



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

October 2022

Christian Oldfield – ICSMSU President

# Table of Contents

<i>Foreword</i> .....	<b>3</b>
<i>Team Exec</i> .....	<b>4</b>
<i>ICSMSU Updates</i> .....	<b>9</b>
<i>Exec Update</i> .....	<b>9</b>
<i>Entertainments + Clubs &amp; Socs Update</i> .....	<b>10</b>
<i>Welfare &amp; Academics Update</i> .....	<b>11</b>

## Foreword

*I would like to start this report by thanking all of the volunteer members of the ICSMSU Committee for their commitment and dedication to improving student life at ICSM. They have worked tirelessly already in the first few months of the role, particularly over Freshers' Fortnight where they give up hours of the time to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for our new students. This year, there is a strong feeling of team-spirit and mutual support amongst the committee which I'm sure will prove to be they key to the successes of the committee. All members are working tirelessly and selflessly in jobs which are so often thankless. So to you, I would like to say: Thank You.*

*We have a unique opportunity this year as we are faced with the prospect of the first restriction-free year since the start of COVID-19. Just in October, we have hosted a fortnight of freshers' events, seen the graduation of our MBBS, BMB and iBSc students and held the largest Halfway Dinner event on record. On top of this, Reynolds bar has returned to regular opening hours, following years of disruption. The social side of ICSM is fundamental to the continuing sense of community and this is well and truly thriving. Engagement in our clubs and societies also continues to grow, as well as the number of ICSM clubs and societies that we have.*

*This year, my main focuses as ICSMSU president are advocating for under-represented groups (particularly, support for widening participation students) and improving equality, diversity and inclusivity within our clubs & societies. We have already made great changes in these areas and I look forward to the opportunities for improvement in the coming year.*



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# ICSMSU Updates

## *Exec Update*

The ICSMSU Exec stream have had a very successful start to the year. One of our main aims is financial accessibility for the more expensive events. Prior to this year, the ICSMSU committee worked with the faculty to create a bursary scheme for Freshers' Fortnight tickets. This year, we have extended this scheme to two of our largest celebratory events: Halfway Dinner (HWD) and Shrove Tuesday Final Year Dinner (STFYD), which celebrate reaching the halfway point and the end of medical school respectively. Half-price tickets for HWD were given to all eligible students who applied to the scheme, with tickets awarded by the FEO welfare team based on student loan data and other reasons of financial hardship. We look forward to carrying out a similar scheme for STFYD this year.

Hafsa, our executive treasurer, aims to create financial stability and sustainability this year. Having raised over £4000 in sponsorship already, we plan to create a new Student Experience Fund pot with applications to improvements to student life at ICSM. On top of this, she has secured annual sponsorship for future years and collated information on contacting sponsors for our successors. Hafsa has also created multiple documents highlighting information such as how to create a large event budget effectively. Hafsa is also working with two alumni associations, St Mary Hospital Association and Alumni Association, to create a new alumni charity called the Phoenix Trust.

Elsewhere in the exec stream, our sites and services officer, Haider, has made a new range of merchandise and sold over £6000 worth so far. We are also looking at upgrading the social spaces across Charing Cross, South Kensington and Hammersmith Campus this year. Our newsletter has returned to being released weekly, with much more content than previous years. Secretary and Communications officer, Aoife, has also started a fortnightly internal SU newsletter to improve communication and collaboration between streams. I am working with Angellica, the BMB president, to work out how best to integrate BMB students into the ICSM community and create their own sense of belonging.

## *Entertainments + Clubs & Socs Update*

Our entertainments team put on a very successful fortnight of events for freshers. This included traditions as well as the largest Fulham Palace run we've ever had – selling more than 1100 tickets. We also hosted a new event in conjunction with the faculty called 'BSc Cohort Connect'. This pub quiz in Reynolds is part of a scheme to pair up external and internal intercalators in 4<sup>th</sup> year and increase a sense of community. Reynolds bar was host to many of these events as well as two bops so far. Our Raising & Giving (RAG) team have started to raise money for Refuge and Mind and are currently organising a charity sky dive, an event brought in last year.

We are working with Imperial College Union to improve the provision at Reynolds Bar. As we look forward to a refurbishment of the bar and café later this year, it is important that the level of service until that time is sufficient. This includes ensuring that staffing levels are high enough and that the bar is prepared for large events.

Our clubs and societies are ever-expanding, as we currently have 77 (including incubator societies). Our clubs and socs team met with the chair and treasurer of each society to review finances and goals for the year as well as to provide guidance. Planning is underway for a new event: 'volunteering and academic awards evening'. Whilst we currently have dinners & awards for our sports and arts societies, this event held at the end of term one will recognize the hard work of our volunteering and academic society volunteers. We also signed a sponsorship contract with 'Society App'. This is a new app which may help to replace platforms such as Facebook which are used less and less by new students. Societies have created pages and can set up events for people to see what is happening within ICSM.

To support so many clubs and societies is a great deal of work each year for the ICSSMSU volunteers. I would like to thank the Clubs & Socs team for all of their work to make our CSPs run so effectively.



Heaven Nightclub during Fulham Palace Run 2022



Reynolds Bar during the inaugural BSc Cohort Connect quiz

## *Welfare & Academics Update*

Given the difficulties of the last few years, alongside ongoing issues such as the cost of living crisis, the need for welfare provision has never been higher. This was recognized before the start of the academic year and as such has been a priority for ICSMSU from the beginning. Welfare campaigns started before most courses had restarted university, with support for students re-sitting exams. A new welfare campaign is run each month for the whole year and I'm excited to see what is planned.

Welfare provision for clubs and societies has been a big area of improvement so far this year. Firstly, we secured funding for our faculty for 60 places in a course of inclusivity training with the external company Beyond Equality. Club captains and social secretaries from each of our sports and arts societies attended the training, as well as all of the committee members of ICSMSU. On top of this, we introduced a new 'Pledge' for club captains to sign. This highlighted the behaviour that we expect from our club committees and members, as outlined by Imperial College, Imperial College Union and Fitness to Practice, as well as the potential consequences to these actions. In our first Clubs & Societies Meeting with CSP presidents, our welfare chair, Hamza, gave a new talk about inclusivity in clubs and societies. We hope that increased education and signposting of welfare issues within clubs and societies will help to create a welcoming environment.

Our academics have started working on responding to last year's NSS results. We are working with the faculty to improve the 'Assessment and Feedback' metric, starting with focus groups and an ICSM-wide survey to determine what students understand by the questions in this section. The academic representatives for every year are now using Padlet to collect feedback from students. This was trialed within ICSM last year and looks to be a large improvement in the efficiency of academic representatives in feeding back to the faculty. We have also made changes to improve the effectiveness of SSLGs; our early years now have a pre-SSLG meeting with certain faculty members so that the SSLG itself can be focused on the main issues and producing solutions to them.

In conjunction with the faculty, our Academic Officer (BSc year), Raunak, set up a new support scheme to pair up external and internal intercalating students. This included a very successful pub quiz which has allowed external intercalators to feel included within the ICSM community. Finally, the academics team set up Teams Channels to centralise tutorials run by ICSM CSPs for years 1,2 and 3. This has greatly improved access to tutorials for all students.



**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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