

# Deputy President Education Report to Union Council

## February 2021

Michaela Flegrová

### Highlights:

- Working Together Task Group
- No Detriment Package

College Meetings & Prep	Student + Union Meetings & Prep	Operational work (day-to-day)	Project work	Miscellaneous
40%	30%	15%	10%	5%

### Updates:

#### **Working Together Task Group**

Following some allegations of some senior staff members in the College being a bit naughty, the College has established a Task Group to look at how we can all Work Together and all be a bit less naughty, and generally just Love Thy Colleagues and Students. This group will be making recommendations to the President's Board (that's, coincidentally, the one chaired by Alice Gast) and Provost's Board. I have the pleasure of being the Student Representative on this group (meetings happen exclusively at 8am or 5pm so it's really lovely you see).

As a part of this they will be running consultations with Various Stakeholder Groups, to identify Barriers to Better Ways of Working, to come up with all these recommendations I mentioned. These will be run by an External Facilitator (we are choosing them next Friday at 4-6pm I'm over the moon), so no one needs to worry about being told off for being absolutely honest about all those barriers we talked about. Anyways, one of these Various Stakeholder Groups are students (yes, although it's only 22,000 of us, our views still matter a bit) and I would encourage you to take part if you have any strong views about Being Naughty or Working Together. More info will come soon probably.

#### **Package of No Detriment measures**

One year later and we're still in the middle of a global pandemic (what a bummer, will it ever end, I have personally lost all hope now). This obviously means that learning is not normal, and neither is assessment, with a lot of you reporting that your exams have been made insanely difficult because your lecturers assume being able to Google things immediately makes your brains three times the size. Also we're all a bit stressed and tired of life which means the quality of our written work has declined.

We hear you, life is difficult, and we're working with the College to put together a package of No Detriment measures, making sure you're not failing just because thousands of people are dying every day of this highly contagious virus. But you already talked about working with the College in your last report, I hear you say, are there any updates? Well you're in luck because here are some updates: (don't quote me on these, they have not been like 100% agreed yet, but I'd say we're 95% there, maybe don't like go telling everyone just yet)

- It is very very likely students in different time zones will be able to take their exams a bit later. Yay to not having to get up at 4am just to take your exams! We're thinking 8am-10pm is kinda

reasonable (yeah I know I complain about my 8am meetings, that's why I said kinda), no matter where you are.

- You should no longer need a doctor's note confirming every single mitigating circumstances claim (how can your doctor know if you had to babysit your little brother during your exam and then he started crying and you had to change his nappy and that took you a long time and you couldn't answer the exam properly anyway?) Self-certification for mitigating circumstances will likely be a thing again just like last year.
- We also want to make MCs a bit more transparent. Not just this year, they have always been a mess and no one really knew what was really going on there. We want to know, and we want you to know. The College will put together some infographics or something, and make sure your departments talk to you (I'm looking at you, Materials).
- Even if you are a PGT student (yes we do remember you from time to time) we're hoping you should be able to resit your exams "in-year", i.e. you won't have to put your entire life on hold to sit your exams in 2022 just because you had really bad covid and couldn't take your exams this year – you will hopefully be able to retake any failed/deferred exams in August or September and just graduate as you would normally. Also all in-year resits will be free. Forever. Did you know they currently aren't? We didn't.
- There will be some sort of a cohort-wide safety net, making sure that you're not all doing really badly just because you can't magically Google all of the answers (sometimes I wonder if some staff members really know how the internet works). The details of this are really tricky to agree on and it will probably take us another 6,285 meetings with the College to finalise how exactly this is going to work, but essentially it'll mean that you all won't do worse than people did in the past.
- First years are very likely getting the same individual safety net as last year. We are all super protective of the young (honestly what a horrible first year at uni that has been for them), and it's very easy to give it to them (they still have their whole degree ahead of them so plenty of data) so we thought why not, if we can.

**Other things you probably don't care about (really you are reading this report to find out about safety nets aren't you) but I'll mention them anyway**

- **Recruitment:** We have now chosen our new Representation and Advice Manager! We think she'll be great, she has enormous amount of knowledge about the sector and has already accepted, but her notice period is approximately five years so she won't be starting until May. Now we just need to recruit a new representation coordinator.
- **Student spaces:** we are looking to identify departmental student spaces that can be improved through some small investments. If you're reading this before Friday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb, you can suggest some spaces [here](#). I am also trying to coordinate student consultation into what will happen with Chemistry Level 4 but it's proving more difficult than I thought. (Why does no one care about student spaces? It's free money. For students. To make their spaces nice. The architects will do all the work for you, you just need to pick pretty colours and comfy chairs. I don't get it, it sounds great to me.)
- **Digital Education Recording Policy:** it's looking like we will have Panopto recordings for all lectures unless the lecturer really doesn't want to record, but they'll still have to ask students if it's ok for them not to record. It's almost a win, in theory perfect because it means all students will get what they want, but we'll just need to finalise this whole student consent thing to make sure it is taken seriously (as any consent should).

- **SOLE:** I'm collecting a lot of feedback from various sources at the moment, and will feed this into all of the wider work happening right now. There will be some trial runs happening in some departments in spring with some different questions, but most of the feedback I'm getting from students is not about the questions, so the trial might not necessarily help (although they will not be running it on the obsolete SOLE system which is very hateful so at least there's that).
- **Academic rep forums** are well underway this term but I'm talking with the GSU about possibly outsourcing the PG ones to the GSU, as they'd like to be a bit more involved in... representation. We might give it a try in Term 3 and see how things go.

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Thanks for reading! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at [dpe@ic.ac.uk](mailto:dpe@ic.ac.uk), send me a message on Teams, or call me at 45646 (internal only, and it works only when I'm in the office, but if you're ever on campus then give it a try, maybe you'll be lucky enough and reach me). You can also send me a letter to the Union Address (I love receiving letters).

Please vote this report down if you're not happy with the quality or the content – I will certainly consider doing so myself.