

Imperial College Union Council Report

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Introduction and Summary

As this is the final report of the year, it also contains a summary of my year. Overall, the year has been ups and downs with many battles with College and the senior Union staff, but overall I feel like I can say I am proud of the new relations I've forged in College, especially with College Catering who have now let me feed into the Catering Strategy and make the message 'Students as Partners' instead of customers. I'm also proud of the transformation we have made to the Union structure to re-establish the Leadership team (sabbatical officers + senior management staff) as the top body in the staff structure, instead of just senior management staff, and empower the Officer Trustees (OTs) to be part of all the big decisions again.

My final highlights of the year have been creating a semi-interactive page on the Union Finances to explain to the student body how we function, what we spend money on, how we try save students money, and overall bring a lot more transparency around this area, a big manifesto point I was passionate about; working with College for over 8 months to introduce 24-hr hot food and drink to students on campus so they can continue to stay fuelled while they study late in the library and not have to compromise on nutrition; and running a hugely successful student consultation with 150+ students at Reynolds bar and already being able to make progress on almost every point raised, in joint partnership with the ICSM President, with the final few points to be progressed in the next week or two.

Below find:

- Report on progress of projects still ongoing
- Reflections of the year
 - o Manifesto Points
 - o Additional Projects worked on

Report on Projects Currently in Progress

Project/Goal	Status	Updates	Next Steps
Union Finance Infographic	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed• Currently asking students to test the page and I am making edits in accordance with the feedback	Launch it before end of term
Great Exhibition Road Festival	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reusable cups designed and ordered	Design deposit scheme comms
Summer Ball 2019	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No updates	
Summer Ball 2020	To Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No planning done yet until Summer Ball 2019 over• Have ensured any potential ideas the events team have must pass through the Finance & Risk Board first to be approved as potential options before continuing to be investigated. This allows for student trustee approval first.	Shall be talking to the Union events team to try and create a student working group where people can help plan the Summer Ball 2020.
h-bar	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have decided to provide food ourselves in h-bar• Food tasting = 13th June lunch time, will be trying to invite a mixture of PG reps• Food launch = 17th June	

Reynolds	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion boxes installed in the bar and library to gain regular feedback easily • Awards board have been updated • Missing historic signs have been located and awaiting being rehung • New food has been trialed on 3 occasions this term and 2 more instances have been planned • Working in collaboration with ICSM President to design the food menu, drinks deals, and prices, and also advertise all the events. • Have successfully lobbied College to revamp the café – a new hot food range will be introduced, soup and hot dogs will also be introduced to bring parity between the outlets in South Kensington and Reynolds, and a brand of coffee will be introduced (actual brand unconfirmed, but may be Starbucks) • Also lobbied College to improve the upkeep of their side of the Reynolds Bar, with a deep clean planned and windows revamped. 	Still lobbying College to invest money in redoing the furniture in their half of the bar + working with Dan to improve the booking system for Reynolds
Beit Bars	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trialed a BBQ Week and an Ale Festival which were successful. Lessons learnt have also been recorded, to make sure it is run even better next time. 	

Reflections of the Year

This following section is just a summary, and the depth can be found on imperialcollegeunion.org/dpfs.

While I was elected to carry out my manifesto points, not all of them ended up being plausible due to ideas/resources/finances, or other projects that had arisen over the year took precedent, as they had greater impact on students. Priorities and projects also changed once I understood my role and capabilities better, as well what the Union actually required to function better for students.

Manifesto points

- ✓ Put students at the heart of decisions, making students the decision makers of events and big changes
 - This is a point that has expanded out to be an Officer Trustee (OT) wide aim. We have been trying to engrain student consultation and feedback into all projects and decisions. As a team, this has involved us inputting into the questions in the Student Experience Survey (SES) as well as analysing the results, which has not been done by the Union in the past. It was filled out by over 3000 students and has been used to inform any decision that's relevant and also help identify areas where work is needed.
 - To do this has been an uphill battle with many challenges and involved us having to change how senior management functioned, removing their meetings and resetting the Leadership team (sabbs + senior staff) as the top deciding body so that the sabbatical officers are involved in all big decisions and can prevent or adjust changes that would not be most beneficial to our students. We also have tried to introduce a culture change of using student feedback and data (such as the SES) to be one of the main things looked at whenever planning something. This has been a hard one to change but slowly student feedback is being used more without us sabbatical officers having to remind staff.
 - In addition to this, I have used the SES data to lobby College Campus Services on changes to their outlets, including introducing meal deals and more vegan food, making sure that the feedback is acted upon.
 - Furthermore, I have used many different methods of student consultation to gather information on Union Breakfast, Meat Free Monday, Summer Ball, and Shop Refurb to name a few.

- ✓ Create an infographic on how the Union income is spent on students (coming mid-June)
- ✓ Bring back bendy straws to the bars
 - They're now biodegradable, but also looking into getting edible ones so even less waste
- ✓ Reduce queues in Library Cafe and College Café (Express queue introduced to Library Café)
- ✓ Bring back SCR breakfast, or start it at the Union
 - Started breakfast in the Union instead but was shut down in March due to lack of uptake.
- ✓ Lunchtime drop-in sessions for CSPs
 - Instead of drop-in sessions, I looked at how to answer all CSP queries I encountered.
 - Emphasised CSPs should contact Management Groups first, while also rewrote some of the training pages on eActivities to help with queries. This reduced the number of queries received. From this, was able to arrange phone call or in person meetings with club committee members at a time that suited them, instead of them having to come find me during lunch.
- ✓ Focus on Union and College food quality and deals
 - Successfully lobbied College to introduce meal deals in all College sandwich shops, the Pizza outlet and the Plantworks outlet.
 - Increased the range of food available on campus by working with College to introduce a plant-based café, pizza and pasta outlet, and increase awareness of allergen friendly meals. Introduced vegan meals to Silwood Park campus.
- ✓ Quicker sponsorship contract approval (reduced average turnaround time to a few weeks rather than months)
- ✓ Make the Union less dependent on student spending by increasing external income
 - The 2019/20 budget has a stronger focus on sponsorship and selling stalls/advertisement to external companies relative to income driven from the student bars. Additionally, the Leadership team have been looking at investment projects that can diversify our income generation. These have yet to be finalised.
- ✓ Develop an online shop to sell global alumni/prospective students
 - We actually already shipped products globally. However, this is not advertised well, and the website cannot always cope with purchases. A new version of the Union Online Shop is currently being built and this has been set as a priority by the Leadership Team this year. The new online shop will allow for the ability to apply discounts or voucher codes, improve speed of service, reduce the number of occurrences the website crashes during high demand periods, and also increase the modern look! Hopefully, this will increase our product demand amongst alumni and prospective families, increasing our external income again!
- ✗ Introduce an online food ordering system for food
 - Have spoken to OrbisTech, the suppliers of the till software the Union uses, as well as talking to our systems team, an app would only be possible if I learn to code due to resources and priorities, and I do not know how to code.
- ✗ Ensure students get home safe by introducing an end-of night Union minibus drop-off system
 - Due to our Section 19 permit for minibuses we are unable to pay drivers, making the system hard to sustain via volunteers. With other projects that were higher impact to students coming up in College, I chose to focus working on those rather than try and continue a feasibility study for this project.
- ✗ Generate income from eActivities by licensing it to other Unions
 - After carrying out a feasibility study and talking to the systems team and some professional software/website designers, this could only be done if completely rebuilt from the ground up as eActivities is so bespoke to the Union with the way data is inputted and the different finance apps it needs to interact with. It would be a huge investment piece, and also require extra staff to market the product, while the income return is hard to predict.

Some points in my manifesto were actually more suitable for other sabbatical officers to look into in some instances, as once in the job you understand where each other's remit actual is. The points other officers and staff looked into are:

- Transport to Harlington on Mondays and Wednesdays

- Improve minibus upkeep
- Negotiate with College to make more departmental spaces available to CSPs
- Advertise facilities to the public during the holidays
- Useful, quality training, delivered at the right times for CSPs
 - However, I have rewritten some of the finance training hub pages to make processes clearer and easier to understand

Additional Projects I've Worked On

- Worked with Greening Imperial to improve College sustainability by removing single use disposable plastics from catering outlets, introducing a coffee cup levy to encourage using your own cup, and lobbying College White City Campus development team to include more green tech and efficient processes in the build of the South section of buildings.
- Launched a Meat Free Monday trial campaign across 4 campuses and 35 outlets, making it the most wide-spread campaign the Union has ever done.
- Introduced 24-hr hot meal vending and drinks to campus so students can continue to stay fuelled while they study late in the library and not have to compromise on nutrition
- Carried out various forms of student consultation and fed this back into the spring carnival and summer ball, something that had never been done before. Planning had previously just been based on what the events team decided sounded good, with no chance for students to input.
- Worked with College ICT Service to assess how the new printing credit and charges system/prices should work, implemented in April 2019. It's now cheaper to print!
- Redesigned Health & Safety Committee to improve the effectiveness of the committee and raise the importance on the focus of H&S within the Union
- Helped James (DPCS) implement his new annual budgeting system within Clubs, Societies and Projects Board (CSPB)
- Worked with College Security and ICT to look at the need for an app called SafeZone
- Working with College to introduce sustainable reusable cups to the Great Exhibition Road Festival 2019
- Work with the Ethics & Environment Officer to support her introducing a Greening Imperial Week
- Working with our Operations Manager, GSU and h-bar managers to introduce a food menu to h-bar
- Working with our Operations Manager, ICSM President, and Reynolds staff to introduce more food to Reynolds, review the booking system of the space, introduce more drinks deals, introduce suggestion boxes, update the awards boards, rehang fallen signs, and also lobby College to improve the upkeep of the space, open the Café during holidays and introduce a better range of food to the Café.
- Working with College Catering to include in their strategy 'students as partners'!

Ending

Thanks to everyone who has helped spread my communication pieces, taken part in my consultations, or given feedback. With a month still left in the job, I will continue to update my webpage so you can see what I'm continuing to work on, or projects I'm starting to set up for the next DPFS to take over, but you are also welcome to contact me to get further details on a particular thing too.

Hope you all have a successful end of project/exams, and enjoy the summer weather!

Want to know more? [✉ dpfs@ic.ac.uk](mailto:dpfs@ic.ac.uk) | [📞 020 7594 8060](tel:02075948060)