

CITY & GUILDS COLLEGE UNION

Council Report II

“The Aims of the City & Guilds College Union:

- *To further the academic, welfare, sporting, recreational, and social interests of students of the Faculty of Engineering.*
- *To encourage, promote, and support our clubs and societies.*
- *To represent the needs and interests of Engineering Students to College, ICU, and external bodies.”*



This year, we hope to build on the success of the previous year and further increase its outreach and communication with the engineering student body. Despite the unprecedented situation that we will be facing next year due to the pandemic, we hope to continue providing that level of support for students in academic, wellbeing, and other areas of representation. We also hope to further assist our many Clubs & Societies in this difficult situation.

Goals Progression

Below is the progression on the 3 goals we have set for this year.

1. To increase the engineering identity and continue bringing attention to the Faculty of Engineering, the City and Guilds College Alumni Association, and the Old Centralians Trust.

The CGCU has partnered with the CGCA to introduce an engineering-specific mentoring scheme. There have also been several events which aims to bridge the gap between alumni and current students. Further details can be found in the 'Alumni' Section.

We have also founded the Intercollegiate Engineering Alliance with the aim to connect Imperial engineers with engineering students around the world.

2. Improve the committee handover process to make the transition smoother for future committees, alongside developing committee training to provide CGCU officers with the skills to take on their roles.

Our series of professional training sessions for the committee has concluded, with further details in the 'Committee Training' section.

3. Provide our clubs and societies with the support they need to traverse through this period, acting as a channel to vouch their concerns and issues towards those higher up in the Union.

The management group team has held MG meetings and reflected common issues to the CSPB and relevant people. We have also been connecting DepSocs with alumni from their respective departments.

Intercollegiate Engineering Alliance

An exciting initiative this year has been the founding of the Intercollegiate Engineering Alliance in collaboration with the respective engineering societies of Oxford, Cambridge, MIT, Stanford, Yale, Harvard, and Trinity College Dublin. The IEA is an organisation formed by engineering students, for engineering students, with a mission to share social, networking and knowledge-based opportunities to build global connections.



The Intercollegiate Engineering Alliance with its constituent universities

The network was launched in November of 2020. Over 300 students joined within the first week of launch. We ran its inaugural event during the 3rd week of December, with participations from both the UK and US universities. Our current goal is to consolidate the constitution and structure of the organisations, and to work towards hosting an international conference at the end of the year.

Committee Training

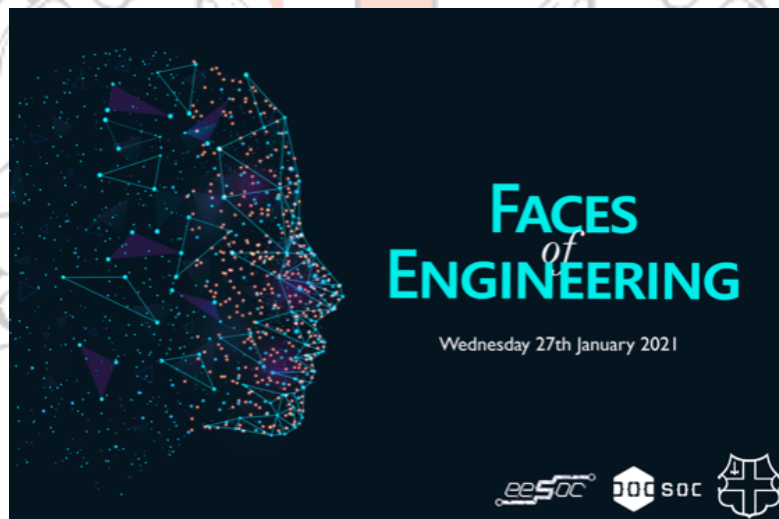
The second of the two external training sessions was successfully run during the first term. This was done in collaboration with Liebfrog consultancy. As opposed to the first session that focused on work styles and remote working, this session aimed to equip committee members with the skills to have difficult conversations when needed. Attendance was extremely high and both sessions received great feedback. We hope that the provision of professional training to the committee will continue into all futures years for the CGCU.

The handover for the committee members elected in the bye-elections were also successfully carried out, with committee members being encouraged to utilise the internal CGCU wiki.

Activities

Our collaboration with the Girls In Charge Initiative has been going well. On top of putting on workshops that aim to improve the soft and business skills of women in a male-dominated field, we have also trained several Student Leader volunteers in making and hosting their own workshops.

As a way of celebrating the diversity within the engineering profession, the CGCU runs an annual panel-based event, with speakers attending from a range of companies that has previously included Google, Shell, and P&G. This year's Faces of Engineering event will be held on Wednesday 27th January and will feature speakers from Graphcore, VMWare, Thought Machine, BAE Systems, Two Sigma, and Showcode.



Face of Engineering promotional banner

The event aims to provide a space for constructive discussions on what we as engineers can do to champion diversity, as well as showing prospective engineers from a variety of backgrounds what support they may be able to receive along their professional paths. Through the panelists' personal experiences, students can also gain insight to how factors such as race, gender, socioeconomic background or neurodiversity could shape the career paths of people working in these industries.

Since some attendees may very personally relate to the experiences of the panelists, the CGCU believes that an opportunity for students to ask questions to and network with panelists was vital to making this event a success. As such, despite the remote nature of this year's iteration of Faces of Engineering, the use of Wonder.me will be implemented to allow for a slightly more direct discussion space.

By bringing diversity-related issues to light, we wish to encourage students to be open-minded when considering how factors may affect their professional lives, or the professional lives of others. We hope that the key takeaway for students is that they can provide something unique and valuable because of the things that make them different - not in spite of those things.

Communication

The communication team has been hard at work creating all the necessary graphics and promotional materials and coordinating the marketing drive for all the events and initiatives from the CGCU. The secretary's bi-weekly newsletter has also been integral in our marketing effort and has been used to assist our clubs & societies in promoting their events and initiatives.

The Guildsheet Editors are preparing articles for the upcoming issue of the Guildsheet, with calls for engineers who have experienced UROPs, research projects, or any passion projects over the summer to write articles about their experiences.



Call for articles for the Guildsheet Summer Experience Diary

Clubs & Societies

The management group team mainly worked on supporting the C&S's throughout the uncertain times throughout the pandemic. Various online events (Minecraft, games nights) were organized and open to all C&S, and a few departments took advantage of this and organized their own events using our license. We also organized an event in collaboration with the CGCA, connecting the current department representatives to the corresponding CGCA department alumni. Recently, we have been working on an upcoming diversity event in collaboration with department sponsors.

Other than events, MG meetings were held to discuss general issues within the C&Ss. These issues were brought up and discussed in CPSB meetings. A lot of these issues involved sponsorships and communication with the union, which will hopefully improve soon. Further, we supported C&Ss in dealing with constitutional and committee member changes by helping them organize EGMs.

Unfortunately, due to the increasing severity of the COVID pandemic, no in person activities are permitted for C&Ss. We hope that the situation will soon improve and C&Ss can offer their usual activities to the students.

In the near future, the management group team will support C&Ss in their annual budgeting procedure and meet with each C&S individually in order to ensure that the C&S secure adequate funding for the next academic year.

Education

During the first term, the Education Chair has been helping the newly elected Education Officer settle into the role.

The Education Team has been proactive in meeting the several DepReps of the engineering faculty and making sure that they are aware of the support that the CGCU can provide.

The team has also been liaising with the staff in various meetings. A major issue that many DepReps brought up was the lack of exam feedback across all departments. The team has brought it up with the DPE and is now actively working on a solution with the union.

Wellbeing

The main thing the CGCU wellbeing team has been able to make work over the last term have been a series of yoga sessions that was ran in collaboration with the yoga soc. These have been running on a bi-weekly basis and will continue into the coming term. They have been very successful, with spots being filled for most sessions.



CGCU Yoga Session promotional material

Based on their popularity, and the current lockdown, we are expanding these sessions to run strength and conditioning sessions at the same time in the off week of yoga, we hope this should help people stay fit while at home.

Alumni

Term one has been very fruitful in terms of alumni progress.

The beginning of term saw two training events for our CGCU committee members, organised by the CGCU President, Vice President and Alumni Officer. These were kindly funded by the OC Trust and focused on teaching our committee members how to work effectively in a remote team. These events were enjoyed by all, with positive feedback and comments regarding increased confidence in online working from our committee members.

The major triumph has been the developments in the 'CGCA Alumni-Alumni Mentor Scheme', piloted by the CGCU Alumni Officer. This is a new scheme aiming to partner recent graduates from the past 5 years with older graduates, providing career advice and expertise in the early years of their careers. This has been done in close contact with the Imperial Careers service who will advertise the scheme to recruit the mentors, whilst the CGCA Young Members will recruit the recent graduates to act as mentees. The project is currently in phase one, with the recruitment advertisements sent to the Careers Service and awaiting distribution. Once mentors have been recruited mentees will be recruited and the 6 month scheme of monthly meetings will progress. At the end of the 6 months an option to add a current CGCU undergraduate to form a 'Mentoring Bubble' will be available. We very much look forward to watching this scheme progress.

Another first we saw this term was the CGCA-CGCU Quiz Night, an online social event to bring together current students with Alumni in an engineering themed quiz. This was hosted by our Alumni Officer and the CGCA Deputy Honorary Secretary and had around 60 attendees, who all seemed to have a great evening. The success of this even has inspired us to run further student-alumni social events.



CGCA-CGCU Quiz Night promotion

We also had our annual DepSoc-CGCA Meet and Great, where current DepSoc committee members got to meet their CGCA DepReps on zoom and discuss how they could be supported during this rather unconventional year. This led to many DepSoc events including alumni panel events which were attended by many current students to learn what they can do in the future.

Asides from what's already been mentioned, a great effort has gone into remodelling the CGCA membership system. This is still in its early stages though we hope to see this progress continue next term.