



**Imperial College School of  
Medicine Students' Union  
Council Report**

January 2022

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## Foreword

*When it came to writing this report over the Christmas break, I had substantial time to reflect on the past term. On all its successes and perhaps on things that didn't go to plan, and how we can learn from this and improve moving forwards. I want to thank my incredible SU for all their amazing work in the first term. It's often said that the first term is the most demanding and challenging time for each SU member. They all performed their roles admirably and it's made all the more impressive given many of them are holding SU roles for the first time during their time at medical school. The new term will bring with it, its own set of fresh challenges. The mounting uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 (and the deafening silence from our own government) will mean our SU will need to continue their hard-work to meet the demands that this term will surely throw at us. We want to provide the stability our students need during these unpredictable times and ensure that ICSMSU continues providing the much-needed academic, welfare and general support that our students have come to rely on.*



**Fig 1. The same photo of our SU from the last report – any hope of getting a new one at our Christmas social was dashed by Omicron (RIP)**

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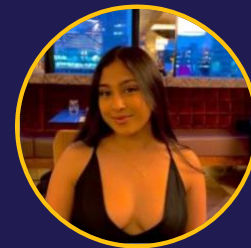
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## ICSMSU Update

Following on from our last ICSMSU Council update in November, we've had a few changes to our SU membership. Our vacant management group treasurer position was filled by Zhin Tan who held the role 2 years ago – he's been looking forward to training our MGT team on annual budgeting and working with our CSPs to build their own budgets and guide them through the grant application process. We also welcomed a second Vice Chair for Wellbeing Representation, Reuben John, who shares the role with Pippa.

Last term saw the final implementation of the feedback boards for each student year group, allowing communication to and from our year rep networks on all things ICSM. We've also worked hard to schedule monthly meetings with heads of year/module/course leads for feeding back on some of the minor, often module/course specific feedback. These feedback pathways, alongside the already established termly SSLGs, has massively streamlined feedback as a whole. The relevant feedback reaches the right places quickly and actions can be taken more swiftly as a result. I've received feedback from both students and staff that this system is working very well. It allows smaller day-day feedback to be addressed much earlier and also means that the feedback reports in each SSLG are shorter, affording more time during the meetings to discuss the larger issues and develop viable, actionable solutions.

As I'm sure you all know too well, in December, owing to a change in COVID-19 guidance from ICU & college, ICSMSU and our CSPs had to cancel/postpone most of our social events. This was an incredible shame, especially given we'd had so many successful and amazing in-person events during the rest of the term. Fortunately, many of these events have been able to be re-scheduled rather than fully cancelled and whilst there has been a financial implication of cancelling some events relatively last minute, we are already discussing how this can be made-up with faculty. Furthermore, the inclusion of COVID-19 clauses in any future contracts we enter, which covers us for cancellation if ICU/College (effectively our governing bodies) change guidance in the future, is a welcome addition when hosting events with external venues.

Thankfully, we can look back at the in-person events from the past term and toast our successes. Arguably the re-freshers' events hosted for the second years were even better received than the actual Freshers' events. We hosted another boat party but this time in black tie attire and of course, we couldn't (and wouldn't) round out any Freshers' based event without the infamous Reynolds Show (it's a secret, don't ask. Ever.)

We made the most of November in other streams too – our sites & services officer, Haider, hosted a black Friday sale on all our ICSMSU merch. This was incredibly successful and really good to be able to offer students the chance to buy merchandise, which has been such a difficult task in recent years with all the

uncertainty COVID-19 has brought. The event brought in over £1800 in revenue for our SU – money we'll directly put back in to ordering more merchandise once we've asked our students what kind of merchandise they'd love to see.

Over in our exec team, our sponsorship officer and secretary & communications officer (Aryan & Sahil), supervised by our very own Deputy Pres (Adrija), helped us to win a competition run by the Medical Protection Society (MPS) by getting the highest number of students to sign up for a FREE membership. We won £2000 for this and plan to keep the money separate from our other finances as we feel that the money needs to benefit as many students as possible. We would welcome any suggestions on how this money could have the most impact during council (or just drop me a [message](#) if you have any ideas).

Centralised mock exam preparation is well underway. The efforts are coordinated by our academics team and are run by some of our key academic societies (Muslim Medics, MedEd, Surgical Soc, AMSA). These are part funded by faculty and are the single best opportunity for students in each clinical year group to get an invaluable opportunity to practice their skills in an exam style setting.

COVID-19 permitting, our RAG chair, Reneé, has been hard at work organising our annual RAG week alongside her RAG committee. The week involves various fundraising events for their chosen charities and includes a day where all first and second years, who have no scheduled teaching, can take part in a full day of volunteering & fundraising. However, given the uncertainty of COVID-19, we are making plans & putting provisions in place to either postpone the event week or host it online, if needed.

A quick look at our finances shows that we are in a much better position now than when we last updated council. This is in part due to reaching out to faculty to confirm & secure funding for the year. This time our funding comes with the caveat that we must provide evidence of the student services we provide, using the funding, as well as examples of event costs & ticket prices to show the money is being used to deliver affordable events to all our ICSM students. The faculty have committed to, as of December 2021:

- Fully funding the ICSMSU President's Sabbatical Salary
- £5,000 for Centralised Mock Exams & £1,800 for training support
- £8,000 and £4,000 for MBBS & BMB student services & events, respectively

This funding is crucial to allowing ICSMSU to deliver the support & services we do for our students and we'd like to personally thank our faculty for providing such a large amount of financial support.



## An update on some of our objectives for the year

### Codifying SU operations, improving handover documentation & SU-related guidance

This was one of my objectives for the academic year and has admittedly fallen low on my list of priorities during the first term. To summarise, I'm aiming to improve the level of documentation & guidance available to our SU on all things related to their role as well as more general training & support documents. The aim is to make the roles more accessible for students looking to become part of our SU for the first time as well as providing continuous guidance on what the role involves and what needs to be done throughout the academic year (and how to achieve this). This objective would be hugely ambitious to achieve on my own, so my SU members are going to begin recording down the things they are doing, how they achieved these things and some of the challenges they faced (+/- the solutions for these challenges) with a view to update/create these handy guidance documents.

I have also reached out to the Secretariat team within the faculty of medicine. The idea here is that they can support our SU in the yearly handover, as often certain aspects of roles may not get handed over properly or important knowledge is lost when a member leaves the SU. If we can deliver a robust set of coded SU processes and handover documents, I believe this will allow subsequent ICSMSU teams to settle into their roles quicker & feel more supported throughout their time on the students' union.

### BMA charter working group addressing on-going racial harassment within ICSM

In December 2021, the findings of an external report into racial discrimination at ICSM was published. A series of focus groups carried out in June & July 2021, consisting of 18 students, delved into their experience of racial discrimination during their time at ICSM. A set of recommendations was developed based on the findings and categorised into key themes. The report, along with the response from ICSM and ICSMSU, can be found [here](#) on our MedLearn student hub.

ICSMSU wants to focus on tackling these issues as a key priority for the rest of the academic year. Myself and our welfare chair, Cammy, attend monthly BMA charter group meetings which is also attended by faculty of medicine staff, BMA reps & EDI reps from the main college. The group have an action tracker and each meeting discuss and create actionable tasks with realistic and attainable goals in mind. Of particular interest to ICSMSU, is focusing on how we can better educate one another on race, background, and ethnicity early on in our medical school careers. We acknowledge that much of the work in response to the report will be reactive. We believe that preventative measures such as: better education on appropriate vs inappropriate behaviours; discussing what race & ethnicity means; how to recognise discrimination; and training on equality, diversity and inclusivity will be better suited

to tackle the culture over reactive measures such as reporting pathways & repercussions for reported students. That's not to take away the importance of making our students' voices and experiences heard via these raising concerns/report + support pathways, we will continue to promote them and evaluate their effectiveness. We also firmly believe there is a need for open & transparent disclosure of these reports & how they were dealt with (whilst maintaining confidentiality). We believe that students need to see action when they report this awful behaviour, otherwise they won't feel empowered or supported. On the back of the report, a [portal was opened](#) for any student to get involved with this work, to share their experiences, to let us know of any suggestions on what more we can be doing and any areas that may go unnoticed. This pervasive culture of racial discrimination at ICSM simply has no place in our community and we will be doing as much as we can to tackle it.

### **Reynolds Refurbishment**

The refurbishment of our Reynolds building, on the back of the St. Mary's sale (🔗), is currently at the feasibility stage. Several mock 'brochures' are being produced and taken to potential funders. ICSMSU has limited input on funding but we have been attending the working groups to provide a student voice on how these spaces take shape. (After all, a refurbishment on student spaces can only be effective if students are included in the decision-making process). We've spoken to several of our CSPs regarding how the recreational space on the lower ground floor can be best utilised and have successfully lobbied for a dedicated multi-faith prayer room, which will now be included in all future refurbishment plans. The timeframe for when the refurbishment will be underway remains to be seen but we hope that it progresses relatively quickly and that a better, modernised space for ICSM students that suits Imperial's world-leading reputation can be delivered close to when we lose our St. Mary's campus in 2024.



**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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