

Presidents report to Union Council – A year in reflection

It's strange to actually be writing the final report. More than anything this marks the beginning of the end for what is five years being involved in the Union rather than just the past one that this report focuses on. This year more than most we have tried to focus on future proofing the Union for years to come – part of this was a choice from the team, part of it was necessity. When you come into an OT role you find that 1 – you have a full job to do before you start anything else project wise, 2 – there are some projects that simply need doing which you never intended and 3 – only then can many of your manifesto points be tackled. This is how I've structured this report.

One update before the report: **The hall rent price negotiations** have been pushed back until next year due to new halls opening leading to spare space which in turn gives an opportunity to renovate certain halls – as they are not sure which these shall be yet they have delayed the process.

The Projects – What needed doing

Policy Review

The vast majority of policies have been lapsed for a long time and many being owned by bodies that no longer exist. I have successfully updated a number of policies and created a prioritisation tool that creates a framework for Policy upkeep and renewal moving forward so that we do not face this situation again. Within this I have also restructured the way that governance documents are owned so that all policies – including staff policies now have Officer Trustee and hence student oversight on.

OT Role Review

I completed a holistic review of the OT roles to ensure that the jobs were appropriate. Here, based on some of the areas identified, we changed the roles to provide DPFS with a more outward looking role – tackling colleges services and finances, and then DPCS with a more process developmental role.

Governance Review / Support

I had the very tail end of the Governance review, concluding in the introduction of the new constitution and byelaws written by Chippy. I also redeveloped the back-house systems for council so that the voting records no longer have to be manually input – rather they now can be automatically generated. We have also produced new training for Union council and reps so that people better understand the democratic structures of the Union.

Disciplinary Review

This turned into a somewhat mammoth task – with best practice for areas such as treatment of sexual harassment evolving so quickly at the moment – writing a holistic policy with no staff expertise or support was going to be a challenge. None the less a large proportion of the leg work has been completed and we have recently employed an interim student advice manager who was heavily involved in Disciplinary procedure writing at LSE and so are in a much stronger position to re write these procedures in an informed way in the following year.

Elections Process Review

I was heavily involved in the redesign of the elections processes. This included the design of the back house system that automated updating complainants of the stage of their investigation dramatically increasing transparency, decreasing response times. I also successfully pushed for the introduction

of an intermediate standardised sanction between warning and disqualification as well as introducing a functional appeals process.

Other Projects

The Times Partnership

I have to be involved in the creation of an agreement between the Times, College and the Union. Here we agreed to run regular events throughout the year, an ambassador scheme for students, as well as a free subscription for students.

360 Reviews

One of my highlights for the year was completing the 360 process where colleagues, OTs and volunteers had the opportunity to feedback on all aspects of our performance in the role. This was a really positive process and lead to changes in the way I approach many situations going forward.

Student Support Fund alumni appeal

I have worked with the college advancement team to compose an appeal to gain support for the Student Support Fund – this was in the form of a letter being sent out to alumni – hopefully this will be hugely successful.

Alumni Partnership

I have worked closely with the College Alumni team to recognise where we have offerings competing against each other and where things could be mutually beneficial. We have started alumni events in the Union, club and cohort specific events, plexus offering as well as using alumni contacts (eg Brian May) to potentially attend club events.

Graduation Speech re write

For the first time in over half a century I've managed to re write the reading from the Union president at graduation ceremonies. This bring the language and ideas of the speech more in line with the values of the Union.

The Manifesto

Below I've gone through each of the points on my (in hindsight very long) manifesto and stated progress for each point. This is done in the order everything was on my campaign [website](#).

Catering	Good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with DPFS – much of this should be accredited this way 24 hour food vending is on its way this term. Vegan + Vegetarian Café introduced through college Union Breakfast Trial Run Transition of DPFS role to officially work with college to change their services.
Sponsorship Support	complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sales and Sponsorship manager staff role introduced – doubled union income from sponsorship Sponsorship advice for clubs re written
Environmental outlook	Good progress (environment still a mess so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Again worked with DPFS Plastic free college Coffee cup introduced for Union Coffee

	cant really say complete)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushed for sustainable investment strategy in College meetings
Ethos Gym Expansion	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeveloped and expanded downstairs
Tour Funding Increase	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pot for tour funding increased at the start of the year
Guaranteed Internal Varsity	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This happened – really great event
Committee Training and Support	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all training was redeveloped this year myself involved in the council training, but then my team redeveloped rep training, officer training etc.
Advice Centre Accessibility	Partially Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice centre now open for appointments on Wednesdays so more accessible to students with this time off • Expert advice goes against skype appointments due to the delicate nature of some matters discusses and so this has not been introduced as standard
Campaign Funding Accessibility	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becky and the Wellbeing team have redeveloped the campaign application process so that union support is better able to be given and the application process is clearer.
Challenging Inequality	Good progress (society is still unequal so not complete)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real progress in access and participation with introduction of different offer standards for Widening Participation students and a multi year action plan for the first time. • Member of the start of Imperial moving towards the Race Equality Charter • Large changes to colleges approach to EDI (see below)
Student Study Space	Great progress / Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with DPCS – much of this should be credited to him - looking at South Ken Masterplan • Communal study area pods have been introduced around campus • Work from the Student Experience Survey now directly feeds in to the projects college compete • Obtained guarantees for community space in the development of White City South from College.
Student Involvement in Curriculum Review	Complete/ Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On going process however students have been involved in all stages from departmental to Programmes Committee reviewing each programme with DPE.
Improve PG Engagement	Complete but way more to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG election turn out increased • PG in Office Trustee role next year • Worked with the GSU to redesign their governance and support where I can elsewhere.
Multi-Campus Support	More work needs doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the year Union had office space at White City • Campaigns run at multiple campuses

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Student Experience Survey data to obtain investment in facilities outside of SK
CU Identity – White City	Not done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have not managed to do this
Sport Mascot Referendum	Not done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the Importance of the work surrounding Sports Hub (See DPCS report) and having just centralised kit – this was seen as something that even if it happened we would not have had the power really to change.
Activity and Storage Space	Good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the worst spaces around college have been redeveloped. James has been in discussions obtaining CSP storage at White City Rat problems being tackled in Beit storage but the Albert Hall building works are causing more than normal to come this way.

The Job

The Team

This year for the first time there has been a shift from the team being just the Officer Trustees to a Leadership team – the Officer Trustees and SMG working jointly. This has led to a greater integration of student ideas into the decision making process. This includes greater student oversight into things such as the budgeting process and prioritisation, staff governance documents and operational procedures now having input from OTs and many more. More than anything this change has the potential to have huge impacts for future teams going forward.

College Impact

As President you hold a large number of key relationships with College – this year I have streamlined the number of meetings and relationships that the president holds to change the emphasis on what we want from them and to free up time to be able to do other initiatives. Below details the relationships and meetings managed and the larger impacts I have had in each over the year. Detailed as well are other meetings that have largely operational sides – eg the scrutiny of new courses coming through, discussion of outreach awards etc.

College Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College financial scrutiny including discussions around writing an ethical investment policy for the first time. White City horizon scanning (10-50 years) – emphasis on transport links and Colleges responsibility to create student community. Education and College strategy – integration of student experience and student voice into the strategy with tangible measures. Discussions on large college investments + sales also occurs here.
Audit and Risk Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub committee of Council – this committee has reports from KPMG auditors on Union – a degree of scrutiny of the Unions processes occurs here. Student Wellbeing added to the risk register for the first time to be considered alongside all other college risks.

Senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union involvement in the re writing of the Mitigating Circumstances policy after college initially passed a concerning policy.
Access and Participation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked very closely with this team. Introduced the first multi-year access and participation plan with more student consultation on Bursary scheme than ever before. • Retrospective support to 2015 bursary cohort • Entry strategy changed for WP students in future years • Started conversations on altering support packages for WP students.
EDI Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased pressure for a structured approach to EDI strategy where there currently is none – the strategy includes very little tangible measure and by when – this change in approach has been supported.
Race Equality Charter working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputted into the starting process for the college aiming to obtain mae changes so it pushes for the Race Equality Charter. Here I have pushed for initiatives to focus directly on student experience – not just the staff experience that the room tends to focus on.
Sexual Harassment policy working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant pressure to make sure that this policy is written in a way that works for the student experience and not just become a staff HR policy. • Successfully lobbied for staff and reps to be given training around disciplinary cases to know how to tackle this type of case – and indeed any other highly delicate disciplinary case.
Other more operational meetings	<p>These are attended either through necessity or as they align with our values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societal engagement awards • Student Information Management Programme • Deterring Terrorist Activity Working Group • Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee • Disciplinary (Residency, College, FTP)

Disciplinary Investigations

As well as the college disciplinary cases – the Union had over 60 formal investigations and cases this year, all of which come to the president. The investigations, meetings and sanctions take up a huge amount of time. This year there have been 3 appeals.

Concluding Comments

Its pretty hard in one document to remember everything you've done and write it down. There will be other papers I've sent to different locations and other things I've forgotten to mention. Hopefully the above provides a reasonable oversite of a lot of what we've achieved in the year. I've really enjoyed the year and got a lot out of it – I hope that what we've left is a Union better prepared to make change in the future.

Tomkies out.