

**Imperial College Union
Board of Trustees / 8 December 2021**

Officer Trustee Update

President / Dr Lloyd T James

Objective: Reviewing our offer to Postgraduates

Update: [Complete] Following the publication of the PG Engagement Review Report (to be discussed at this meeting) I consider this objective to be essentially complete. There is now an implementation phase to proceed over the coming ~18 months, however the 'review' phase is now finished.

Objective: Reviewing our democratic structures

Update: [In Progress] A Working Group made up of members of Union Council has been formed to progress this task. The Working Group has met twice, to shape the scope of the review and to develop a survey to be sent out to members of Council. The Democratic Structures Review aims to complete initial discussions in April, to be followed by a series of focus groups with senior volunteers. A finalised proposal will then be completed in May, for approval by Council in June and final submission to the Board in July.

Objective: Understanding community development

Update: [Complete] This objective has not quite progressed as intended. Working jointly on this with Nathalie, the initial concept was that a significant, short-term project was necessary to rebuild a sense of student community post-pandemic. However, it has seen become quite clear that this is not the case – the overall sense of community has returned to pre-pandemic levels without the need for significant additional support. Where areas for improvement in this area exist, they are associated with those areas where development of inclusive community has been weaker historically, such as among Postgraduates, students at other campuses, and in certain clubs and societies.

We view improved understanding of community development in these areas as overlapping almost entirely with other projects, such as the PG Experience Review, Democratic Structures Review, CSP Culture Review, and Constituent Union Support. For this reason, I consider this objective to be 'complete', with the focus shifting to business-as-usual work in this area. To ensure that we have ongoing understanding of the sense of community, relevant questions have been added to the Student Experience Survey to give annual data.

Objective: Supporting Constituent Unions

Update: [In Progress] Two key areas for improvement in CU support have been identified as training for CU Presidents/committees, and staff resource within ICU. We are due to discuss what specifically would be of use to CUs at the Governance and Identity Board meeting scheduled for February 8th. We would then hope to have a trial run of any training go ahead in April, to be delivered to the incoming CU committees in the summer. Any changes to staff resource would be longer term, with an implementation time scale depending on precise requirements and available funding.

Objective: Developing a coherent lobbying agenda for Campus Services and Estates

Update: [In Progress] Continuing to engage regularly with senior stakeholders in Estates, including Neil Alford (Associate Provost - Academic Planning). Key conversations at present relate to re-allocation of office space at South Kensington for student-facing purposes, as well as development of new student spaces at the White City campus. This objective has been advanced by the development of the stakeholder map, to be discussed later in this meeting. The remaining essential deliverable here is an articulation of our 'agenda' as far as Estates are concerned – further work is required in developing this, which we aim to complete for July.

Deputy President (Education) / Daniel Lo

Objective: Work closely with faculty and departmental academic reps (dept reps) to ensure departments are actively addressing the issues/ feedback raised in the NSS response

Update: [In Progress/ Complete] I have compiled all departmental recommendations and published on the Union website. Faculty teaching staff have access to the reports and some of the concerns raised by students have been addressed. The major part of the project has been concluded, but it is necessary to engage with faculty and departmental reps to ensure their departments are implementing, or are planning to implement the changes. At this stage, besides having regular meetings with the reps, there are no outstanding items for me to follow up on.

The NSS Task and Finish (T&F) group was set up by the College in January, with a wider scope of reviewing all student surveys (NSS, PRES etc.). The first meeting will be scheduled in late February.

Final year students are invited to complete the 2022 NSS survey. Although I am not involved in promoting the survey, I will review the College's 2022 NSS participation rate to keep track on the progress. The closing date of the survey is in April.

Objective: Providing support on development training for reps and foster the sharing of good practice across different departments

Update: [In Progress] All rep training sessions were complete in December. We tried to organise rep socials but it was impacted by COVID. Regular Union subcommittee meetings are still going on. UG and PG departmental reps will have the opportunity to discuss education-related issues in rep forums.

I am working on a new initiative to change how reps collect feedback from students. By building an online academic feedback platform, reps can collect feedback on a centralised platform and all students in the cohort can access the board to see what was being asked and answered. This improves the current rep system which students providing feedback to reps through various social media platforms, which makes reps harder to collect feedback.

We are currently on a trial run and 5 departments will be introduced with the feedback board in Term 3. This project is now in the consultation phase. A few senior College staff have been consulted and the relevant reps will be consulted in mid-February. Once the consultation phase is complete, I will start building the platform (depending on the provider we use) in late February/ early March.

Objective: Work closely with PG AWOs to ensure the departments are actively addressing the recommendations raised in the PRES response

Update: [In Progress] This was a shared objective with the President, owing to his familiarity with PG student experiences. I have been working closely with the Graduate School to work on addressing PRES recommendations. The College has proposed a few solutions to tackle issues raised in the survey. This will be reviewed together with the AWOs and the President. The current work on the PG engagement review will also form part of our PRES recommendations.

It is currently still on the rep consultation phase and we aim to complete the ICU PRES report by the end of term 2 (April).

Objective: Review the Mums and Dads scheme to investigate what the right cause of action is

Update: [In Progress] I facilitated the Christmas Buddy scheme in December to help students staying in touch during Christmas. This was facilitated by the DPW last year during lockdown and I believe it will benefit students during the uncertain period of Omicron. Besides that, the sign-up form has been redesigned in order for us to do as a trial run to evaluate the effectiveness of the matchmaking process and whether the ICU have the capacity of performing matchmaking for a large number of students. I am currently reviewing the buddy scheme, which contributes to the Mums and Dads (M&D) review. I am expecting to complete the buddy scheme evaluation by mid-February.

Objective: Enhance the Imperial experience for international students to ensure there is parity with home students

Update: [In Progress] This objective was started in early February with a main focus on the international student support team. This project will conclude in July. The international officer was consulted to understand current issues that international students, including myself, are facing. After that, I will expand the consultation to all students via a Town Hall meeting, which will be scheduled in due course. Once we can identify the issues, we will start investigating whether the College can effectively support international students.

Deputy President (Welfare) / Nathalie Podder

Objective: Post-Pandemic Reintegration of the Imperial Community

Update: [Complete] I had a conversation with Lloyd about this at the beginning of term as this was our shared objective. We reflected that, at the time that we made our objectives, it seemed to be the right approach to establish this as a separate priority. As the year progressed, however, it became increasingly apparent that the vast majority of the issues that students faced during the pandemic seemed to resolve automatically as they were granted a sense of normalcy from being allowed back on campus. The departmental well-being reps shared this sentiment in my many conversations with them; they stated that students are generally a lot happier now that they can continue their education and socialise with others in person, which led to far fewer well-being related complaints in term 1 than in the previous academic year.

There was some shakiness around the progress made in Term 1 when Omicron came around, but from observations I have made above, I am fairly confident that these issues will once again resolve with the transition back to on-campus learning and social events. I will also aid in supporting this transition by working with the Advice Centre to roll out educational campaigns related to personal well-being. I have set up a meeting on the week of 14/02 to discuss this with the advice and

representation team, with the aim to get some wellbeing messages in place for exam season (Term 3).

Objective: CSP Culture Review

Update: [In Progress] In the end of term 1 I met with the trustee board chair, union president, managing director and DPCS to discuss aims for this objective. It was agreed that a blanket solution to address problems with CSP culture is likely to be ineffective, as evidenced by the fact that we have over 300 CSPs and similar initiatives have failed in other student unions in the past (according to a source from WonkHE that provides us with updates from the sector).

As such, we decided to take an informed risk-based approach. We aim to identify areas of concern through information from sector-wide surveys, named priorities from regulatory bodies like BUCS, as well as internal data from surveys, complaints, and the advice centre. I aim to develop a framework for assessing cultural risk in CSPs and an accompanying action plan mitigate those risks by the end of my current term in office, at the end of July. Next year's DPW will be tasked with implementing the action plan.

Objective: Improving Safeguarding and Disciplinary Procedures

Update: [In Progress] The College's review into its student disciplinary procedures has officially begun with an introductory meeting that took place at the end of January. The immediate next step for the members of the working group will be to engage with evidence groups to gather feedback on the current state of the procedures from different parts of the community. I am taking an active part in this process by interviewing each of the liberation and community officers in the first two weeks of February. I also held a Town Hall in the last week of January which was open to all students and attended by 27 students in total (including 5 students who submitted their views electronically). The final drafts of the town hall summary and LCO interviews, as well as the sexual misconduct survey report (published in January) and the Union Council paper on the College's disciplinary procedures, will all be submitted to the working group prior to the second meeting of the disciplinary review, set to take place on 21/02. I seek to make my consultation process as balanced and as comprehensive as possible, and I appreciate Lloyd's faith in my ability to do this. The review will be completed in May 2022, with a final report sent to Senate and College Council in June and July.

In parallel, I have been working with staff to map out and review the Union's complaints and disciplinary procedures. We have been meeting roughly once a fortnight to do a mapping session, which will be tested rigorously by both student volunteers and staff; at the current rate, the mapping and testing of the procedures will be completed by the end of term 2, with recommended amendments to the procedures drafted in term 3.

Objective: Welfare Representation Network Review

Update: [In Progress] After spending the first term talking to wellbeing reps on a weekly basis, I have identified the following key areas to be investigated in the review: the pros and cons of having independent academic and wellbeing reps at the year rep level, the quality of training provided to reps, the quality of signposting information provided to wellbeing reps, and the quality of communication among different levels of reps. I have scheduled a meeting with a member of staff from the representation team on the week of 21/02 to draft a survey which will be sent out to all wellbeing reps. I aim to complete a report on the survey in Term 3.

Objective: Developing the Union's EDI Strategy

Update: [In progress] The task and finish group had its first meeting with Koreo in January. The timeline for the project was agreed upon, with an aim to produce the strategy and action plan in May 2022. We are currently liaising with College to match our 1.5 million rows of data on eActivities to large-scale demographic statistics, which will be used to fuel discovery conversations with the task and finish group in February. These discovery conversations will be followed by a drafting of the strategy, and will be tested extensively by members, student volunteers and staff.

Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) / India Marsden

Objective: Training for CSP Committees

Update: [In progress] This term so far, we have run two different levels of budgeting training, one for the CSP officers writing their budgets, and one for the Senior Volunteers who scrutinise them. These were both very successful, and I believe reduced the email queries we received. We also ran a CSP election training/Q&A session, to help enable CSPs to participate in the online elections or empower them to run their own elections. This term, Connar and I will be focusing on creating a new provision for newly elected officers, both at CSP level and for the Management Groups. This likely will be delivered in May.

Objective: CSP systems and Processes

Update: [In progress/Complete] There has been a significant amount of progress made on this area. With the new Student Activities team in place, there have been several discussions on how best to manage the workload associated with all these processes. We have recalibrated and are putting into practice the policy changes. With Budgeting, after some careful consideration we decided to continue with the same process, as it is such a complicated system. A change on previous years was extending the timeline to enable a more realistic workload for both DPFS and I, as well as the senior volunteer. I would consider this objective mostly complete, with ongoing monitoring and review throughout the remainder of the year.

Objective: Imperial Athletes

Update: [In Progress] This is the object that was both a massive piece of work, but that I have also made the most progress on. After the Townhalls, I wrote up a paper detailing all the issues students had with Imperial Athletes, as well as working with Connar to create a similar paper from the staff perspective. The next steps in this process will be, now that we are sure the model needs drastic change, to iron out what those changes look like, and then gain buy in from the correct people on the other side of Imperial Athletes management. We have begun doing this by mapping who is responsible for what part of the sports offer between us and College. This change will be fully implemented by next academic year but I expect we will have a clear idea of what it will look like then by April, in order to allow us to plan and modify budgets appropriately.

Objective: Communication (Response times)

Update: [In Progress/Complete] With the new team fully in place, we are working on keeping on top of the inbox management, and now have full awareness of metrics to measure this, as well as daily dedicated time to keep the team focussed. If we do not have the capacity to pick implementation of a CRM system this objective is therefore complete with monitoring to ensure these changes are working.

If we do decide to implement a CRM, it is likely that we will be looking at this in late March/April, when term 2 is over, aiming to have it fully tested and in place for the start of the next academic year in September.

Objective: Student Representation around Spaces

Update: [Still to begin] This has not yet started but we are still on track to pick it up to elect them late in Spring term as mentioned in my previous update.

Deputy President (Finance & Services) / Sam Lee

Objective: Union Sustainability

Update: [In Progress] I have been working very closely with the Representation Team to develop a Project Initiation Document for both the Union Sustainability Strategy and the Union's Ethics Policy. We will be conducting and completing research into both areas, and meeting with a range of stakeholders (students, staff, and College staff) to determine a plan forward. We are hoping to have a report on these areas completed by April 2022 for circulation and to inform the next steps.

Once the report is completed, we will be working to develop drafts of both the Sustainability Strategy and Ethics Policy, with an aim to circulate for wider scrutiny in May/ June and to have them officially reviewed at the last Board meeting of the year.

Objective: Developing a coherent lobbying agenda for Campus Services & Estates

Update: [In Progress] Continuing to engage in regular conversations with Campus Services in particular. The relationship we have built with Jane and her team is paying off incredibly with the work we are looking into with the Summer Ball 2022, and in particular her willingness to help and support us to deliver this. We have also met with the Estates department with regards to the Summer Ball, and again we are seeing clear signs of the improvement in our relationship and their willingness to allow us to deliver the Ball in the way we want to, and support wherever we need.

We are starting discussions with Campus Services around bringing back an evening hot food service in h-bar for Postgraduate students and staff, this is a point that has been continually articulated by PG students as a service they want returned. We are aiming for the reintroduction of this service to be in Term 3 (~June 2022) to ensure we are introducing this service for the Summer – a period where PG students feel the Union 'forgets' about them, and demonstrating that we will still be delivering a service for them even when UG students have completed their academic year.

Objective: CSP Systems and Processes

Update: [In Progress/Completed] With a nearly-complete Student Activities team, we have been working closely with the team to improve and deliver better processes for all CSPs. We are already seeing better satisfaction from CSPs with regards to our process (in particular our drop-in sessions which students have found particularly helpful). We have worked hard to deliver an improved Annual Budgeting experience for CSPs, but with the amount of work required to improve this process it was not feasible to make change and implement it this academic year, and we are still finding the budgeting app to be proving challenging at the best of times, but by extending deadlines we have tried to limit the problems occurring from this. We are still seeing implementations of some of these changes, hence why I haven't classified it as fully complete.

Objective: Commercial Review

Update: [In Progress] We have nearly finished the installation of our new EPOS system, with a launch occurring at the end of this month. I have worked closely with our Director of Finance & Resources to redefine and develop the new development areas for each of the Commercial Review streams and we have included a new stream of 'Student Staff' as part of that review. Timescales for this review are varying as each individual project has it's own specific timeline, but the overall aim is to develop the policies and plans by June/ July for operational implementation over the summer months with aims to launch most project outputs in September/ October.

Objective: Services & Sustainability Board

Update: [Started] I have been working with the Representation Team to look at integrating the review of SSB into the wider Governance review. I will be utilising SSB as key stakeholders in both the Sustainability Strategy and Ethics Policy development, and still allowing people to raise individual policy review/ development through SSB in the meantime.