

# Deputy President (Education) – Council report

Michaela Flegrova – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

## Highlights:

- PG Representation
- Chemistry Level 4 refurbishment
- Exams survey

| College Meetings & Prep | Student + Union Meetings & Prep | Operational work (day-to-day) | Project work | Miscellaneous |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 35%                     | 20%                             | 30%                           | 10%          | 5%            |

## Updates:

### Postgraduate Representation

- I've been discussing with other education officers from around the country how we could be supporting postgraduate research (PhD) students
- Now talking to the College about giving students the option to include "Covid impact statements" when submitting their thesis – this is already done at other universities
- Looking at wellbeing-specific questions in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (national survey for all PhD students; runs every 2 years) – those are not included nationally anymore this year but we have the option to (and want to) include them in the Imperial PRES survey
- Working with the GSU to establish meetings between PG reps and College staff
- Looking at how Outreach activities done by PhD students can be recognised; working with Léonie Strömich (GSU White City Officer) and other GSU & PG reps

### Package of No Detriment measures for UG and PGT students

This has finally been agreed and it might not seem like it but an enormous amount of effort and discussions went into this. We understand some student will not be happy about the fact that there is no more safety net policy for students; unfortunately, the College and indeed the whole sector have been very clear that they are not going to reintroduce this.

We have been able to get our UG and PGT students some assurances that would not have happened without our involvement and strong lobbying of the College:

- All students in different time zones will be able to take exams at a reasonable time
- In-year resits will be available to all students, so no final-year or PGT student will have to take a year out to finish their degree if they are unable to sit or pass at first attempt
- The results of cohorts will be better or the same as the average in the 3 pre-pandemic years

I wrote about the package [here](#) and the College wrote about it [here](#), although you've all probably seen all of this already.

### Chemistry Level 4 refurbishment

- We are looking at Level 4 in the old Chemistry building and how the space could be refurbished and repurposed. Levels 5 & 6 are already finished and they have been made into smaller tutorial rooms with removable walls and individual study spaces.

- Level 4 is going to be more of a social area, probably with some vending machines, microwaves, water fountains, soft seating and table tennis etc, but also including some group study areas
- I have now been able to put together a student consultation group for this project and we have met twice, including a meeting with the architects – we are discussing the purpose of the spaces as well as design choices and details
- The space will be mostly ready in the summer – all spending needs to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> July

### **Exams Survey**

- We ran a survey asking students who had exams in December and January about their exam experience, and if there have been any problems.
- The full results of the survey can be found [here](#), but the tl;dr is: there weren't any major issues overall, but students found exams quite hard and quite different to the practice questions they were given, in a lot of departments. They also found them quite stressful, were not always happy about integrity, and weren't very satisfied overall. Timetables, access to technology and suitable working environment were generally very positive. Some specific departmental issues need to be followed up separately.
- I am talking to the College about the survey results and about exam prep in general – they want to ensure students are well-prepared for their exams and the technology works. Of course, a lot of work needs to be done locally so departmental reps will play a crucial role in ensuring things are working in departments.

### **Digital Education Recording Policy**

- Just a refresher: That's the policy where we say every lecture will need to be recorded unless students agree it's ok not to
- We are now finalising the last few details and it will hopefully be going to Provost's Board at the end of March

### **Rep Team recruitment**

- Our new representation and Advice Manager will be starting on 31<sup>st</sup> May (yay!). Cat Turhan is currently a Policy Analyst at the Russell Group and we are sure she will be a great addition to our team!
- We are now recruiting for the Representation Coordinator role, who will hopefully be able to start not too long after Cat.

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Thanks for reading! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at [dpe@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpe@imperial.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).