

**Imperial College Union
Union Council / 4th of November 2025**

Officer Trustee Updates Report

Author(s): Nico Henry – Union President
Anson To – Deputy President (Welfare)
Emina Hogas – Deputy President (Education)
Tom Gordon – Deputy President (Activities)

Decision(s): To consider.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to inform union council members about the work of the Officer Trustees, outline our priorities for the year, provide updates on the union's activities, and an opportunity for feedback.

2. Nico Henry – Union President

What does the Union President do?

- Lead, and be ultimately responsible for, Imperial College Union.
- Represent the Union and our members to the University.
- Facilitate the work of the other Officer Trustees and lead the officer team.
- Deliver the Union's strategic aims.

Goal-related progress

1. Housing

I've been pushing for the university to offer more non-first year housing opportunities. Progress looks promising and the university seems supportive. I've also been proposing to expand the rent guarantor scheme to all students as it's currently only available to UG. This should be in place by the next academic year. I've also been meeting the accommodation team to discuss whether any housing advice should be offered by ICU so we add this to the block grant negotiations.

2. London allowance for PhD students

Emina, Deniz, and I are continuing this work from last year to lobby for an increase in the UKRI's London allowance. A proposal has been written and we have the support of London students' unions. We're waiting on some responses from important stakeholders for feedback.

3. Study spaces

We continue to advocate for more study spaces. Level 3, 4, and 5 of Sherfield building are now open and I'm happy that we were involved in the design of the student spaces on level 4 Sherfield.

4. Increasing job opportunities

We're launching a temp agency to provide a central place where students can find jobs on and outside campus. My role has been in getting university stakeholders and teams onboard and supporting (Catering, careers service, ICT, different departments). We're recruiting for the agency's manager.

5. Maximising Metric Usage

I've been working with the venues and commercial teams to make the most out of metric as a breakout space and potentially a café when not in use. We'll be submitting a presidents' community fund application to fund the project.

Key committees attended since last report

- College Council (and sub committees: Audit & Risk, Property, and Finance)
- People & Culture Committee
- Senate
- South Kensington Redevelopment Board
- White City and Old Oak Programme Board
- Student Lifecycle Board
- Education and Student Experience Committee
- Student Experience Forum
- White City Student Engagement
- Sustainability Strategy Committee
- Grantham Advisory Board
- Academic Building Client Board

Calls for actions

Join the presidents' forum soon to be able to feed into projects like Metric, temp agency, housing, and more!

3. Anson To – Deputy President (Welfare)

What does the Deputy President (Welfare) do?

- Represent the welfare interests of all Imperial students.
- Lead and manage the wellbeing representation networks.
- Report student opinion on wellbeing affairs to Imperial.
- Collaborate with ICU staff on training and support of wellbeing representatives.
- Support wellbeing innovation and projects in the university.

Goal-related progress

1. Culturally Sensitive Counselling

I am speaking with the Student Counselling and Mental Health Advice Team on staff training to improve cultural sensitivity, reviewing how the team hires student-facing staff. There is good news from the Health Centre that they have recently hired a mandarin speaking support worker and mandarin speaking mental health support is available through Westminster IAPT. I'm currently waiting on written confirmation from the health centre and will be communicating to students formally afterwards.

2. Swap Shop/ ICU Marketplace

I have engaged with relevant stakeholders and a plan is in place. Currently waiting for the IT side of the project. I have also spoken to ESoc about testing the system and getting student feedback before launch. In terms of swapping events, I am working with ICU Events on Reuse Fairs and Skill Swap Shops, in collaboration with ESoc and University Sustainability Fortnight.

3. Food Prices

I will be presenting a proposal to Taste Imperial on suggestions for their Savers' Menu and a potential meal subscription that could offer students' discounts if orders are placed early. With

a new eatery on Sherfield Walkway that offers some value for money options, which is similar to what we have been asking for, I would be keen on knowing what you think about the options.

4. Commuter Fund

I presented this recommendation to Access and Participation Strategy Group (APSG) and the committee is receptive of the idea. The next step is on how we can define what is a commuter student to ensure students in need are included in the policy.

Key committees attended since last report

- Access and Participation Strategy Group
- Patient Participation Group with Imperial College Health Centre
- Stonewall Action Committee
- Imperial ATHENA SAT
- Mitigating Circumstances Working Group

Calls for actions

- If you have to travel between South Kensington and White City often, how are you finding the shuttle bus services? Do you have to travel back from White City to South Kensington for CSPs? Let me know if you or your friends have any suggestions
- What are people's thoughts on the new eateries? E.g. Rasa Kitchen

4. Emina Hogas – Deputy President (Education)

What does the Deputy President (Education) do?

- Represent the educational interests of all Imperial students.
- Lead and manage the academic representation networks.
- Report student opinion on academic affairs to Imperial.
- Collaborate with ICU staff on training and support of academic representatives.
- Support educational innovation and projects in the university.

Goal-related progress

1. Assessment and feedback tailoring

- In progress - I have been attending regular meetings with the Faculty Review Coordinators. Next steps include establishing a way to share best practices across Faculties as well as carrying out Assessment Mapping across the College.

2. Masters in year resits

- Halted and likely unfeasible due to prioritisation of other projects (module catalogue, case management system implementation) as well as incompatibility with Imperial's Academic Calendar structure.

3. Mitigating circumstances review

- In progress – MC Working Group was rehailed – key stakeholders were now engaged as part of 5 comprehensive consultations (one of which includes an all-student session). These meetings will focus on updating the policy and regulations around MCs which will aim to be implemented for AY 25/26
- Central Digital MC submission platform mock-up has been generated, however changes to policy are being prioritised before this is implemented.

4. Alumni networking event

- In progress – Given the lower-than-expected engagement due to summer exams the event will be integrated in Campaign Activities carried out in Autumn Term.

5. UROP and UKRI funding

- In progress – UROP review is being discussed over the next months in relevant committees (SEF, ESEC) and I am collaborating with Huaihou and Anthea to carry out student consultation on proposed recommendations and inform the Union's stance.
- Collaborating with Camille and Deniz to produce a proposal with other London Universities (QMUL, LSE, King's, UCL) to lobby UKRI for increased London PGR allowance. The proposal will be fortified with qualitative data from a 5-minute survey we've created aimed at capturing how current London funding impacts PhD experience.

6. Increased communication with Reps and student body

- Record Leadership elections turnouts (25%) and 34% aggregate with CSP positions
- Moved away from forums (TARF/RARF) as single interaction point with reps and now meeting Faculty and Departmental Reps 1:1 every ~1.5 months
- Exploring opportunities to make rep training digital on SUMS platform next year to streamline the rep experience.
- Speaking to Faculties about monthly Rep mingling opportunities over tea/donuts.

Key committees attended since last report

- Sentate
- QAEC
- RPRC
- PC
- ESEC
- Digital Education Platforms Project
- Learning & Teaching Strategy Group

5. Tom Gordon – Deputy President (Activities)

What does the Deputy President (Activities) do?

- Take on Presidential duties as appropriate,
- Be responsible for the training, support and recognition of Clubs, Societies and Projects volunteers, in conjunction with the relevant Union committees,
- Liase with Union staff to ensure that appropriate support is being given to all Clubs, Societies and Projects
- Be responsible for reporting student opinion on and needs of CSPs to the College and external bodies, suggesting areas for development and enhancing the student experience and provision for students, in conjunction with the relevant Union committees and staff,
- Be responsible for overseeing support on financial matters to Clubs, Societies and Projects,
- Be responsible for overseeing the effective organisation of Welcome Fair,
- Be responsible for delivering community development for students, including supporting student-led events, volunteering, reward and recognition, and skills development, with support from the ICU staff team.

Goal-related progress

1. Cut response times when reaching the activities team

Since setting this goal, the size of the team has grown and Freshdesk has been introduced as a ticketing system. Average “first response time” this month is 9 business hours, with an average resolution in 3 days. Core risk assessments and activity proposals are now handled by staff in Freshdesk, so everything student-facing (except finances) is now in a single location and thus, in theory, more efficient for the team. With the hiring of a dedicated Activities Coordinator (Finance), we are in a better place for approving expenditure >£1000, but I will continue to monitor and encourage students to get in touch if an approval is urgent or taking a long time. Concerns have been highlighted about the quality of responses at times, as well as what systems are in place for these processes when key staff are ill or on annual leave.

2. Improve training quality for club and society committees

Most online training articles have been moved from PDF files to a much more accessible single location — Freshdesk — where volunteers are already used to sending questions/queries to the team. The platform also offers much better search functionality.

In person CSP committee training was held over two days at the end of September, though attendance was low (~100 attendees out of ~2,000 volunteers). Feedback from attendees was overall good, but concerns have been highlighted about the timing (before the start of Term) and the lack of an online option. Myself and the team are looking to hold more training sessions throughout the year, focusing on specific topics e.g. finance and running inclusive events.

3. Expand the usage of the Student Experience Fund

So far the focus has been on getting the fund running for the 2025-26 academic year. We have three funding sources, all of which still fund us on an ad-hoc basis year on year. Funding has been confirmed from Imperial and ICU, and we’ve determined we have enough of our IC Trust allocation left over from last year to support the fund this year. SEF launched this year on the evening of October 23, with grants ranging from £25 to £70.

I’m working with ICU staff to establish a governance framework for the fund, so we can aim to guarantee its funding for years to come. After this I will focus on expanding the fund to further groups, e.g. Postgraduate and International students. Our funders seem excited about this, but challenges will include how to determine need amongst these groups.

4. Build a CSP alumni network

An introductory meeting with Imperial’s alumni engagement team has taken place, and they seem very keen to work with us over the coming year. I don’t have any significant updates to share regarding this, but a shared OT goal is to look at how we engage with alumni and what we (and Imperial) can do to incentivise them to come back and support our students and CSPs.

5. Improve provision for fundraising for clubs and societies

The Expanding Reach Fund has launched for the first time in 2025-26, allocating money to target students that do not currently engage with Imperial College Union through clubs and societies. It can be accessed by Clubs, Societies and Liberation and Community Networks who are looking to actively access barriers to participation and make events more accessible.

I will also focus on aiming to support societies to raise money through themselves, such as by introducing options such as crowdfunding and simplifying the donation process.

Key committees attended since start of term

- Activities Forum
- Student Activities Board
- Joint Cyber Security Working Group

Calls for actions

- Please submit nominations for Committee Member of the Month. This is a new scheme and we've had really impressive uptake, but we really want to reward student volunteers who go above and beyond.
- Please encourage students to access their Student Experience Fund!