



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

The seventh ordinary meeting of the Union Council

The meeting of Union Council was held remotely via Teams on Tuesday 12th May at 14:00

Present

Role	Name
Union Council Chair	Lloyd James (LJ/Chair/THE CHAIR)
President	Abhijay Sood (AS)
Deputy President (Welfare)	Shervin Sabeghi (SS)
Deputy President (Education)	Ashley Brooks (ACB)
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Thomas Fernandez Debets (TFD)
Deputy President (Finance and Services)	Fi-Fi Henry (FH)
Ethics and Environment Officer	Francesca Siracusa (FS)
Felix Editor	Henry Alman
GSU President	Mohit Devgan (MD)
GSU Vice President (Representation)	Milia Hasbani (MH)
International Officer	Amr Alwishah (AA)
PG FoE Council Rep	Luke Jamieson (LJ)
RCSU President	Alex Auyang (AAu)
RCSU Vice President (Education)	Michaela Flegrova (MF)
RCSU Vice President (Welfare)	Peter Hull (PH)
Recreation Sector Chair	Christopher Turner (CT)
RSMSU President	Christopher Carter (CC)
RSMSU Vice President (Education)	Alexandre de Saint Germain (ASG)
Sports Sector Chair	Ross Unwin (RU)
UG FoE Council Rep	Douglas Adams (DA)
UG FoM Council Rep	Pylin Parkes (PP)
PG FoM Council Rep	Jaye Sahota (JS)
PG FoNS Council Rep	Adrian LaMoury (AL)
PG NF Council Rep	Eoin O'Kane (EOK)
UG FoNS Council Rep	Aishwarya Chidambaram (AC)
UG FoNS Council Rep	Zhidong Zuo (ZZ)
UG FoNS Council Rep	Grace Fisher (GF)
PG NF Council Rep	Eoin O'Kane (EOK)

Observers:

Governance Officer	Victoria Agbontaen
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Apologies:

CGCU Vice President	Hayley Wong (HW)
CGCU Vice President (Education)	Poppy Oldroyd (PO)
ICU Disabilities Officer	Hilliam Tung (HT)
	Emily Brown

Absent:

Arts and Entertainment Sector Chair	Joseph O'Connell Danes (JOD)
BME Officer	Deborah Adegoke (DA)
CGCU President	Fatima Khan (FK)
CGCU Vice President (Wellbeing)	Miles Gulliford (MG)
Culture Sector Chair	Shuning Xu (SX)
Community and Faith Sector Chair	Jack Lee (JL)
Gender Equality Officer	Vinzenz Freigassner (VF)
GSU PGR Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering)	Raya El Laham (REL)
GSU PGT Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering)	Ewins, Clementine (EC)
ICSMSU President	Benjamin Russell (BR)
ICSMSU Academic Chair	Waseem Hasan (WH)
ICSMSU Welfare Officer	Jack Hall (JH)
Interfaith Officer	Amna Ahmed (AAh)
Knowledge Sector Chair	<i>Vacant</i>
LGBT Officer	Freya Hepworth Lloyd (FHL)
Mental Health Officer	Ambika Bharadwaj (AB)
PG FoE Council Rep	Xiaoran Liu (XL)
PG NF Council Rep	Rahul Jugnarain (RJ)
PG FoE Council Rep	Igor Gawron (IG)
RSMU Welfare Officer	Arman Sarjou (AS)
Silwood Park President	Conor Nicoll (CN)
UG FoE Council Rep	Ioannis Ioannidis-Karatsivoulis (IIK)
UG FoM Council Rep	Bartosz Szyszka (BS)

Item	Actions
<p>1. Chair's welcome and Chair's business</p> <p>1.1. Chair welcomed the Council to the seventh meeting of the 2019/20 session.</p>	
<p>2. Apologies:</p> <p>Hayley Wong – CGCU Vice President Poppy Oldroyd - CGCU Vice President (Education) Emily Brown Hilliam Tung – ICU Disabilities Officer</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>3.1. Minutes were approved by Chair.</p>	
<p>4. Action Tracker</p> <p>4.1. FH to provide update on the reshaping of Services and Sustainability Board by next meeting. 4.2. Election Working Group has been resolved.</p>	
Matters for Decision	
<p>5. RSMU Constitution</p> <p>5.1. CC gave brief overview of paper regarding changes to Presidential succession and temporary absences, changes to the roles of Vice President (Clubs and Societies) and Vice President (Activities and Events) and changes to the resignation process among others. 5.2. TFD questioned as to whether the returning officer can allocate individual amounts to different people as specified in section D of paper – campaigning and publicity. 5.3. CC stated that the changes to the Election publicity in the RSMU Constitution were made in alignment with the ICU policies in order to allow for there to be no contradictions between the two. 5.4. Chair took a vote on RSMU Constitution paper and proposal was accepted by Council.</p>	
<p>6. SSB Standing Orders</p> <p>6.1. FH advised Council this was the first year of the Services and Sustainability Board existing. The aim for the Board was to be operational but given the volunteers are already highly engaged elsewhere it has been difficult to run the campaigns efficiently. 6.2. FH explained due to this, the standing orders are required to be changed to reflect a more strategic direction. Due to issues of being quorate, changes around membership are required to be made. 6.3. ACB questioned how the request for two additional members chosen by Council will work and if this must exclusively be from those who are members of Council which FH confirmed. 6.4. MH also asked what type of sub-teams FH is envisioning for this. FH explained there would be a further two. One that focuses on bar staff and student staff. The second would focus on ethics and the environment.</p>	

<p>6.5. Chair agreed the changes to the structure was sensible and it would be important to also plug in these sub-committees with staff, particularly around events etc.</p> <p>6.6. Chair took a vote on SSB Standing Orders Paper and proposal was accepted by Council.</p>	
<p>7. London Living Wage</p> <p>7.1. AS gave an outline of the paper stating there is a 2-fold case being made here. Firstly, a unanimous endorsement from Council to go ahead with this and Council are behind the principle that student staff should be paid the living wage and secondly around the timeline and practicalities for implementing this.</p> <p>7.2. AS explained that there tends to be higher levels of productivity and motivation, more recognition and consistency when people are paid better. AS further outlined, there is a parity case to be made here as majority of SU's in London pay their staff the living wage.</p> <p>7.3. AS expressed his understanding of the current financial situation the Union are currently facing and thus mentioned there had been a suggestion a 3-year phase in of the rise of the rate of pay in order to avoid a greater hit to the salary bill.</p> <p>7.4. HA questioned how this ties in with the Block Grant negotiations and whether this could be phased in with those other financial requests.</p> <p>7.5. AS explained that due to the crisis, the Block Grant situation is complicated and the request for an increase in living wage would be separate to the Block Grant bid if accepted. However, its noted the College is in support of the Union moving in this direction.</p> <p>7.6. Chair took a vote on London Living Wage Paper and proposal was unanimously accepted by Council.</p>	
<p>8. Tuition Fee Refunds</p> <p>8.1. AA explained to Council his paper was motivated by a number of international students contacting him stating there was a lack of fairness around fees regarding the remote teaching/service that all students are receiving.</p> <p>8.2. From speaking with several international students, AA understands they felt since they are unable to use the resources they have paid for and aren't able to benefit from life in the UK. In addition to this, students have had to make further financial investments into ensuring they have efficient equipment to study from home, i.e. purchasing new laptops.</p> <p>8.3. AA would like Council to lobby for refunds for these students or reduced fees for next year if they are not able to travel to the UK for education at Imperial and thus not receiving the full experience paid for.</p> <p>8.4. Charging the same amount for online education was felt by the international students to be unreasonable, especially since the College is saving funds by not having students on Campus, etc.</p> <p>8.5. SS explained that in terms of refunds, there are no current plans from the College for this, neither are there any intentions for fee reductions.</p> <p>8.6. SS noted PG students who are not able to complete their studies are able to suspend this and will subsequently pause payment on fees due or carry over any already paid fees. However, this is more of a departmental position.</p>	

<p>8.7. AS added that the Union will be happy for ask for retrospective fee reductions, however, the College are contractually under no obligation to do so. Also, the rest of the sector are similarly not doing anything to this effect.</p> <p>8.8. AS highlighted that AA’s assumption that College is saving money by being shutdown is incorrect as there is a steep decline in the College’s revenue due to Covid-19.</p> <p>8.9. AS asked for clarification from AA what position they would like the Union to take with College and what the specific ask might be, i.e. discount for next year, specific courses and/or students.</p> <p>8.10. RU highlighted that the University has an opportunity to improve its distance learning, as they already offer online business courses for upwards of £37,000. Therefore, College should be pressured to meet the same standard of those courses, rather than pressuring for discounts or refunds.</p> <p>8.11. SS added that in an effort to not reduce fees, College are putting together remote courses which is of the same standard as usual courses. The biggest expectation is that College will see a downturn in income but a different outcome in possible.</p> <p>8.12. ACB added that the challenge for College is they are not fully equipped to go completely remote at scale.</p> <p>8.13. SS also highlighted it would be unfair to just view this issue within the scope of solely international students and it should be something that applies across the board for all students.</p> <p>8.14. AS argued that international students pay a higher fee for the same course as Home students so taking that position would not be suitable.</p> <p>8.15. A vote was put to Council to broaden the paper in favour of all students for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Fee reduction for the current year 2- Fee reduction for next year 3- Compensation and mitigation (i.e. extensions, deferred exams). <p>8.16. AA argued against putting home students and international students in the same category as the purpose of the motion was to signify the disparity of fees paid between the two groups.</p> <p>8.17. CC responded by stating his understanding of differences between the two groups of students, however if OT’s lobby for proportionate fee reductions/refunds then all students will be positively impacted. Adding that the issues raised in AA’s paper are not unique to international students and it could be argued for both domestic and international students.</p> <p>8.18. The proposal on a fee reduction for all students for the current year was accepted by Council.</p> <p>8.19. The results for the proposal on a fee reduction for all students for the next year are as follows: 2 accept, 13 abstain and 3 reject.</p>	
<p>9. Verbal Updates on Policy Review</p> <p>9.1. Chair outlined the policy review as being an ongoing process mainly being addressed within sub-committees.</p> <p>9.2. Chair noted that with the Governance and Identity Board, the awards policy has been reviewed and approved.</p>	

<p>9.3. Chair advised that the Colours, Outstanding Service awards and Union Fellowships need to be decided by a sub-committee of Council. Chair requested for those who are interested in taking part to inform him via completing the doodle poll.</p> <p>9.4. SS noted that the 'safe space' policy was accepted during the Community and Welfare Board. SS and HT are also in initial discussions regarding the accessibility policy but there is still progress to be made here. The religious observance policy, liberation policy and the representation policy are still being progressed.</p> <p>9.5. Chair questioned whether the above policies will be approved by the next CWB meeting. SS agreed to set final meeting to get policies approved.</p> <p>9.6. ACB updated Council on ERB outlining the main two policies up for review. The first being the higher education policy which had relatively minor changes. Second being the representation policy which had been reviewed but since last Council the structure of the meetings has been amended. ACB stated this will go to ERB's May meeting for approval.</p> <p>9.7. TFD noted that all CSPB policies have been reviewed since the paper submitted in November. The one policy coming back to CSPB will be the room booking policy, TFD explained however there is work being conducted around space usage and policies for the Union.</p> <p>9.8. FH stated the Services and Sustainability have six policies within the Board. The ethical investment, fair trade and environmental policies have all been completed. The remaining policies will be brought to next council.</p>	<p>DPW to schedule CWB meeting to approve policies prior to next Council meeting in June.</p> <p>FH to pick up advertisement policy and provide update at June Council.</p>
Matters for Report	
<p>10. President Report</p> <p>10.1 AS noted the biggest flag in the paper was around financial planning and the Unions use of the governments furlough scheme for its staff. Adding that HR is being conservative in the way the Union applies the scheme to staff.</p> <p>10.2 AS added under current lockdown circumstances, OT's are having far more meetings than usual so more of their time is booked up.</p> <p>10.3 AS informed Council that a new Managing Director, Tom Flynn had recently been appointed.</p> <p>10.4 AS encouraged Council members to nominate and vote in the upcoming student choice awards.</p>	
<p>11. DPE Report</p> <p>11.1 DPE also mentioned that having to work from home has resulted in a number of extra meetings but the transition into this has been successful.</p> <p>11.2 DPE noted the working from home situation has enabled there to be a lot more positive communication with Reps through Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>11.3 DPE informed Council that the biggest issue with the 'Safety Net Policy' is with the Masters student as there are many different scenarios associated with PGT.</p> <p>11.4 Regarding the Masters Programmes, MH encouraged PG Reps within Council to carefully read the Safety Net Policy and Masters registration</p>	

<p>policy and contact her if with any concerns about how they are being implemented in their respective departments.</p> <p>11.5 MF questioned how much departmental plans reflect the Unions recommendations and how they are being monitored.</p> <p>11.6 ACB responded and said that actions are being taken to PRQC for approval. ACB will reiterate these actions during the next PRQC meeting.</p>	
<p>12. DPW Report</p> <p>12.1 DPW outlined the main groups he is aligned with, dealing with PG issues, safety net issues etc.</p> <p>12.2 DPW noted his involvement with the student operations group which focuses on communications with incoming students etc.</p> <p>12.3 DPW added that 75% of his time has been spent in meetings so work prior to Covid-19 is progressing a lot slower than usual, however key work pieces will still be completed before the end of the year.</p> <p>12.4 RU questioned what College are doing in terms of the remote community and environment for new students. SS highlighted that the Student Recruitment Strategy group will look at the student experience, focusing on community/cohort building, welcome experience, and student services etc.</p> <p>12.5 AS added that the Union are putting together a timeline of activities they are working on around the student experience.</p>	
<p>13. DPCS Report</p> <p>13.1. DPCS noted that his focus now is mainly on the wider student experience and looking ahead to the next academic year.</p> <p>13.2. DPCS added due to Covid-19 his work has been more operational, trying to look ahead and make long-lasting decisions that will have a positive impact on students in the future beyond exams.</p>	
<p>14. DPFS Report</p> <p>14.1 DPFS confirmed that the Summer Ball has officially been cancelled.</p> <p>14.2 DPFS added she will be working on the objectives stated in the paper.</p>	
<p>Any Other Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AAu stated another elected Council member was required for GIB. Chair explained that the final GIB meeting is in 2 weeks at the end of May so there would be no purpose in electing a new member. 2. AS and Chair welcomed any member of Council to attend the next GIB meeting. 	

Next meeting: TBC.