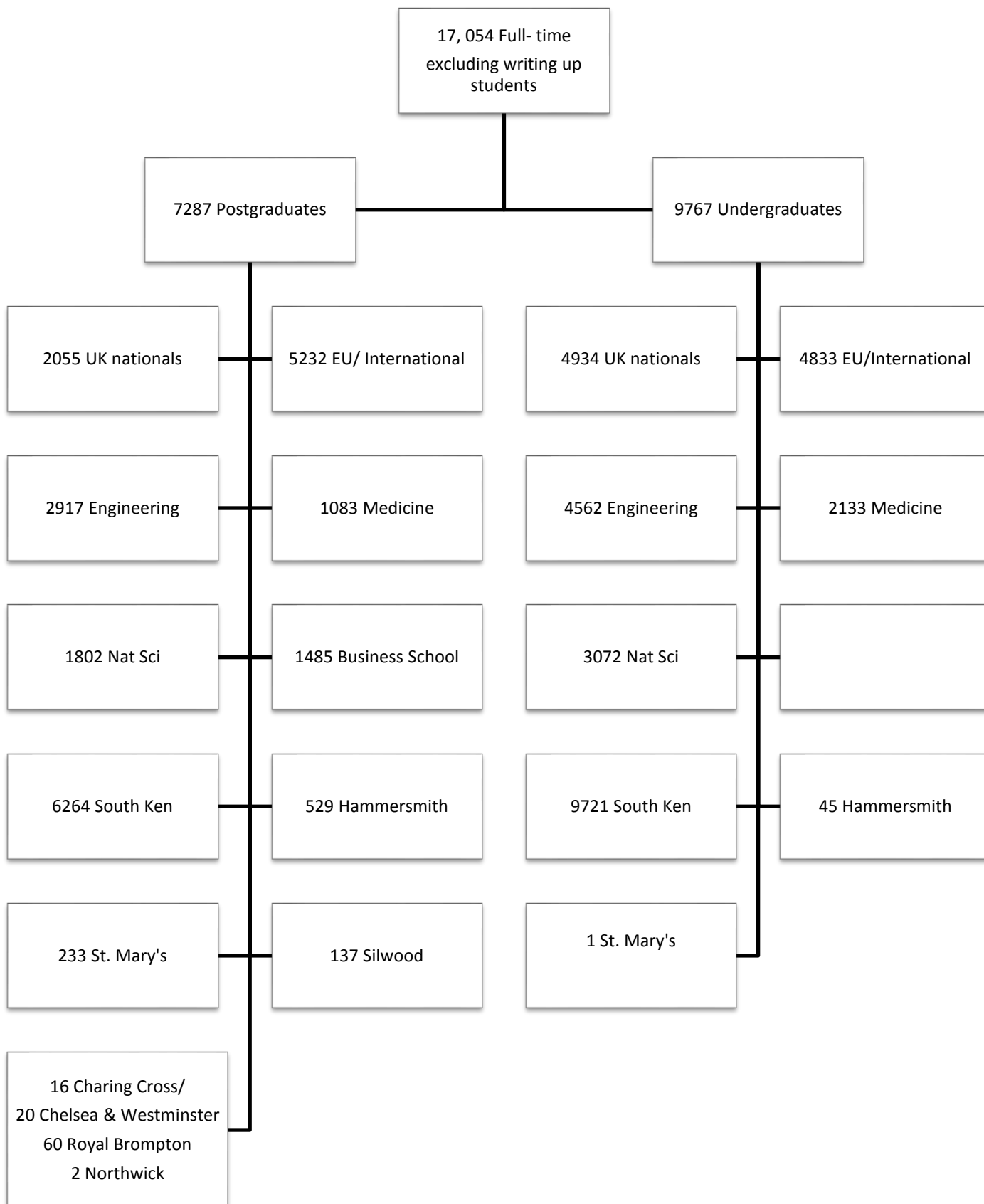
Segments and turnout expectations
The following diagram shows how the audience will be segmented for the purposes of the Communications Plan, with each sub-segment having its own tactics and turnout targets. There are eight audience segments with each successive segment receiving more targeted communications.
Turnout expectation by audience

All students
30% turnout
5400 students

UG
4600 voters

PG
10% turnout

First years
1500 voters

Returning
3100 voters

PGT
10% turnout

PGR
0%

Candidates
100% turnout

Imperial student profile: 17/18

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                        ┌─────────────────────────┐
                        │   17, 054 Full- time     │
                        │  excluding writing up    │
                        │       students           │
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7287 Postgraduates		9767 Undergraduates	
2055 UK nationals	5232 EU/ International	4934 UK nationals	4833 EU/International
2917 Engineering	1083 Medicine	4562 Engineering	2133 Medicine
1802 Nat Sci	1485 Business School	3072 Nat Sci	
6264 South Ken	529 Hammersmith	9721 South Ken	45 Hammersmith
233 St. Mary's	137 Silwood	1 St. Mary's	
16 Charing Cross/ 20 Chelsea & Westminster 60 Royal Brompton 2 Northwick			

Communications Partners and Stakeholders

Our partners are people, programmes or places outside the Elections Team that interact with our members regularly and can assist us in messaging, either directly or through use of their channels or spaces.

Partner/Stakeholder	Audiences	Channels
Constituent Union Executives	UG First & Returning	Emails, face to face
College Comms team	All students	SM, web, emails
CSPs	Club members	Emails/Fair/social media/Wanna Go Wednesday
Library	All students	Desktops/roller banners/flyers/posters/screens
Gym	All students	Roller banners/screens
Bars and cafes	All students	Tills/table stickers, table talkers, posters/t-shirts
Lecturers	UG and PGT	First lectures
Existing Reps	UG	Emails, face-to-face, flyers
Halls	All First Years	Flyers, emails, banners
Welcome Team	All Year One	Fair, Talks, all Comms

The Communications Plan will be rolled out in two phases:

- Nominations period: 29 September – 10 October
- Voting period: 15 -19 October

Phase 1: Nominations

Aim:

Having higher nominations per position is an objective of this election with the aim of at least two nominees per position.

Messaging

To accomplish the above, all Imperial students must get the following messages, *at the least*:

- What positions are available
- Why the positions matter to them *personally*
- What the commitment of each position is, in terms of duties and time
- How to stand for a position and within what timeframe

Aim of message	Messaging, in full	Condensed
What positions are available	Choose your Academic & Wellbeing Reps for the year ahead, as well as your Faculty Rep on the Students' Council, and these other positions important to the student experience: CSP	Choose your Reps for the year ahead

	committee members and your CU executive	
Why the positions matter personally	Influence of Reps increases teaching and learning outcomes, ensures you have the right support throughout your studies and therefore has an impact on the quality of your degree and student experience. The more students vote, the more influence these Reps have over College and the greater the chance that you and other students can control the quality of your education and Imperial experience.	Let's take charge of our Imperial experience: become an Academic Rep, Wellbeing Rep or Faculty Rep. Nominations close 10 Oct We all vote 15 – 19 Oct
What the commitment of each position is, in terms of duties and time	• Listen to peers and report issues to Faculty on an ongoing basis • Attend Student/staff committees every month • Attend training and liaise with other Reps	To lead the conversation between fellow students and College.
How to stand for a position and within what timeframe	Go to imperialcollegunion.org/elections before 10 October	Go to imperialcollegunion.org/elections before 10 October

Channels:

The Nominations messaging above must be available *in full* in the following channels:

Channel	Activity
Imperial College Union elections webpages	Passive hub containing all promotional and mandatory election information to which all communications must refer.
Positions booklet	Active distribution across campus to both create awareness and generate interest in the positions and elections

And will appear *condensed* or *fragmented* in all other channels employed in the following channels:

Types of channels	Activities
Email	• Newsletters • email signatures • Candidate emails
Screens	• Tills at points of sale • IBC screen • Faculty screens • Library screens • Library desktop screens

	• Union screens • Bar screens
Print	• Flyers • Tabletalkers • PVC banners • Roller banners • Posters • Table vinyls • Stickers
Social media	• Facebook • Twitter • Instagram • WeChat • Snapchat
Events	• Fair • Welcome Talks • Halls move-in day • Welcome events
Media	• Felix • IC Radio
Partners	• See partners and stakeholders list

Nominations Communications Action Plan

This section brings together the messages, channels, audiences, stakeholders discussed in previous sections. It should be referred to by Elections Team or other interested parties for specific actions to be taken at set times of the project.

It's organised according to the four main segments, which overlap, and therefore should be treated as a whole. The purpose of organising by segments is to ensure there are no gaps and that each segment is being accounted for, and that the level of activities are commensurate with turnout expectations previously discussed under audience segments .

Year 1 Campaign Activities					
Date	Activity	Channel	Partner	Responsible	Message
Week -6	Include in first email to new students	Union newsletter	Internal	Keriann to write and send	What Reps are, why it should matter to them; that they can stand and dates; that we'll train them;
Week -6	Include in email to new	College general	College Comms	Keriann to ask Hannah McLachan & Jesse	What Reps are; that

	students	newsletter		Alter	they can stand and dates; that the Union will train them
Week -6	Include in email to new students	Departmental emails	Departmental Admins	Keriann to email admins; Fran to reinforce in meetings	Consider becoming a Rep; what it entails; that they can stand and dates; that Union will train them
Week -6	Include in email to students	CU emails	Cu Presidents	Rob to discuss with CU Presidents	What Reps are, why it should matter to them; that they can stand and dates; that we'll train them;
Week -6	Start mentioning on Freshers' pages	Freshers' pages	Internal	Gareth to start scheduling	Start thinking about becoming a Rep! Here's what it's about and why we'll choose these reps as soon as you arrive.
Week -6	College account	Social Media	College Comms	Request one College retweet	Start thinking about becoming a Rep! Here's what the Union is saying about these roles.
Week -5	Flesh out info about the election on Welcome page and link	Welcome Hub	Internal	Keriann to flesh out content	Start thinking about becoming a Rep! Here's

	to updated Reps pages.				what it's about and why we'll choose these reps as soon as you arrive on campus.
Week -5	Update elections.org	Main website		Harriet/Keriann/Gareth/Phil	Full elections information
Week -4	Department pages	College Website		Request that Departments mention on their pages	Choose your Course Reps to do XYZ. Elections take place in October.
29 September	Ensure general awareness collateral are in halls, bars and other spaces and Union stall	Halls Move-in Day	Hall wardens Bars	Daz to include in stall activity, Manager to brief HelloICU Crew and venues staff so they can answer any questions that arise from the collateral. Passive, not aggressive campaigning	General election messaging
29 September -5 October	Include in OT Welcome Talks	Welcome Talks at College events		Rob, Becky and CU presidents to include in their talks to students	Importance of Reps and high voter numbers: higher turnout means greater influence over College decisions
29 September – 5 October	Ensure collateral at stalls	Union stalls		Daz to include in plan for stalls	General awareness collateral
28 September onwards	General awareness collateral around campus			Keriann and Irina to create and print, elections and promo team to distribute	General awareness collateral
2 October	Promote at Freshers' Fair	CSPs, Union stalls, OTs and collateral		Iain to brief CSPs on expectations; Daz to issue flyers and include in Union signage and Fair screens, Fran to	General awareness of the elections

week -1	Felix; Ramp up social media with daily activities, including quick OT videos;	All channels		Andy	open tomorrow!
	Insert banner on web homepage,	Website			
	Distribute positions booklet				
	Upload to screens and tills across campus				
	Erect all general collateral				