

Council Attendance

Role	Name	Initials	Attendance
Officer Trustee - Union President	Camille Boutrolle	CB	Present
Officer Trustee - Deputy President (Education)	Emina Hogas	EH	Present
Officer Trustee - Deputy President (Welfare)	Nico Henry	NH	Present
Officer Trustee - Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Christian Cooper	CC	Present
Officer Trustee - Deputy President (Finance & Services)	Stephanie Yeung	SY	Apologies
Council Chair	Anthea MacIntosh-LaRocque	AML	Present
Constituent Union President - ICSMSU	Lilia Evans	LE	Present
Constituent Union President - CGCU	Daniel Zhuo	DZ	Present
Constituent Union President - RSM	Amelia Spindler	AS	Present
Constituent Union President - RCSU	Julia Purrinos De Oliveria	JPDO	Apologies
Constituent Union President - Silwood	Jana Braun-Wilson	JBW	Present
Management Group Chair - Arts	Nathalie Tedfors Lindell	NTL	Apologies (proxy)
Management Group Chair - Community	Shahmir Durrani	SD	Present
Management Group Chair - Culture	Sheshpriya Gadiya	SG	Present
Management Group Chair – Knowledge	William Chen	WC	Absent
Management Group Chair – Recreation	Enzo Amaral	EA	Apologies
Management Group Chair - Sport	Junior Mbah	JM	Present
LCO - Black & Minority Ethnic Officer	Comfort Oluwakoya	CO	Present
LCO - LGBTQ+ Officer	Anson To	AT	Apologies
LCO - Disabilities	Maegan Spitari	MS	Apologies
LCO - Mental Health	Miriam Foulkes	MF	Apologies
LCO - Gender Equality Officer	Vacant		
LCO - Ethics & Environmental Officer	Hollie Meyers	HM	Present
LCO - Interfaith Officer	Ashay Divekar	AD	Present
LCO - International Officer	Yuanze Xia	YX	Present
LCO - Working Class Officer	Scarlett Kilford	SK	Present
Welfare Officer of CU - RCSU	Stefaniia Medvetskaia	SM	Present

Welfare Officer of CU - ICSMSU	Ketevani Asatiani-Kalandaze	KAK	Absent
Welfare Officer of CU - CGSU	Adrib Ahmed	AA	Apologies
Welfare Officer of CU - RSM	Gao Kamalanavin	GK	Apologies
Academic Officer of CU - CGCU	Linmo Lin	LL	Present
Academic Officer of CU - RCSU	Jack Swires	JS	Apologies
Academic Officer of CU - ICSMSU	Yousuf Yaqub	YY	Absent
Academic Officer of CU - RSM	Emma Halford	EHa	Present
Postgraduate Research Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering)	Yifeng Mao	YM	Present
Postgraduate Research Academic & Welfare Officer (Medicine)	Ruksana Begum-Meades	RBM	Present
Postgraduate Research Academic & Welfare Officer (Science)	Hengchang Cao	HCa	Absent
Postgraduate Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Business School)	Reem Al Saud	RAS	Present
Postgraduate Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering)	Injeel Syed	IS	Present
Postgraduate Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Medicine)	Srimathi Lakshminarasimhan	SL	Present
PGT Representation Chair	Nakul Maheshwari	NM	Absent
PGR Representation Chair	Jing Xu	JX	Absent
Council Representative (UG Science)	Chloe Huang	CH	Present
Council Representative (UG Science)	Elias Fink	EF	Apologies
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Salman Khalaf	SKh	Absent
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Alvaro Vicente Tarrago	AVT	Present
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Huaihou Yang	HY	Present
Council Representative (UG Business)	Sofia Hueffer	SH	Apologies
Council Representative (UG Medicine)	Haider Nazerali	HN	Absent
Council Representative (UG Medicine)	Rohan Boyapati	RB	Present
Council Representative (PG Science)	Alex Auyang	AAu	Present
Council Representative (PG Engineering)	Deniz Etit	DE	Present

Council Representative (PG Engineering)	Hanqing Zhang	HZ	Apologies
Council Representative (PG Medicine)	Thea Jakobi	TJ	Present
Council Representative (PG Business)	Laotan Faji	LF	Apologies
Council Representative (PG non-faculty)	Jordan Milward	JM	Apologies
Council Representative (PG Business)	Akanksha Kumari	AK	Apologies

In attendance [Students/Staff]

Hannah Corsini (HC) – ICU Democracy and Representation Assistant [Union Staff]
Zahra Butt (ZB) – ICU Democracy and Campaigns Coordinator [Union Staff]
Mohamed Majlisi (MM) – Felix Editor [Student]
Alan Roberts (AR) - Partner at Counterculture
Monica Jin Yang (MJY) – Board of Trustees, MSc Neurotechnology
Nick Marley (NM) – Lay Trustee, Chair of Finance & Risk Committee

1. Welcome

AML welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies & Chair's Business

Apologies

MS, MF, YA, GK, NTL (with proxy), AK, LF, SY, EA, EF, SH, AT, JM, JPO, HZ, YL, JS, KV

Quorum check

35. *Confirmed.*

3. Council Seat Reinstatement

None.

4. Proxies

PM as a proxy for NTL.

PM allowed as a proxy by general consensus.

5. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting

HK was recorded as being absent, but was present.

It was noted that there were two people referred to by the initials 'SK' (Scarlett Kilford and Salman Khalaf). It was suggested one of the two people be referred to by different initials.

Secretaries post-script: Salman Khalaf will be referred to as 'SKh' going forward.

CB noted there were errors in the quoted numerical data as part of the discussion of the rent paper. CB will send through corrections.

Date on the header of the minutes is currently January 0th – this will be updated.

Pending these amendments, minutes of the previous meeting were approved by general consensus.

6. Action tracker

i)

Date of creation	Action number	Council reference (if applicable)	Action	Owned by	Status	Update
7/11/23	1.5	Item 10, Resolve 10(1)	Demand that College: i) Make a public commitment to exclude all fossil fuel companies from their investment portfolio(s). ii) Introduce a publicly accessible ethical investment policy that explicitly excludes all fossil fuel companies. iii) Fully divest from all fossil fuel companies within 3 years.	CB	In progress	11/1/24 Reconvening SRI working group within College to tackle this 20/2/24 CB noted she sent a recommendation to the Provost and will give further updates in due time. 19/03/24 CB noted regarding Action 1.5 that a Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) working group has been set up and will hold a meeting on 10 May, and updates will be shared to Council afterwards. 28/5/24 SRI working group met on 10 May to assess whether they need to revisit the policy. CB noted there will be changes to the policy, but they are currently facing pushback on whether they're using the Imperial index to judge investments. CB noted the next meeting will take place in June. 1/11/24 College still disputing how they will roll out the Imperial Zero Index and this needs to be decided before it is

						applied to investments. Currently the College has no investments in fossil fuel companies, and this will not change in the time it takes them to decide on the Index 10/12/24 CB is still unsure as to when the university needs to decide on the Imperial Zero Index. The university has emailed her saying that they are in discussions, but they are still relatively cagey about this. Update in 1/25
20/2/24	4.1	Item 8, Resolve 1	The Union will release a statement taking the position that part-time work as part of your studies is now a must for many and not a choice and offering support to students in part-time work.	CB, NH	In progress	1/11/24 CB: No Union-specific statement has been realised, but OTs have been advocating for more support for students working part-time with the College. 2/11/24 NH: Following my analysis of the bursary survey, which shows students have increasingly been working whilst at uni, we're working with the university to release this sort of statement.
20/2/24	4.3	Item 8, Resolve 3	To encourage Imperial to facilitate more academic-related employment opportunities within the College for students that will further their career development and align with their academic pursuits by recognising the restrictions on work due to studying needs and their financial needs as these opportunities are often better remunerated.	NH	In progress	30/04/24 The OTs have raised the item to college stakeholders, but are yet to finalise actions. They are also lobbying the College to create a platform to set up proper advertisements and increase students' awareness of work opportunities. 2/11/24 NH: I'm in the process of writing a recommendation document for each of the faculties to work on. This will show that the proportion of students working has been increasing every year for the past 5 years. I've already started the conversation, and everyone has been very open to this, I'm working with the

						careers service to finalise this and have conversations with each faculty dean on reducing the stigma of students working. This will lead to set recommendations on students working.
20/2/24	4.4	Item 8, Resolve 4	Lobby the College to acknowledge and address that part-time work is undertaken by many students at Imperial alongside their studies and that these students may require additional support. This acknowledgement should include a statement released to students with the College's stance on part-time working and signposting to support, financial and otherwise, available within and outside of College.	NH	In progress	30/04/24 The OCs have raised the Item to college stakeholders but are yet to finalise actions. AC noted this is a complex conversation, and the College acknowledges part-time work is important for students but restated that the 20-hour cap for home students is merely a recommendation, whereas for international students it is legally set at a national level. They are currently trying to identify their capacity to lobby at a nationwide level. 2/11/24 The university has acknowledged this and are working with me. The statement is partially on this website but we're working on making this more public through different channels. The union hasn't made a statement but we will soon. https://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/jobs-and-experience/part-time-work/
20/2/24	4.5	Item 8, Resolve 5	To collaborate with Student Services to review the indicators of financial hardship, particularly for hardship fund and bursary applications.	NH, JM	In progress	30/04/24 The OTs have raised the Item to college stakeholders but are yet to finalise actions. 2/11/24 NH: I'm working with student support services on this and increased communication on the available help at the university.
20/2/24	4.6	Item 8, Resolve 6	To meet with students and College to discuss expectations and	NH, JM, NFL	In progress	30/04/24 JM noted regarding Action 4.6 that it was brought up in meetings with the Quality

			impact of part-time work on studies.		Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QUAK) and the Early Career and Research Institute (ECRI), and discussions for expectations and impact of part-time work on students are in progress. JM noted it is an ongoing initiative on postgraduate and post-academic support by the university. 28/5/24 NFL noted regarding Action 4.6 that some revisions were made on adding some support to help students identify job opportunities within the College. It is now a requirement that the expectations document is discussed at the initial student-supervisor meeting as well as other regular checkpoints such as the Early Stage Assessment or Late Stage Review. NFL also noted they are acknowledging the need for part-time work and ways to recognise opportunities within and outside the college. 2/11/24 NH: I just presented data on working students and the trends over the past 5 years to the faculty deans and other stakeholders at APSG (Access and Participation Strategy Group). This was taken very well and we will be meeting starting next week to discuss expectations and impact of working students. 12/11/24: Writing recommendations on how to take this project forward
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20/2/24	4.7	Item 8,, Resolve 7	To facilitate more accessible employment opportunities for students.	NH, JC, NFL	In progr ess	2/11/24 NH: I'm working with the university on seeing what jobs we can give to students, some faculties are creating more UG Teaching assistant jobs, there's also more well paid mentorship opportunities (up to £19 p/h), and I'm personally making sure all students are getting paid more than London Living Wage, I successfully lobbied the university into increasing the wages of students working for catering (~£3p/h increase). We're pushing the careers service and the university to create even more developmental jobs and opportunities. At the union we are also creating more jobs for students and this should be expanding even further in the next couple of months.
20/2/24	4.8	Item 9, Resolve 2	Lobby the College to support increasing the UKRI London allowance.	CB, NH, DE	In progr ess	10/12/24 DE, CB and EH have met with other London-based Student Unions on lobbying to improve the UKRI allowance. A working group has been set up. 28/5/24 AC noted Action 4.8 was raised in a meeting with college stakeholders, with the review of the funding structure to be completed in due time. NH noted that students that can vote should do so as they can impact student experience in the years to come. CB added regarding Action 4.8 she spoke with College staff who are happy to help with drafting papers moving forward. CB noted they haven't reached out to Unions, but they will be involved with the projects planned in the next year, where student lobbying will likely happen.

20/2/24	4.9	Item 9, Resolve 3	If the College does not support increasing the UKRI London allowance, then to form a student-driven campaign led by the paper author focussed on the issue of the UKRI London allowance, with the support of the Union President and Deputy President (Welfare).	CB, NH, DE	Incomplete	
20/2/24	4.11	Item 9, Resolve 5	To gather data regarding the financial circumstances of PhD students at Imperial.	NH	In progress	30/04/24 AC noted this has been raised in committee meetings but are yet to finalise actions. 2/11/24 NH: Questions around work and financial accessibility will be added to the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). 12/11/24 NH: Keeping this action open until there is confirmation that this question will be added to the PRES 10/12/24 NH is attempting to update the PGR experience survey in order to reflect financial circumstances of PGR students. He has a meeting week commencing 9/12 and will update at the next council.
	4.12	Item 9, Resolve 6	For the Union President and Deputy President (Welfare), alongside the paper author, to make efforts to form a working group with other London-based universities to lobby the UKRI to increase the UKRI London allowance.	CB, NH, DE	In progress	10/12/24 DE, CB and EH have met with other London-based Student Unions on lobbying to improve the UKRI allowance. A working group has been set up.

	4.13	Item 9, Resolve 7	For the Union President and Deputy President (Welfare), to make efforts to form a working group with non-London-based universities to lobby the UKRI to increase the UKRI base rate.	CB, NH	In progress	1/11/24 CB: The UKRI has just completed a review of the UKRI base rate so we feel we cannot influence this but we cannot influence this but we have much more scope for London allowance – potential to prioritise the London allowance. 10/12/24 See Item 4.12.
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AML noted the update of the action tracker.

7. Officer Trustee Goals

EH and NH gave short PowerPoint presentations on their Officer Trustee goals.

- i. No questions for EH from Council Members. AML congratulated EH on the progress.
- ii. No questions for NH. AML congratulated him on the progress.

8. Termly Officer Trustee Report

This year, OT reports will be written updates. A Mentimeter poll has been opened beforehand so people may upload questions.

Union President Report

- i. CB gave a brief verbal update, summarised in her written report. AML noted that one of the calls to action given for the rent issue is a possible rent strike and asked for clarification on this.

CB said that she and NH have gone through the budget with the College line-by-line and it is still higher than they would like in terms of percentage increase. Their ultimate goal is to mobilise the student body, but rent strikes are complicated on an individual level and may have severe repercussions for students.

Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) Report

CC gave a brief verbal update, summarised in his written report.

OTs have written calls to action for Council. AML requested everybody to look at these in case there is anything they would like to work with the OTs on.

9. Felix Editor Update

MM gave a brief verbal update, summarised in his written report.

- i. AVT asked if there are any available statistics on who reads Felix.

MM replied that this is something they are trying to work on. Of the 800 papers they distribute, they get about 100 back, but they know that a lot of students share Felix with their friends. MM believes that they have a healthy readership and noted that the website is doing well.

10. CSPB Update

CC noted that CSPB met on the 14th of November 2024 and he received feedback from CUs and MGs.

CC has a meeting on the 10th of December 2024 with the Arts and Ents team on the Great Hall development.

The next CSPB meeting will be on 12th of December 2024. The meeting will focus on various committees and their operations, in particular funding committees leading on from the Annual Budgeting Review.

- i. AML asked for any questions and reminded the Council that the CSPB is the only sub-committee with decision-making powers.

11. Rent Negotiations Update

NH gave a verbal update as to rent negotiations. He noted that at the previous Union Council when the rent paper was introduced, the average increase in room rents was 25%, and that he and CB have negotiated it down to 18%. CB and NH are scrutinising every budget line, line-by-line and looking for different tactics on persuading the University it is too high an increase.

He noted that the university is looking at widening participation and diversifying the student market but that he and CB believe the rent increases contradict this.

He noted that the rent paper mentions lobbying wardens to pay rent. Students currently pay for the university's opportunity cost of 167 beds given to wardens, who are full-time university staff members given three-room flats in halls in exchange for working on community-building and welfare issues within halls. At the meeting NH and CB had with University Management, they negotiated to remove the £1.2 million cost (£400 per student annually) associated with housing wardens and sub-wardens. This has reduced the costs being charged to students by 3%.

- i. NH noted that because they took the warden opportunity cost out, they would no longer be pushing for wardens to pay rent, which had been indicated in the paper passed in the last meeting.

NH and CB are pushing for clarification on some of the other lines of the budget. They have also reached out to Admissions Tutors and Deans on this issue. So far, they have removed about £3 million from the budget.

NH noted that this budget will disproportionately affect students in North Acton as they are facing a 55% rent increase, and this is where the most affordable bed spaces are located.

He noted that the President and COO of the University hold decision powers on the negotiation, but they are currently not meeting with CB or NH. He further noted that the President and COO were involved in the University of Bristol rent strike negotiations 3 years ago, and called international debt collectors in to resolve this. NH believes that a

rent strike would be a bad idea because of this. He and CB would like to know if Council believes they should write an open letter, or get the press involved. At the moment, they are considering higher education press only, but this could potentially be expanded to national press in the future.

- i. CC noted that rent strikes are still on the spectrum of possibilities, but they do not want to do it yet.
- ii. DE believes that an open letter would be a great idea, as it would let the University know the students are aware of the issue and would put pressure on the University.
- iii. DE questioned the 18% increase cited by NH and CB as the North Acton increases are 55%.

NH clarified that the 18% is an average across all brackets.

- iv. NH stated that he would like to get as many beds as possible into the most affordable bracket, which is set at 55% of the maximum maintenance loan. He noted that if more beds become affordable, they would likely have to make up costs elsewhere.
- v. DE asked about the £1.2 million cost for decarbonisation of buildings.

CB replied that this has been removed for this year, but may be up for debate next year.

- vi. CC asked for a clarification on “residence costs” from NM.

NM replied that costs such as painting, maintenance and initial building costs are spread out over the lifetime of the building and passed onto the students. However, it is difficult to predict how long a building will last, making it difficult to factor this into the rent calculations and negotiations. Nick and CB were in a meeting with the University CFO where they looked at three factors: initial cost, cost change over time (inflation) and the interest on the College’s building debt. The University aims to break even on first year rents, so they factor in capital costs. They charge students £2 a week over the course of the year to account for any beds which may be added in or further expansion to the buildings.

- vii. LE noted that she is not in favour of a rent strike given the repercussions seen at the University of Bristol, but that she would like them to feel as if they have done everything they could. She noted that several students in the FoM are extremely passionate about this issue and have approached her with questions and concerns.

- viii. SM asked for clarification about the removal of opportunity costs.

NH said that they are no longer pushing for wardens to pay rent as the opportunity costs have been removed, and that the wardens have been contacted about this. NH believes this will also help get more people on their side.

- ix. AAU asked if the University’s break-even model applies overall or per hall, and if it is the latter, which halls are subsidising other ones.

NH said that they are not given the costs of every hall, and that to his knowledge Beit is subsidising Acton, but is not certain of this.

- x. AAU asked if it is justifiable for the University to want to break even, as he believes providing accommodation should be a service.

NH said that this is the conversation that they are now having, and said that the focus on widening participation is contradicted by the 18% (average) rent rise and that rent is where they can make the most gains for students. He believes that £2 million or £3 million is not that much in the grand scheme of things for the University.

- xi. AVT asked if it would be more beneficial in the long-run to make the University carry out the increase over a few years as opposed to all at once. He noted that King's College London spreads out the rent increases year by year.

CB said that they are negotiating on both fronts. She noted that rent discussions used to be on a 5 year basis, but now there are rent increase discussions annually. It has taken up a lot of time for CB and NH to work on negotiations, and it is not feasible for the President and Deputy President for Welfare to do this annually. She noted that there is currently an uncertainty as to how much the rent will increase year on year. One potential possibility could be phased rent increases, so that they can carry out multi-year negotiations beforehand, and project rent increases so people will know what they will be paying for the next few years.

- xii. AML summarised the sentiment as being that we should continue pushing for lower rents, that an open letter could be useful but consensus seems to be that a rent strike would not be feasible.

AML suggested that Council members email NH and CB regarding this issue if they have any further points to raise.

CB and NH noted they are planning to start a petition, and they are not sure if it will be for the Council or for the student body in general.

NH also noted he is planning on sending the petition to widening participation NGOs and charities.

AML said that this may be more powerful than the student opinion.

CB said not to discount the student body, as this is the closest reference point the University has as to what prospective students will be thinking. She also noted that alumni have been messaging her, and in general, there has been a lot of passion around this issue.

AML agreed a combination of NGO and student input would be good.

12. Democracy Review

AR from Counterculture was introduced. He outlined the findings of the Union's external democracy review to the Council, and made some **draft** recommendations. Themes included full-time officer make-up, council structure and representation, and inclusivity of the student voice. The slides are attached to this paper pack. As these are suggested recommendations, the slides should not be circulated widely.

Next steps:

Counterculture will draft a more formal report with recommendations, and seek consent on these. AR will present report of recommendations, these will be agreed and then they will pass byelaws through council. Recommendations will be treated as policy statements.

- i. DE asked if Council will be changed immediately.

AR replied it will depend on how long it takes to make decisions, and how large the consensus is, but it is unlikely that sabbatical roles will change for the upcoming elections.

- ii. SM asked if the activities sabbatical role would move more towards clubs and societies, with services moved to ICU staff.

AR said it would and that customer engagement would be moved to ICU staff.

- iii. PM asked if staff roles within the Union would be considered to take over the Finance and Services officer's duties.

AR said that this would be the case. AR noted that more insights into student engagement would be useful, and working students would be able to provide these insights.

PM said that removing the DPFS and making it an ICU staff role would reduce accountability.

AR replied that they will be held accountable to ICU standards such as the Board, and complaints procedures, and that scrutinising how things are spent and done should apply to the ICU rather than students.

PM asked if they had looked at the complaints procedures as part of the democracy review. AR said that they mainly looked at democracy, but when they finalise the report they will assess complaints procedures and bye-laws.

- iv. AVT requested all slides to be released to Union Council. AR consented, and requested people are not distracted by the structure changes.

- v. LE asked how postgraduate representation in CUs would fit into their structures e.g. incorporating Academic and Welfare Chairs, as some students may not know how to perform these roles.

AR said that every CU would have their own answer to this question and their own way of addressing it.

- vi. AS noted that the Postgraduate Coordinator role on the RSM has not been filled for the last 4 years as postgraduates have their own rep within each of their departments and are not interested in engaging with a younger age group.

AR said he understands this, and that postgraduate representation is less about them sitting on the committee and more about making sure the communication ties between the RSM and the Department Reps are there.

- vii. AAU noted that previously there was a CU for Postgraduate Officers and its President was a paid FTO. He noted that it did not do much and the events were not well-attended.

AR replied that every CU needs to understand its own relationship with postgraduates and develop it, and they do not necessarily need representatives.

SM said that postgraduates and their representatives do engage in the RCSU and agreed that it is on a CU basis. However, there is an issue as their committee do not have the capacity to run postgraduate events.

AR reiterated it is about understanding the CUs' relationship with postgraduates and not measuring it on an undergraduate basis.

AML asked whether this is already the role that existing postgraduate representatives are filling.

AR said there should be more linkage between their representatives and the CU.

AML noted that this may create more admin for CUs and representatives.

AR said that there would not be any more governance than getting CUs to know what they were doing with postgrads.

13. AOB –

ZB noted that there would be a Disability History Month panel from 5-7 at Metric on 12th December 2024 and requested that Council members let others know.