



Imperial College Union Council Report

July 2021

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Committee of 2020-21

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ICSMSU Update Report

Foreword



Well, what a year! Despite being faced with the most difficult year an ICSMSU committee has ever had to face, we've not just ploughed through but we've thrived and worked hard to accomplish more than ever!

It has been an immensely challenging year, not least due to COVID, but on a backdrop of the new leadership structures within the Faculty who have not been short of pushing through many unpredictable changes, which alone would have likely still made this year the most challenging ever.

But despite this, it has also been genuinely the best year of representation in the medical school that I've seen and one of our most successful ever as ICSMSU! I'm really grateful and humbled at how well our SU have stepped up to the challenge!

From winning Outstanding Academic Representation of the year, to securing free tampons in Reynolds, an SU Events Bursary system for financially disadvantaged students, rewriting our financial model to cut ticket prices for events, ordering an independent enquiry into racial harassment at ICSM, pushing for flexible post-Christmas returns for internationals and dedicated bulletins, securing new avenues of donations for our Clubs and Socs, running landmark dinners like STFYD at just weeks of notice, a full refurbishment of Reynolds Bar and Café...we could go on!

To everyone who has helped to make this year as great as it's been for our SU, Thank You! To all our volunteers, all at ICU, and specifically of course, to our 21-person SU committee. I am so proud of our team and all they've achieved.

At ICSMSU we're all just regular students trying to do our bit to make sure our student experience is as good as it can be. I do believe that in the past year, despite being shackled in astronomically higher workload and away from social contact by COVID at every avenue, we have reconnected with our students and offered more than ever, providing something for everyone.

That is down to the hard work behind-the-scenes of our SU who have come together and repeatedly pushed above-and-beyond without complaint, and without whom we wouldn't have been able to do all the fantastic things that we do. Simply, I am indebted to them all.

At the start of the year, I told our team that I wanted us to leave a positive deep-rooted legacy and ambitious changes for many years to come. Now at the end of the year, I can say we have accomplished exactly that and so much more.

Thank You.



Muntaha Naeem

ICSMSU President 2020-21



Stream Updates



Executive Running

Our Exec team focuses on the smooth running of our SU.

BMB

Firstly, in the world of BMB, our BMB Society has continued to run some social events targeted at BMB students, including a students vs staff Drawful. This year Faculty took the decision to stop funding the Collegiate awards for the BMB course which recognises achievements outside of academia. So, in response to this we set up our own new BMB Awards to give thanks and recognition to the achievements and contributions of our BMB students who have given dedicated service to the ICSM Students' Union and the life of ICSM throughout their time here.

Sec and Comms

Communication is one of the other main focuses we want to get right this year. Our Secretary & Communications officer has continued to publish our SU meeting minutes and provide a centralised page for minutes from across the board including our SSLGs. We've drafted up new pages with easy to access information [about our SU](#), [our spaces](#) and our recognition [awards](#). We've also been rewriting our brand identity document to ensure the changes we've made to our design strategy are sustainable and carried forwards in future.

Sites and Services

Our Sites & Services officer has continued to represent us on the Faculty of Medicine's Health & Safety committee. Additionally, this year we rolled out an updated line of merchandise which has fast sold beyond our expectations. This has included a range of new clothing from varsity jackets to fleeces, through to accessories including metal bottles, bucket hats, masks and panel caps. This year we also implemented a delivery system for the first time ever which we hope to carry on through to next year, so our students can buy and own our branded merchandise wherever they are!



Since we've been back on campus, we've also spent a lot of time completely tidying many of our SU spaces in CX and SK which were handed over to us in a slightly neglected state. Our students have been making great use of them since. Special shoutout to team ICU who helped us move our equipment over to our new clubs and socs storage room which we finished refurbishing at the start of the year and which our Clubs and Socs have all been making great use of since September!

Before:



After:

ACCESSIBLE
MICROWAVE 🍷



Before:



AFTER:

Sparkling
Clean!



Before:



AFTER:



@icsmclubssocs

Treasury and Alumni

Our Executive Treasurer has continued to work hard on our new financial model. We are enormously grateful to Ross (DPCS) and Sam (DPFS) for their work with us on improving and rewriting our financial model which has seen a greater contribution of annual budgeting grant towards our core running costs, and taken away a significant amount of burden on our Events allowing them to run at near break-even and introduce an all-new SU events bursary scheme (which we have spoken about later in this report). This will provide direct investment and benefit to our students through reduced event ticket prices.

We have also held meetings with our 2 largest alumni organisations - ICSM Alumni Association and the St Mary's Hospital Association (SMHA). As always, we are massively in gratitude to their continued services to our SU and their continued support to the student experience at ICSM.

We worked with the alumni association this year to introduce new free associate membership to provide our graduates with access to their mailing list to stay up-to-date with the latest opportunities in ICSM. Additionally, students can continue to give back by joining the association as a full member and paying a yearly subscription fee, all of which is reinvested into our student experience, and in return for a free mug and name badge.

Perhaps one of the most exciting developments is the agreement of a merger which has been on the cards for years. We're still working through the specific details but it's likely to be called the ICSMSU Phoenix Fund, or a variation of this. It's exciting for students as it should hopefully lay the groundwork for greater investment to our students in future. We've also spent a small bit of time digitally archiving some of our yeargroup photos for the alumni association which are available to view on their website.

It's also been great to see an increase in our students' engagement with Union Council. We've had groups of students come forwards with College-wide changes they want to see, and we've helped to amplify their voice and guide them through the process of writing papers and subsequently initiate dialogue with the College. This has included recent papers on the College's deals with Huawei, and Lockheed Martin, both of which passed through the ICU Council. All of these papers, including the Access to Medicines motion passed at the start of the year, all follow along similar themes which calls into question the College's ethical investment policies.

Academics

There's been a lot happening in the world of academics.

Firstly, we were incredibly overwhelmed, humbled, and delighted to win the award for outstanding **Academic Representation Team of the Year**. This is a testament to all the hard work, time and effort our ICSMSU academic officers and ICSMSU year reps have put in to make a tangible difference for our students, in what has been the most difficult year on record.

Mock Exams

One of our major successes has been our **centralised mock exams**.

These were more important than ever, with the lack of any society-led non-centralised mock exams.

A tremendous amount of effort and hard work was put in all round by our team to run **11 consecutive, separate in-person Mock CPA, Mock OSCEs and Mock PACES** across **6 consecutive weekends** to cover the entire 300+ cohorts of Phase 1b, Year 3, and Year 5. These ran exceptionally smoothly, in the height of the pandemic, and organised in a matter of a few weeks rather than months. To our knowledge we were the only SU in the country to be running in-person mock exams during that period.

A big thank you to all the candidates and examiners for following the stringent regulations!



Exam Failures

Speaking of exams, our younger years were subject to multiple Exam failures, including the crashing of the online platform and questions from older years' course content being mistakenly included in 1st year exams. We worked quickly to ensure that, unlike last year, students aren't made to resit exams due to technology failures, and which led to the cancellation of the Phase 1b BRS spotter exam and removal of untaught abdomen anatomy questions for Phase 1a.

Our Academic Officer for Early Years, along with her year reps, met with Faculty to raise concerns with the handling of the online Phase 1 exams and relayed all concerns and the distressful impacts it had. We were able to guarantee that in future, initial correspondence from faculty will be sent without delay to inform. This will ensure our students are aware of any issues and provided with any immediate guidance so they are not left in the dark, instead of waiting until long after the exams once a full investigation has been conducted. And we ensured all academic tutors were contacted by faculty so they are in the best position to support our students, and that appropriate guidance and precautions were emailed out before the following week's exams.

As a direct result of our feedback, following the many exam failures this year, Faculty have agreed to initiate a review into alternate online Exam platforms to Practique. They will be scoping the offerings on the market and evaluating to inform a potential move to a different provider. This is another great win for us.

Additionally, concerns raised up by our Year 3 reps regarding the discrepancy of Faculty information on the presence of signs in their OSCEs resulted in Faculty letting us know which signs will be appearing and which stations they will be appearing in for 3rd years which helped alleviate a huge amount of concern.

Digital Developments

When we haven't been putting out fires, we've been working on some of our bigger priorities.

Throughout the year, our phase 1 reps have been sitting on the Faculty's digital development group to input into how the faculty's digital platforms can be made more cohesive and less sporadic.

This work has resulted in the more streamlined MedLearn design which has now rolled out to serve as a centralised go-to Hub for all the Faculty

resources and information we need. Some of our clinical year reps, along with myself, also met with Faculty to input into this new MedLearn design to ensure it meets the needs of clinical years too, and we're continually meeting and feeding back to them.

Feedback Boards

Feedback has been one of the deep rooted areas of issue in ICSM, something which has never been done right for as long as I've been around.

We've made some great progress on the implementation of **Feedback boards** which we've updated on in our previous reports. The idea originated in response to many years of loud student concerns at the lack of empowerment of the student voice for raising of day-to-day issues not encompassed within our existing Student-Staff Liaison Groups (SSLGs).

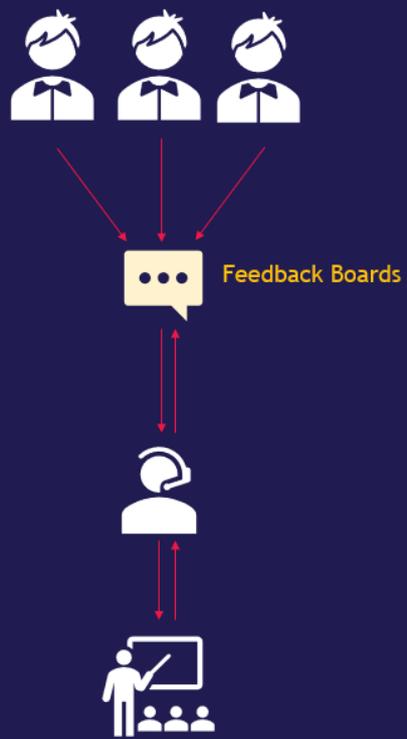
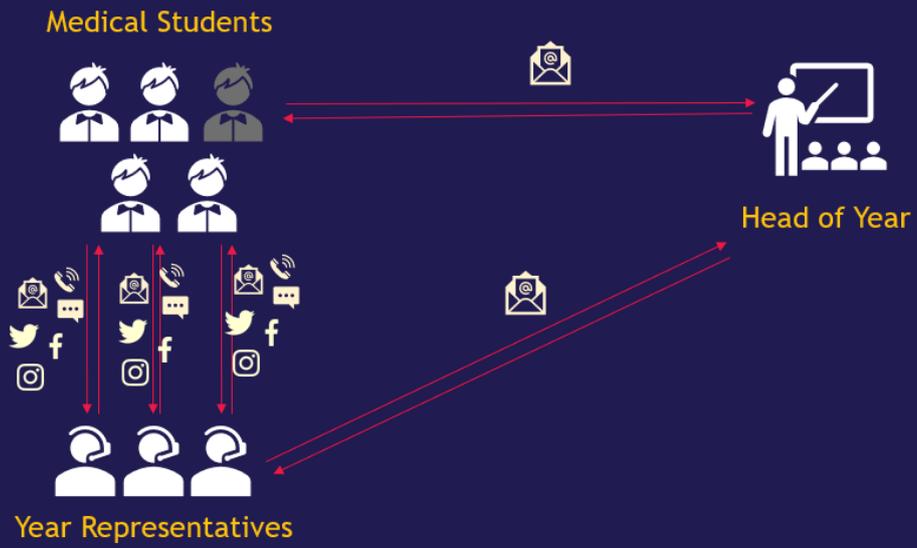
Due to hesitations from the Faculty, we trialled our own frugal solution akin to the Unitu platform ourselves to provide a centralised board for engagement between students and reps.

Throughout the year, we've since continued to discuss this proposal at length with the current ICSMSU Academics team and wider ICSMSU general committee, and a range of Faculty members including the Head of the Secretariat, Director of Quality and Student Experience, Head of Programme Management, and Student Services manager. There is now a lot more onboarding to the proposal following a few clarifications and changes.

This proposal was presented at a meeting of the Quality Assurance Group held on 9th June for feedback and input from the group.

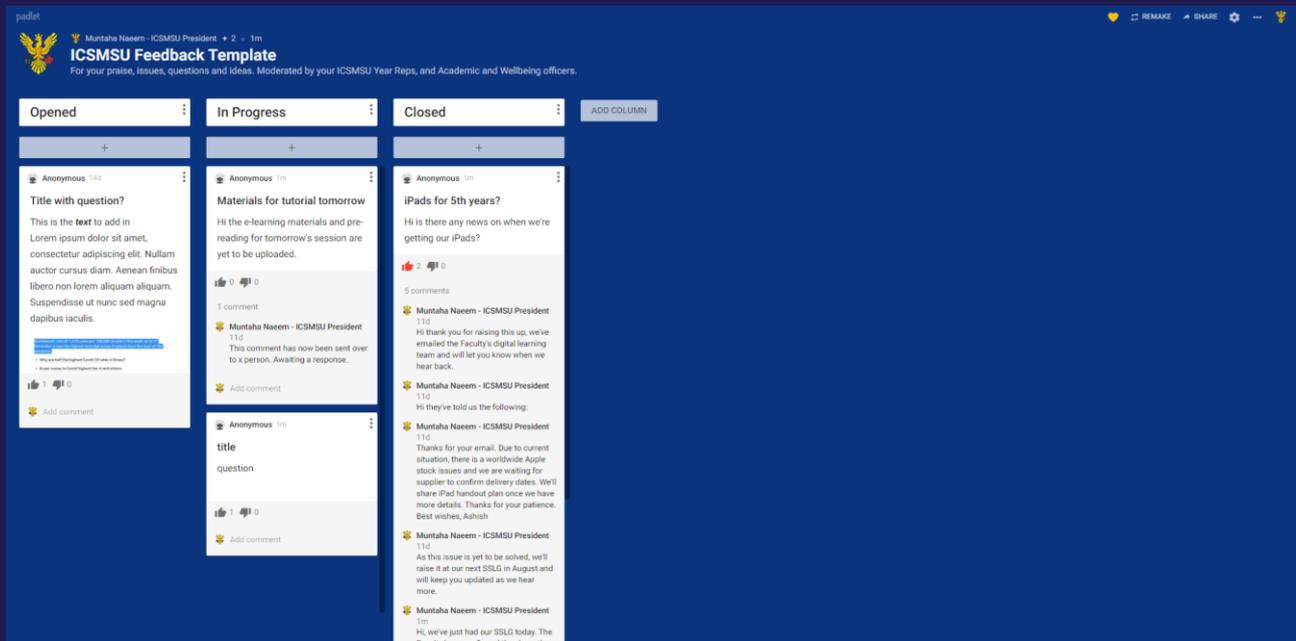
The proposal has also been discussed with the FEO Communications Manager, with a specific focus on cascading information and signposting to students.

Hopefully by the time this report is published, we would have passed this proposal through the ICSM Board, allowing us to implement it!



Top: The current system of raising concerns, queries, ideas and praise. Students raise concerns through both informal and formal channels, and there is a lack of centralisation both at a student level and between reps, leading to many similar queries being escalated.

Bottom: The intended process with the feedback boards being a central, open platform for all queries and responses.

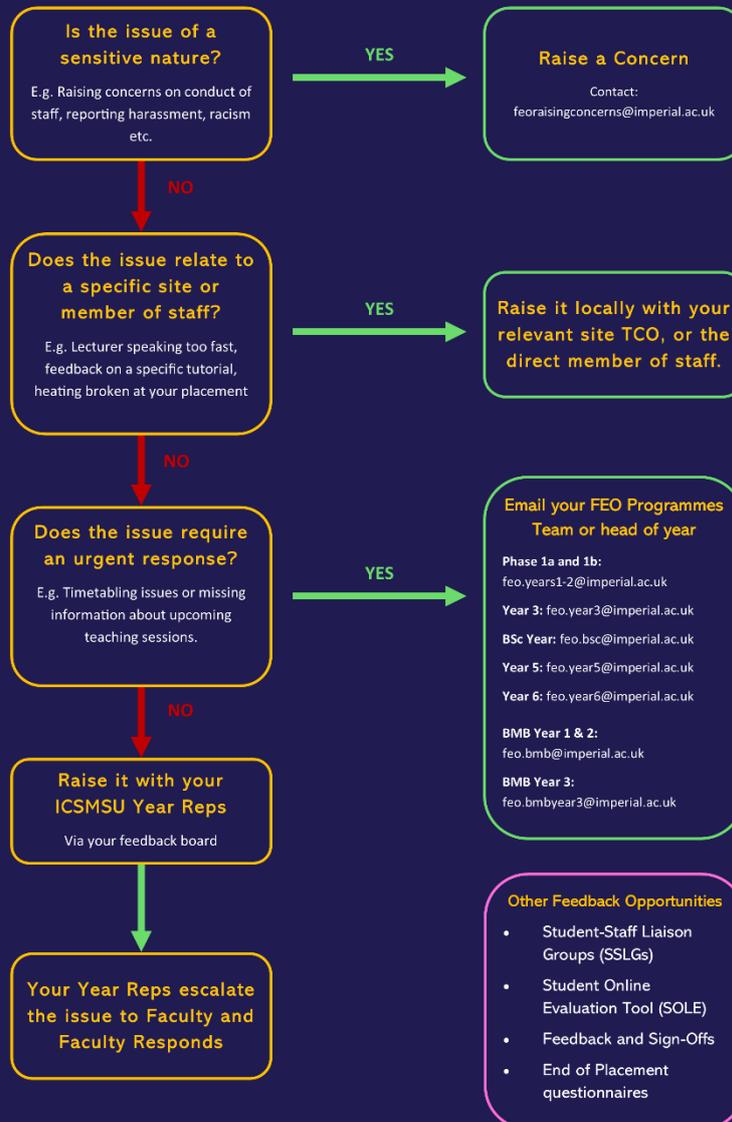


Screenshot showing an example template of our feedback boards. Students submit queries which are moderated by the year reps. Once approved, they are placed under the “Opened” channel. Other students can then view these posts and comment and upvote. Once actioned by the reps, the queries are moved to “In Progress” with an update in the comments, and once completed they are placed under “Closed”.



Getting YOUR Voice HEARD at ICSM

Where to go if you have a query...



We're hoping to push this as part of a wider campaign on signposting how our students can raise academic queries.

Our SSLGs have continued and we've now completed all of them for the year. All in all, they were very productive and we were able to gather a wide, representative set of feedback. We adjusted our approach slightly this year by rotating the presentation of academic and wellbeing feedback across the meetings, collating the surveys for both academic and wellbeing together to encourage students to give both areas consideration, streamline the promotion of both areas and ensure a better parity of sample sizes, and we have ensured better signposting of the outcomes from the surveys. Our SSLG meeting minutes are now published on our [website](#) for all members of ICSM so they can read through the discussions that have taken place, and hopefully somewhat begin to close the feedback loop by allowing our students to see the actions that have resulted from their feedback. We have also made use of newsletters with our President's weekly message, and our informal channels such as social media and group chats in order to promote the main outcomes of the discussions.

For our iBSc students, we've had some particularly nice outcomes. We're now officially taking over the [BSc Buddy Scheme](#) for external intercalators which we introduced as a collaboration with faculty, and we've had a 'handover' with the Faculty about this. Additionally, stemming from our SSLGs, we've been successful in securing 6 month [Graphpad Prism licenses](#) for our students' data analysis, and we're in discussion with the Faculty about changing the term 2 [in-course assessment release dates](#) for our BSc students so they allow more breathing space.

Welfare

We've also been making some great strides for BMB Welfare. The introduction of a new dedicated [BMB Welfare officer](#) as a full position into our SU committee will ensure their specific needs can be catered for with targeted advice, signposting and campaigns. This year our Welfare team also began a new [podcast series](#) with some of the BMB Faculty staff.

One of the biggest achievements has been the implementation of [free tampons in Reynolds](#). Providing free menstrual products to students means their education will not be affected by their periods. Knowing that they have access to menstrual products allows them to concentrate on their studies, and removes the financial burden of having to buy the products themselves. This is particularly pertinent as numbers facing period poverty

have risen sharply during the coronavirus lockdown. Many of our students are reliant upon part-time jobs which haven't taken place, some have lost parents and guardians, as well as other factors which have caused additional financial constraints. The extremely stretched finances of our students too often results in people needing to make a dehumanising choice between placing it on core living costs such as food, accommodation and travel, or having access to necessary products to control bleeding. We hope this new endeavour will help tackle the issue of period poverty in ICSM. We will be rolling it out in a form that initially requires the use of our student volunteers to replace them, but we hope to continually evaluate and refine this approach.

We've also inputted into early prospective plans for a new project by external developers who are looking to build a new private student halls around the Hammersmith area. We've ensured we get through the door early with College and push for it to be pitched as affordable accommodation that meets our students' needs as a prime target audience and stakeholders.

Elsewhere, the Faculty have implemented a new **Raising Concerns** policy to deal with complaints including bullying and harassment. We've been helping to consult and write cases for a new Raising concerns online session for students in 3rd year to complete before starting their placements. This work ties in extremely nicely with our work on implementing the BMA Charter on racial harassment (discussed later in this report).

Our Welfare Team have also been running another 3 social media **Campaigns** since January - on Sleep, Exam Stress, and Results and Resits. These continue to gain engagement from students and provide targeted support and advice during specific crunch points in the year.

Through our SSLGs, we've also been able to successfully work with the Faculty's welfare team to implement a **Welfare holding slide** added to the standard PowerPoint templates used by our lecturers. The hope is this will ensure we can permanently list key welfare contacts at the start and end of all lecture-based teaching and between sessions from now onwards.

Finally, on the front of Finances, we've once again worked with our Alumni Association to bring back the year 5 and 6 student bursary, and in partnership with ICU, Shervin (DPW) has put in a lot of work to help submit a proposal to College to call for an equal proportion of Imperial Bursary for years 5 and 6 to other years, which we're just waiting to hear confirmation about.

Clubs and Socs

From a Clubs and Societies perspective, it is nice to see more activities happening in-person, Our Clubs and Socs team have been working hard to be on-hand to assist them throughout the process and deal with any concerns and queries, and the associated eActivities authorisation barrages.

We've helped our Clubs and Societies through the minefield of annual budgeting, running Q&A sessions and undertaking 121s with each individual society.

We've also been working hard to represent them in Sports Boards, CSPB and overseeing the continued rollouts and developments of Imperial Athletes. As well as contributing to the New Activities Committee and Activities Development Fund subcommittees.

In exciting news, we were over the moon to be crowned the winners of this year's virtual varsity! Huge congratulations to everybody who took part!

We've also been working with the central ICU team to help audit our spaces and tidy up our SU common room and move all the equipment over into our Clubs and Socs storage room in Reynolds basement which we refurbished at the start of the year and has been in great use since late August!

Ents

It's been remarkably positive for our Ents team! We've managed to *finally* run some big in-person events!

The first of these which we ran back in April was Doctor's Day which is typically a chilled get-together of our Final Years on their results day to celebrate their new titles as officially becoming doctors. In the absence of the use of Reynolds Bar due to COVID restrictions preventing any indoor events, we're incredibly grateful to ICU for allowing us to reserve out 568 in

Beit Quad and run an event in socially distanced tables of 6. We saw a packed 568 with hundreds of our final years (and now doctors!) who came together to enjoy an evening of food and drink, and photos with the famous 'trust me I'm a doctor sign', and the signing of their yeargroup photo and signature board.

We also got to use our bright, cuddly, photogenic new phoenix costume (please don't get any mascotry ideas) which we invested in this year!



Our RAG society has also been running well, with the return of RAG Week where they hosted a series of online activities and events, and the selling of our Circle Line and Final Line t-shirts, raising well over £13000 for charity! Our RAG Committee were elated to be shortlisted for CSP of the year, and a huge congratulations to ICSMSU Infectious Diseases Society for winning the prestigious award!

And of course, on the evening of Friday 9th July, we held our long-awaited, thrice cancelled, and once-delayed Shrove Tuesday Final Year Dinner (STFYD). It was a sentimental, poignant event with a series of speeches, awards, reflections, and heartfelt tributes. Our Chair, Emily Quirk and our STFYD Committee put in a tremendous amount of effort to put the entire event together within 3 weeks, during their exams and in the most turbulent times possible! All the hard work really paid off and we're so

enthused we were able to finally put on the long-awaited event in-person and give a proper send-off to our final years!



At our STFYD event, we also held our **Colours Awards Ceremony** for 2021! ICSMSU Colours are awards that are usually, although not always exclusively, given to final years to recognise their extra-curricular contributions to life at our medical school.

This included all our usual awards, and the new **Dr Michael Schachter Prize** dedicated to honouring the life and legacy of Dr Michael Schachter who tragically passed away at the start of the academic year. All the winners were much deserved and have helped improve our student experience immensely over the last 6 years.

And we're now going through the motions of event planning all over again, with our delayed **Halfway Dinner** preparation in full swing, and our Rooftop party towards the later end of this month.

We've also seen our **Reynolds Bar reopening** on Wednesdays and Fridays which some of our students have made a decent amount of use of and has definitely been much welcome and missed by them. On some evenings we have been able to host a few smaller events such as light opera's big chill.

As we move into next term, we've begun planning for our Freshers' Fortnight and the return of bops, which have been facilitated hugely by the removal of minimum spends in the Reynolds Bar, arising from the new ICU

strategy and increased block grant allowing for the bars and student events to not be focused on making profits to fund core costs. This has alleviated a lot of tensions and pressure from our events and we're massively grateful to ICU for the hard work in making it happen!

Tackling Racial Harassment in ICSM

Last year, we released a Survey asking our students about their experiences of racial harassment at ICSM.

We had hundreds of students step forwards to disclose a range of their first-hand experiences of racial harassment and microaggressions on the wards - whether by NHS staff, Faculty, patients or peers, and throughout their day-to-day life around campus. We presented the results to the Faculty's BMA charter task-and-finish group, where we've been representing our students along with BMA reps since the start of the year on the implementation of the [BMA's charter for tackling racial harassment](#) in medical schools.

Their experiences shone a light on the magnitude of the problems, and brought up serious issues that clearly need to be understood and tackled by Faculty.

They were helpful for us to input into a new raising concerns policy and reporting process which is now live. And we've strongly been making the case throughout the year that **we as students should be the driver of any work conducted** as we understand the issues in a way that nobody else does through our real-life experiences, and we have many ideas for change that need to be explored in depth and better understood to inform the Faculty's work moving forwards.

After lobbying from us, Faculty agreed to order an independent enquiry into **racial harassment in ICSM**, led by an external professional consultant.

He has now completed a series of student focus groups and is using these to write up an **independent report and action plan** based on the outcomes and our recommendations. This will be published in the next 2-3 months and then taken on board by the Faculty.

These focus groups were safe spaces without any Faculty so we could speak openly about what needs to be done to create a more inclusive and equal environment at ICSM - whether on the wards as part of placements, in lectures, or simply in day-to-day life around campus.

We know this is an area many of our students are incredibly passionate about, but in order to make real, sustainable change it was vital we pushed for this opportunity so our students could embrace it and come forwards to speak out about their experiences and any ideas for change. After running the first set of focus groups, we then went back to the Faculty and got them to fund further groups to take place after exams to ensure everybody had the chance to attend and input.

The report and action plan is now being written up, and hopefully will be published in due course.

Pre-Foundation Assistantship

Another Win for Student Representation!

[This was such a big issue, it deserves its own section.]

Since March, hundreds of our students across years 3, 4 and 5 were in touch with concerns about the implementation of a new Pre-Foundation Assistantship (PFA) as a permanent new fixture in the curriculum. The vast majority of us always saw the huge amount of benefit an assistantship provides for our academic preparedness in entering the workforce, but had concerns specifically around the way it was set to be implemented by the Faculty. This was also implemented **without** student consultation.

After many hours of discussions, speaking with many of our students and advocating on their behalf behind-the-scenes, we have managed to reach a consensus and secured some really solid wins from Faculty which we hope will address our students' concerns:

- ❖ The Faculty's introduction of the PFA from next year at short notice caused a lot of discontent for 5th years entering final year, due to a variety of reasons including the late impacts on already-signed housing contracts.

- ✔ We've successfully lobbied for the PFA to be voluntary for next academic year.

- ❖ Under the initial proposal, the amount of time between finishing 6 years at medical school and entering the workforce was to be reduced from the current 44 days down to 16 days.

- ✔ We have successfully pushed for the length of the PFA to be reduced from 6-8 weeks down to 4 weeks. The course end-date has been pulled forwards by 3 weeks from the Faculty's initial proposed date, so the amount of break is now 37 days which is in line with many other medical schools around the country.

- ❖ The introduction of the PFA reduced the amount of time for electives to 6 weeks, but some of our students wish to undertake a 7 week elective.

- ✔ The addition of vacation weeks before and after the PFA and electives blocks will allow the scope to undertake 7-week electives if they wish to do this.

- ❖ Randomisation of block allocations could split households and cause issues for contracts, and prevent us from undertaking electives with our preferred groups and peers.

- ✔ We pitched a proposal for an allocation process for blocks to allow household linking of up to 6 people which Faculty agreed to, along with preferences for specialties.

- ❖ Extending the length of the course would result in additional strains on finances.

- ✔ We have confirmed the availability of the NHS bursary for the PFA to cover any travel and accommodation expenses for home students, and Faculty are now also applying to many other funding pots which they will hopefully share more info about soon. On our end we've once again worked with our Alumni Association to bring back the year 5 and 6 student bursary, and in partnership with ICU, Shervin has helped to submit a proposal to College for an equal proportion of Imperial Bursary for years 5 and 6 to other years which we're just waiting to hear confirmation about!

❖ Some of our 5th years have asked if it would be possible to do a slightly shorter PFA instead of the full 6 weeks.

✅ Faculty have introduced a 4-week PFA option for next year.

❖ Some of our students in phase 1 have asked how the PFA and electives will look for the new curriculum.

✅ We've approached Faculty about the new curriculum overhaul for years 5 and 6 and they have confirmed they will be consulting our reps in due course.

✅ And they've also agreed to undertake more widespread consultation from us on ideas for improving preparedness to practice and listen to our experiences of placements to inform future meaningful improvements and changes.

It's taken a huge amount of time, discussion and energy on all parts over the past 4 months but we've got there! We've always encouraged our students to get in touch with their ideas, concerns and expectations as we can only represent them when we know their thoughts. It's been rewarding to see this through to the end and finally reach some closure.

Reynolds Bar and Café Refurbishment

Now this one really is exciting! We're refurbishing Reynolds Bar!

Those of you who've been around for a while will be well-aware of the many consultations and discussions held on our Reynolds Bar and Café over the years.

One of our goals for this year was to follow up on these consultations and push for change.

We've been able to secure an investment from College which will finally allow us to put our ideas and suggestions into action and undertake a refurbishment of both the bar and café spaces.

This project will be a culmination of all our previous consultations on the Reynolds Bar, which will form the basis of this work. This project and its funding is independent from other prospective projects, such as the Faculty's developments arising from the St Mary's sale, but we of course hope to ensure our work complements the other developments taking place too. As we know, the Reynolds bar is a Union-owned space and so this project will be Union/ICSMSU-led.

The planning for this project has already started, we've already held its Kick-off meeting which included key representatives from both ICU and our own ICSMSU.

We did face a bit of resistance from Faculty who had a vision of the Reynolds café turning into a group learning space, which we didn't feel appropriate. After turning down these approaches, we have since met with the college to pitch our user narrative based on collation of data from our past consultations and our own experiences.

Broadly, the overarching aims are:

- ❖ Bar and café space to complement each other as 1 large cohesive space, not just 2 separate spaces with completely different vibes.
- ❖ Inclusive social/recreational space: Not just used for sports nights once a week but can also be used Monday - Friday during working day if students wish.
 - Working day usage: Inclusive social space. Primary thing that's lacking at CX campus - currently there only 2 vibes: revision/study

or sports night. Place to eat your lunch, come down from the library and chill when you need a break from revision, or if you have a gap in firms placements = Casual mingling social vibe - a place to hang out.

- After-hours usage: Multipurpose events venue, professional lighting, drinking social space.

We also have some more specific objectives we hope to pursue and have pitched to the college including brightening up the entire bar space, replacing the sticky floors and furniture, improving ventilation for the smell of alcohol, soundproofing, a proper food provision and full catering menu, integrating our ICSMSU student identity, and the potential for sports screenings. We're awaiting to hear from the College and this will hopefully be a big project to hand over and see that we can finally have some great outcomes!

Sale of St Mary's: Reynolds Building Refurbishment

Last year saw the sale of the St Mary's Medical School Building. Approximately £3.5 million of this sale is being reinvested into refurbishing the Reynolds building.

The aforementioned Reynolds Bar refurbishment is part of a separate project with separate funding, but we of course hope to ensure our work complements these developments taking place too.

The Faculty have now concluded focus groups with all yeargroups of both of MBBS and BMB cohorts, and a group for recent alumni and one focused on inclusivity.

Faculty have published these outcomes, which our SU have discussed in a general meeting to form important discussion points, and with our Arts clubs to understand our areas of priority for the basement space.

We've since formed our broad vision and met with Faculty to discuss our ideas for how the outputs of the student focus groups can come together to form the refurbished layout of the Reynolds Building. We've since got our foot-in-the-door, presented our floor-by-floor breakdown to Faculty who

are now on board, met with the building managers, and very early drafting of floor plans are underway by the Faculty.

Broadly speaking, our plans fit in as follows:

Basement: Student facilities - Sports and Arts: Expanded air-conditioned gym space along with showers and changing rooms, Clubs and Socs storage room, Soundproof Music practice rooms, piano rooms, and expanded dance studio with storage.

Ground Floor: Welcome facilities. Refurbished entrance reflecting the culture and identity of our medical school and heritage. Existing security desk, SU offices and storage space, Reynolds bar and café (currently under redevelopment as part of the separate College-Union project).

First floor: Group spaces. Existing Brian Drewe Lecture Theatre and associated breakout space. Relocated SU common room in place of the existing R2 seminar room to feed onto breakout space, development of dedicated group practice space for skills-based assessments in the form of many OSCE tutoring rooms and open clinical skills hub. Ideally these rooms can be organised into circuits for running of mock exams and as closely emulating OPD clinic rooms as much as feasible. A small quiet/prayer room cited in the inclusivity focus group is also placed on this floor in our plans.

Ideally all of these communal spaces listed are kept together with maximal space provided rather than being split over multiple floors or having multiple facilities of different natures infringing upon each other.

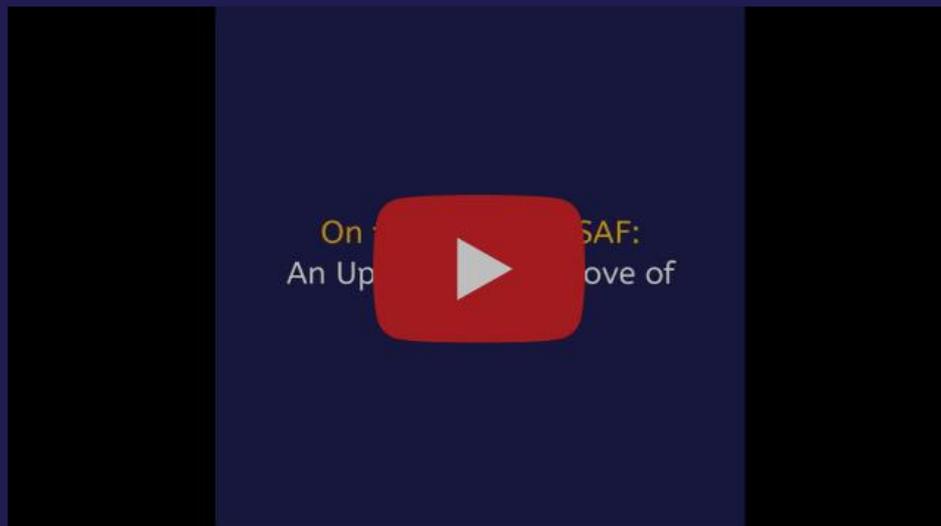
2nd floor: Revision for knowledge-based assessments. Well-catered for by quiet study in the current library and computer room.

3rd floor: Faculty services. Dedicated staffing spaces, expanded offices, staff meeting rooms, and student-facing staff services such as the FEO welfare hub. It is obviously vital the welfare hub is not located directly near any student-specific revision spaces or social facilities.

This is the current steer, but there are many hurdles yet to move through including assessing feasibility and drawing of schematics with the

architects, and of course further student consultation on the final plans. However, it is nice for us as students to directly form the narrative of large scale future plans and set the direction of travel to ensure it fully meets the needs and wants of our students.

The move of SAF's Multi-Disciplinary Laboratories (MDLs)



Following the Sale of St Mary's medical school building, this year the Faculty of Medicine announced a behind-the-scenes decision to build a new institute of infection in the centre of our Sir Alexander Fleming Building, and move ICSM and all our current students from our MDL spaces into a separate building - the relatively derelict Royal College of Science building.

The announcement arrived on my birthday (rip) - Monday 7th December and during the FoM virtual graduation ceremonies.

This decision was made without any student consultation, including with our SU.

This follows a string of major decisions in recent years, including:

- 2013: Sale of Teddington with no student involvement in the decision.
- 2015: Closure of the Teddington Memorial Bar at Heston with no student involvement.
- 2018: Move of medical student sports from Heston to Harlington with no student involvement.
- 2018: Attempted closure of St Mary's Pool with no student involvement.
- 2019: Sale of St Mary's Hospital Medical School without student involvement.
- 2020: Move of our MDLs with no student involvement and refusal to commit to consultation prior to a rehousing of the home of ICSM undergraduate education in SK.

These sorts of decisions have been a source of immense upset and hurt to the student body at ICSM, and as an SU we sense this frustration has been heavily building up leading many to feel more strongly than ever that decisions about us shouldn't be made without us.

A few months ago, we wrote to our students about the Faculty's decision and the concerns we had with the lack of any student consultation, the impacts of the decision, and what this could mean for our future in SAF.

As you may recall, we distributed a survey to capture the mood and thoughts of our student body and allow them all to express their views on the Faculty's decision. This quickly amounted hundreds of responses from students across yeargroups and from both our Medicine and BMB courses who expressed their overwhelming dissatisfaction.

This has been instrumental in allowing us to accurately represent their views. We've since shared their feedback directly with the Faculty and, to close the feedback loop, we also [shared the results](#) of what our students told us back with them.

The Gazette also [published an article](#) which provides a student's perspective into the decision-making and what we can expect from the RCS building itself as described by its former users.

Q&A Event and Clarity on the Future of SAF

We held an open Q&A event on 22nd February where we directly put our students' questions to members of the senior faculty, including the dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Jonathan Weber.

At the event, Faculty confirmed our suspicions that their 'ambition' is indeed to one day move ICSM out of SAF and into RCS in its entirety as the medical school's building. And when explicitly asked, they sadly still could not confirm they would undertake any student consultation prior to this decision being taken.

We know that whatever the Faculty's future reasoning may be, SAF is home to many of our student facilities. Such a decision would have potential to directly impact not just teaching, but all aspects of our student experience including our social interactions, society activities, and our identity.

So we need to ensure they go through the right process that effectively represents the interests of students, with a prior onboarding of all relevant stakeholders before making a decision.

Put simply, this decision about us shouldn't be made without us.

We've seen it time-and-again: A big decision that significantly impacts our student experience is made without consulting us and the surprise announcement comes after it's already a done deal.

We now know that a decision to undertake a full move out of SAF is on the cards and could potentially happen at any point in the years ahead. So we need to ensure we can secure a commitment to a consultation process now, before it happens. Otherwise it will only be a matter of time until we find ourselves in the same position again.

And that's why we're drafting a consultation framework which lays out what we believe adequate consultation should look like, one we hope that Faculty will commit to. We've had countless conversations with the faculty about consultation over the past few months and the early signs are promising that they are prepared to listen to what we have to say.

This is a large piece of ongoing work so we'll update as and when we are able to share more.

What we've been doing in the short term

In the short term, we need to ensure we can get the best out of this decision. While pushing for a shift in culture to empower the student voice and encourage transparency in decision-making, we must continue to engage and work constructively with the Faculty to ensure we can make the best out of this decision and provide student representation from this point onwards.

We've been inputting into the RCS building's new MDL plans and their design on a weekly basis since January and have been representing you on the 'MDLs user group'.

We've also since held multiple focus groups with our academic officers and with our Clubs and Societies to ensure all our various needs can be catered for, and we have even set up our own dedicated RCS working group within our SU.

We've lobbied for the faculty to include a dedicated student breakout space within their plans which they have agreed to, and we've now pushed to ensure that we can lead on its design. As students we know our needs best, so we feel strongly that we should take a leading role in the development of a dedicated student social space.

As part of this, we gave our students the opportunity to share their views on what should be included within the space so we could feed this back to the faculty. We've since got floor plans drawn up and are set to meet with the furniture company within the next week or so.

So overall, we've had some very solid developments and responded quickly and decisively to make sure our students can get the best out of this decision, respectfully challenge the decision-making process, and ensure we start the journey down the road to long-term change.

Manifesto Review

Too often we are loudest during our campaigns and fall quiet once we take office into our positions.

So, it's time to go back to where it all started. I've cracked open the archives and pulled out my old campaign website and manifesto and will go through each line and openly reflect on what I personally feel we have achieved and what is still outstanding. These are all my own personal reflections on what we as an entire SU team have accomplished this year, and of course others are more than welcome to reflect themselves on where they feel we have succeeded and where we have fallen short. This is of course, non-comprehensive and I'll only talk about work we have done where it directly correlates to one of these aims or objectives.



HELLO

Thank you from the bottom of my heart to everyone who #VotedMunty and showed your support over the past few weeks!

Hi, I'm **Muntaha**. And after much thought and consideration, I'm ready to offer myself to be your next **ICSMSU President**. Our SU does amazing work and as your next president I want to see us become more inclusive, transparent and representative than ever, and I believe I have the experience, qualities and insight to make it work and bring our vision to life.

So let's build a better SU for everyone.

HOME

ABOUT ME

OUR VISION

CONTACT

VOTE MUNTY!

I wrote my manifesto with 3 overarching aims in mind, focusing on *how* I wanted our SU to run, *not on what* I wanted us to run.

1. *'Back to Basics' - Do a better job at the fundamental roles of a Students' Union, reaching out to a wider range of students, enhancing our transparency when changes are implemented and on what we accomplish throughout the year.*

The most fundamental role of a Students' Union is to represent and advocate on behalf of students. We wanted to carry forwards the existing momentum we have with our events and Clubs and Socs, but also re-engage trust from our students that we're there for them and are on their side when it comes to backing their corner, particularly on issues of academic and pastoral representation, after all we're just fellow students just like they are!

As I said on my website, *"I want to see us become more inclusive, transparent and representative than ever."*

I'll leave it down to others to decide our level of success, but personally, more than anything else I really think these are the 3 big areas we've made huge strides in and it's how I would summarise the cultural change we've been able to shift towards in the past year as ICSMSU. We've made sure we openly engage our students, fought a lot behind-the-scenes, helped support and implement ideas but also respectfully challenged decisions not made in the best interest of our students which overall has led to a lot more wins we otherwise wouldn't have had. One of the comments arising from my 360 review in January was *"Muntaha represents the student body -rather than the Faculty of Medicine. He makes every effort to reflect the views of the medical and BMB students as he understands them- despite those views not always being palatable to the Faculty"* - and whilst this focuses on myself as an individual I think it's testament to the **wider culture of the team** as a whole. No matter what we do, I don't think anybody could ever doubt our intentions. We've been able to keep hold of our integrity and keep representing our students honestly throughout the year and haven't been afraid of even being the lone voice in doing so.

On transparency, I think this year has been our most transparent and open ever. Transparency has been present in everything we do. Every week in our newsletter I've written up a comprehensive President's message detailing

everything our SU including myself has been doing in the preceding week. We've openly published all our SU meeting minutes and SSLG minutes on our website, we've published termly stream updates across our social media - bullet point summaries of our main accomplishments by stream, conducted termly interviews with our Gazette, and even ensuring these very Council reports are as **comprehensive** and accountable as possible and well-signposted to everyone at ICSM. Even the Feedback Boards we've trialled and will be implementing are fully open and transparent for everyone to see and comment on! We've also been keen on pushing Faculty to be more transparent which is something we have much less control over, and this has included pushing for items to be included in their own bulletins, organising Q&A webinars, and even publishing minutes of the BMA charter task and finish group.

So all the detail on everything we've been doing has been there for those who want to see and access it. And we've also been more than open to discuss anything with anyone. After all, transparency is a key lead to accountability and showing all that we do.

This has directly helped to facilitate communication in a 2-way direction with some students, many of whom would not traditionally engage with our SU, placing their trust in us that their issues will be taken seriously and so taking heed of the many "get in touch if you have any thoughts or queries" type messages we place around and often replying to our newsletters or contacting either myself or one of our SU directly to do just that!

- 2. Facilitate the ideas our SU are most passionate about by being active, empowering others, and being a strong, professional pillar of support.*

I always recognised that as an SU we don't have direct power on a lot of areas that are owned and run by faculty/College, only influence. And I knew that regardless of my ideas, a huge part of the role is facilitating and overseeing the priorities and vision of others within our SU on the areas that come under their remit. Having done this before when leading other teams, it's an area I felt quite natural and in my element in. I've always been conscious of not stepping on others' toes, and where I do have ideas, I've always preferred to empower my team by giving them the ultimate say and autonomy over what they do, and work with them to onboard them with any suggestions.

Again, I'll leave it to others on our SU to determine how successful this has/hasn't been, but as far as I feel, there's been a huge focus on committee development this year. At the start of the year, I told all of our committee that we've got their backs in everything we do and we're always no more than a message away, and that's a message we've kept pushing. Every day of the year so far, I've gotten at the very least 1 thing from our SU committee to deal with/help on/advise on/answer, which I think is nice testament to that culture. We also redesigned our training day with a good emphasis on soft skills, and even introduced new compulsory welfare and active bystander training, held regular 121 catch-ups with our committee throughout the year, and I've always prioritised checking in and helping our committee whenever they've needed me. Not just as members of my committee, but as individuals. My 360 review in January was again really helpful for me to benchmark my abilities and it's an area I think I've continued to develop in since; comments on my leadership style included "managing and leading each member well, and adapting my support style depending on the officer", and "*Muntaha has some admirable leadership qualities - he has integrity, honesty, clarity of purpose and able to communicate his vision. he should be applauded for having these qualities at this early stage of his career*". Which is always heartwarming to read as whilst I've been continually trying to introspectively reflect and empower my understanding of my own strengths and values, only those around me and who work with me can really connect the dots in a way I never would. Of course this year has been a constant development, driven by many adrenaline-pumping moments, and allowed scope for real self-reflection and refining! I've always got a way to go and I hope I can continue to develop!

- 3. Streamline our activities against COVID and mitigate against its long term far-reaching effects - whether they be on academics, welfare, our clubs and societies, Freshers' Fortnight or beyond.*

Nobody thought COVID would last the whole year. We all thought it'd probably be over by about July, and then by freshers, and then January, and somewhere along the line we all soon figured it's probably going to be considerably longer... We've ended up being locked down for pretty much all of the year and sadly it's certainly been a far bigger resource drainer, shackling us all down in hugely greater workloads and reducing our social contact to nearly zero than we ever expected.

I think we've done what we can to mitigate its effects. We've worked as hard as we can to try to focus on stability - ensuring our students have the information they need as soon as possible, and that we are able to pass on their queries and concerns in an effective way. With every big announcement that has come our way, including our changes to Freshers Fortnight and A-Level results day debacles, Lockdown 2.0, the introduction of Tier 4, and the more recent national lockdown, we have been on hand to cascade information via our formal and more informal channels such as through our social media with Q&As and our group chats to provide clarity. We also introduced COVID Updates as a standing item in our weekly newsletter with a breakdown summary for any new developments - whether from us as an SU, ICU, Faculty, College or even nationally.

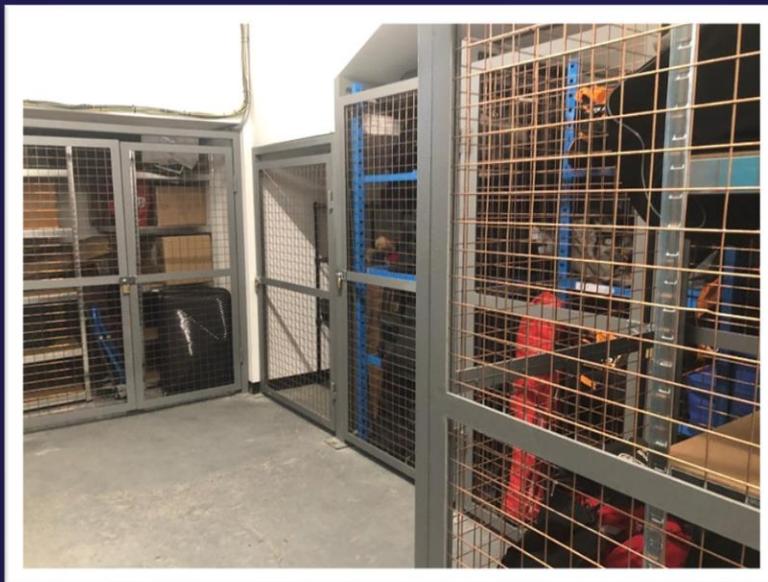
We have been liaising directly on behalf of our students with our Faculty, ICU, College, and even in a few cases, speaking with the government to make sure our students have the information they need and as much certainty as we can provide. We've engaged with the Faculty continuously and have been meeting with them before-hours every other day since the start of the year at our Faculty of Medicine COBRA meetings where we have been able to escalate the student voice and a vast number of concerns to the highest level, and also at the weekly staff 'COVID forums'. Since the announcement of tier 4, these meetings also continued throughout the Winter break with planning ahead for various eventualities for both teaching and assessment given the uncertainty of the crisis leading into January. We also worked to organise new weekly All-Student Briefings open to all Faculty of Medicine students, both Undergraduates and all Postgraduates. Each week, we were joined by our Vice-Dean for Education, as well as an Imperial-based expert such as Professor Peter Openshaw, Professor Robin Shattock, and Professor Wendy Barclay, and also myself to update us on the current COVID situation and new guidelines nationally, and at a College and Faculty level, along with any new announcements and a student-led Q&A session.

And now for all the more specific points I hoped to accomplish. Of course, these areas relate to aspects overseen by members of our SU team whom I always wished to give complete and final autonomy - my vision aligned very closely with many of their own manifesto points and priorities which we discussed through soon into when we took office, and so I will be reflecting not specifically on myself but as a whole on what we have accomplished together as an SU:

Clubs and Socs

Review the long-term storage facilities available to our clubs and societies and push for the completion and allocation of the Reynolds storage refurbishment. ✓

Huge credit to our Clubs and Socs team, this **long overdue** project was completed back in late August at the start of the year. It's been home to storage space for the equipment of our over 65 CSPs ever since. This also ties in nicely with the wider space review of the Union.



Encourage more cohesion and collaboration between volunteering and academic (V&A) societies, including an inaugural V&A dinner to celebrate their achievements.

This is still in progress. We specifically created a new Announcements chat, akin to our Sports and Arts club captains chat, to allow easy access between our Clubs and Socs team and all of our V&A presidents. We also established a new source of grants from the St Mary's Development Trust, to provide parity with our S&A clubs who have access to the SMHA for grant money. We've seen many of our V&A societies make use of this and receive funding for new equipment and new initiatives in a very difficult financial year.

However, the specific idea of an inaugural volunteering and academics recognition dinner is one to be handed over, unfortunately the pandemic has prevented us from being able to run this event and although it's been floated for some time, it remains overdue.

The Coronavirus situation is ongoing and there is a chance it may have far-reaching effects on the smooth running of club/society events at the start of the academic year. I want to initiate early communication with ICU and

work with them to explore avenues available to us to mitigate potential issues in the event we need to adapt, and communicate any updates to our clubs/societies as quickly and swiftly as possible. ✓

A lot of this is already discussed above under the 3rd aim.

Until recently, a lot of CSP related activity has been mostly inactive, although there's been spurts where certain events can run. We've been in constant communication with ICU, well-facilitated by close relations with the DPCS, and our Clubs and Socs team have been on hand to trickle this information out to our CSPs and answer all their, often many, questions.

We've been meeting regularly with ICU on a minimum of a fortnightly basis throughout the whole year, and more frequently with the activities team when we first took office at the start of the year in order to plan our Freshers' Fortnight and liaise regarding other events.

Welfare

Better signposting of financial support available to students. ✓

I do think this has improved, not to say it's perfect. It's been raised in many of our SSLGs and resulted in reminders in dedicated Welfare bulletins by Faculty, along with a new dedicated page on MedLearn listing all the support available. Our SU Welfare team ran a dedicated Finance month campaign in November which included a livestream with the Faculty's student services manager to talk about the Hardship fund, with example cases, and top tips.

The provision of the NHS bursary was specifically an area that students have complained about a lack of information in the past, and so we set up an NHS bursary talk with College for our 4th years, and compiled an [NHS bursary FAQs document](#) on applying. Additionally, we crowdsourced a step-by-step [video](#) on reclaiming placement and travel expenditure. We're also redesigning our Welfare page on our SU website with a greater emphasis on signposting of the available College, Faculty and external sources of financial advice and support.

Provide greater holistic support, including both welfare and academic, to those students who are resitting exams over Summer.

Our Welfare team have introduced a new results and resits campaign, and last year launched a lockdown lessons campaign over Summer. This has helped to empower and deliver advice to students undertaking resits. However, there's certainly more that can be done in this area.

Better representation of the diversity within ICSM, particularly of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students, and ensuring they are fully-supported at all times. ✓

Clearly there is always going to be more that can be done in this area and cultural change often takes much longer than a year, but I wanted us to make **progress** towards tackling this important issue and I believe we have. Our Welfare team sent out a survey to encapsulate students' experiences of racial harassment at ICSM and their ideas for change, with hundreds of students stepping forwards to disclose a range of their first-hand experiences of racial harassment and microaggressions on the wards - whether by NHS staff, Faculty, patients or peers, and throughout their day-to-day life around campus. We've since presented these results to Faculty, and have been representing our students on the ICSM Faculty's BMA charter group and the Faculty of Medicine-wide Black Lives Matter working group.

We've made representations on a lot of key issues including the wearing of headscarves in theatres and consulted on the implementation of the new raising concerns policy, and pushed for this work to be as transparent and student-facing as possible. After recommendations from us, Faculty also agreed to order an independent enquiry into racial harassment in ICSM, led by an external professional consultant.

Within our SU itself, we've also had a stronger display of religious and cultural festivals in our newsletter, and we've put in a lot of work to deliver compulsory Welfare and active bystander training to all of our SU committee, and compulsory club culture and inclusivity training to all of our Sports and Arts club captains and social secretaries.

So overall, we've more than got the ball rolling and made some good strides in the right direction, I hope we will continue to build on this important work in the years to come.

Academic

The transition into clinical medicine is a difficult one. I want to work to provide better study skills support to 3rd years to help ease them through the change. ✓

We've fed into a new academic tutoring scheme for 3rd years which was rolled out by the Faculty with a focus on coaching and study skills tips.

We also spoke with the 3rd years in their induction week, with a focus on academic advice and navigating clinical placements. On an individual basis,

we've also had students contacting us directly, particularly at the start of the year, and have provided tailored advice.

Again, there's always more that can be improved but we've made steps in the right direction for sure.

Communication of developments and changes as a result of your feedback from Student-Staff Liaison Group meetings. ✓

For the first time ever, we've openly published all the feedback reports presented by our reps and all meeting minutes openly on our [website](#) to directly close off the feedback loop. We've also included breakdowns of the main points discussed in our newsletter and encouraged some of our reps to post on their group chats with bullet point updates after each SSLG.

Ensure students on clinical placements and receiving remote teaching are fully supported and kept up-to-date in relation to changes resulting from the ongoing Coronavirus situation. ✓

Again this is as discussed above in our 3rd overarching aim. To summarise, we've had 2 directions of communication between students - escalating the student voice up to Faculty, and disseminating information the other way. In the height of the pandemic, we've been meeting with the Faculty's leadership at least 3 times a week and our reps also additionally met with their clinical heads of years on a weekly basis to efficiently tackle any issues that arose each week so they can be resolved asap.

As also mentioned before, we've tried to keep students as up-to-date as possible through standing COVID update items in our weekly Newsletter, on our social media, running Instagram Q&As, Zoom drop-in sessions and more. So those who have needed to engage with them have done. When we haven't had all the updates, we've been providing reassurance and working hard to get that information from wherever it might be - if not faculty, then College, and if not College like in the case of Tier 4, even contacting the government!

Ents

Continue the high standards of events in ICSM and build on feedback from the student body to continue refining them.

With a changing demographic to ICSM, this year I had the pleasure of organising the first Film Night - a new collaboration between ICSMSU and Muslim Medics as part of Freshers' Fortnight. I want to continue building on this foundation and use my own expertise as well as engaging with the

student body to provide inclusive events and ensure the social needs of all our students can be met.

These 2 points are similar, so we'll address them together.

Simply, we haven't been able to make all the changes we'd like to our events because the pandemic has prevented nearly all in-person events from taking place this year. No doubt, these will be good areas of priority for future. Where we have been able to run events, our STFYD has been a good example of listening to student feedback during the organisation where we made the difficult decision of cutting the prices of our tickets and adapting the event to ensure our students get the most value.

On the inclusivity front, this needs to be a major priority to ensure our SU can offer something to everyone and create a comfortable environment no matter how much people wish to drink. By reasons outside of our intentions, this year's adapted Freshers' Fortnight was naturally our most inclusive ever (a very minor silver lining of lockdown), but as we move forwards to more traditional in-person activities, we definitely need to keep working and I know next year's Ents team are looking to further adapt our Freshers' Fortnight by including a greater range of events including mini golf and bowling for all to partake in.

There's also financial inclusivity for students from more disadvantaged financial backgrounds. A tremendous stride we've been able to make has been redoing our financial model and introducing our events bursary scheme, where we can offer up to 86 free passports to incoming students with the lowest bands of household income, and cut prices for everyone across the board for our large events. This will hopefully help significantly in preventing finances from being a barrier for students getting involved with our social activities and events.

Follow-up on the years of Reynolds bar consultations to ensure the space can meet the needs of our students. ✓

Funding has always been perhaps the biggest source of contention for a refurbishment of our Bar and Café. As previously mentioned in this report, our Reynolds Bar and café refurbishment project is now confirmed, with all the funding coming directly from College. We've since used our previous years of consultations to write up the user narrative and identify our key areas for ensuring the space can be better utilised. This has been a significant win and a newly overhauled space is nearly in touching distance.

Executive

I want to see us working together with our Alumni networks to build a mutualistic relationship, providing them with opportunities for teaching, better student engagement, CPD points, and to maintain a closer connection to ICSM, and in doing so provide equal benefit to our students through increased centralised mock examiner recruitment, careers support, portfolio advice and more. ✓

Again, I've spoken about this previously in this report. We've been able to work closely with our Alumni Association and engage their help with mock examiner recruitment and other campaigns throughout the year, and introduced new associate membership to engage as many outgoing students as possible with their mailing lists. We've also had conversations both within our SU and with the ICSM Alumni Association and SMHA on the future of the organisation, and have now initiated the work to combine the 2 to create a new Phoenix Fund charity with an aim to better support our students/our SU. There's many more specific ideas on standby for how we can better engage our recent alumni which I'll be handing over and it'll be exciting to see how this new-look alumni network will grow in future!

Enhanced careers support for medical bioscience students. ✓

Our BMB Society has run online workshops on therapeutic genome editing, and centrally careers support has been raised in our SSLGs by our year reps. Faculty have continued to provide their course-related careers support. We've also had separate conversations with the careers team, who have put in a lot of hard work to run many sessions, drop ins, advice emails, and events throughout the course of the year.

With the unwelcome St Mary's sale, it's absolutely vital we now push for funding invested into student life and provision of services at both the St Mary's campus and Charing Cross.

This is an ongoing project that will likely keep still be ongoing for many years in the near future. Faculty have now run focus groups for each yeargroup of MBBS and BMB, as well as targeted ones for recent alumni and on inclusivity. I attended all of these groups and students fed in with their ideas on what facilities and services make up their campus experience. We've since taken the outcomes of these groups, consulted with some of our societies, and as an SU come up with our own floor breakdowns to give the foundation of how the Reynolds Building developments can work and provide much-needed student services at CX. This is now, as we understand it, forming the basis of the floorplans for the overall developments. Of

course, we now also have the move of our MDLs in mind as another challenge to have in mind which may call into question the provision of our ICSM student services beyond teaching space in South Kensington.

Improved, more open communication with our students through a restructured newsletter and a honed communication and social media strategy. ✓

I think this is one of the achievements that has been most visible. We've entirely overhauled our website and newsletter and created a strong and visible visual identity that's consistent across everything we do, including this very report! We've updated our brand identity and been very open through all the transparency measures mentioned earlier under my 1st aim.

Review and update the practices and SOPs of the SU where required to ensure we're consistently working in the most efficient way possible.

We've certainly made advances in this area. We've updated our brand identity, signatures and banners, reworked our training day, revamped our financial model, asked ourselves why things are the way they are and in doing so, took the decision to scrap the 'snogweb' from STFYD and created new SOPs our Zoom booking system, adding content to our newsletter for both students and internally for other members of our SU, and for acquiring sponsorships with new packages and a professional brochure. However, with lots of our SU activities running remotely or unable to happen such as our retreat, I feel this is still an area where there's got to be an ongoing process that carries on to continue refining how we work.

Nurture the development of our SU members for them to advance student life for both Medicine and BMB students to the best of their ability, be on hand as a professional pillar of support throughout the year, and most importantly of all, work to ensure it's an enjoyable experience for everyone!

As above, I've reflected on this with our 3rd aim and my response would be the same. I really feel our committee have shown immense resilience in the last year, despite very few of the regular socials and "fun" parts of being on the SU taking place yet astronomically greater workloads. It's certainly been a worthwhile experience, if not challenging, and if there's one thing I've seen it's that all our SU have truly become better people. I've watched them all grow and develop in many ways in the past year - I've seen it and couldn't be more proud of them all!

Overall, one year is extremely short in an institution's timeframe and just not enough to make long standing change in *all* the areas we'd like, but we've definitely more than made the most of our time and been able to make strong steps and secure significant advances in our main priorities. What's equally amazing is the amount of work we've done in so many more areas that just didn't feature in our manifestos, which shows just how unpredictable and bigger the learning curves are than any of us could ever imagine when running for the SU!

Ultimately, I didn't do this role because I thought it would be fun. I certainly didn't believe it would be easy.

Despite the difficult year it has been, I would not hesitate to do it all again.

The last year has demonstrated why our SU exists, and it has been needed probably more than in any other year in our history.

We've been there for our students when they've needed us most.

And I wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

Concluding Reflections

Sometimes in the moment it can and does get tough.

*Often as student volunteers, we sacrifice our time, mental and physical health. We find ourselves held to higher levels of accountability than even full-time staff on much higher salaries. And that can take its toll. Often our students forget that we are just their fellow students. These roles are tough, testing and challenge us. It isn't always fun but it **certainly is worth it.***

In the past year, if there's one thing I've learnt it's that you've got to keep your head down, keep moving, and keep doing what you feel to be right.

Have principles, have values, show integrity, and everything else will fall into place.

Do things because they are right. Because they help students. Those around us will often have confounders like reputation and money as driving rationale for making big decisions, but we know reputation is nothing more than a secondary endpoint that arises when you do the right things for the right reasons.

Don't be afraid of transparency, because if you are doing good things for the right reasons, it will only ever reveal good.

We have nothing to hide, and should always hold ourselves accountable before we are held accountable.

Don't be afraid to be the lone voice in a room. No matter how isolating it may feel.

Place your trust in going through the right process to help you reach the right outcomes.

We can make change. It's not easy but someone has to do it.

Because if we don't, nothing will ever get better.



ICSMSU

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Students' Union

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR FANTASTIC VOLUNTEERS. YOU REGULARLY GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO FAR EXCEED THE EXPECTED DUTIES OF A VOLUNTEER, AND EVERYONE IS VERY GRATEFUL THAT YOU ALL WORK TIRELESSLY TO IMPROVE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF ALL THOSE WITHIN OUR ICSM COMMUNITY.



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