

ANNEX A

2008 PLANNING ROUND
FIVE YEAR PLAN
IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

1 Background

- 1.1 The Constitution of Imperial College Union states the following aims and objectives:
- To advance the education of its members and promote, without prejudice, their welfare at all times,
 - To promote and encourage the interest by students in matters outside the College curriculum, especially cultural, social and sporting interests,
 - To represent the needs and interests of its members to Imperial College and external bodies,
 - To provide or ensure a range of facilities which advance the interests of the students of Imperial College.

1.2 There are four key themes that have been identified by considering the College themes and strategic objectives:

- Governance and management,
- Student representation and welfare,
- Student activities,
- Investment in the estate.

Within each theme, the specific strategic objectives are referenced and financial implications outlined.

2. Planning assumptions

The following planning assumptions have been made: a 5% reduction in income in year one, thereafter flat income for the remainder of the plan period, all other inflation is assumed to be 2.5% per year and that no significant changes in student numbers will occur.

3. Governance and management

It is anticipated that, in accordance with the Charities Act 2006, the Union will be required to register with the Charities Commission, separately from Imperial College, during 2009/10 and satisfy their standards of governance and financial reporting. The Union is currently reviewing its finance function with a view to our accounting practices being compliant with the Charity SORP. It is anticipated that Students Unions will begin registering from October 2009 and the Union shall register when further instruction has been received.

The Union's current strategy document reaches the end of its life in 2009. The report and recommendations of the SUEI initiative will provide a starting point for the next strategic review which will seek to establish the objectives of the strategy for the Union during the period 2010-15.

The academic year 2007/08 saw the student body supporting a proposal to disaffiliate from the National Union of Students (NUS); the decision taking effect from January 2008. During the 2008/09 academic year, the opportunity was taken to review the role of the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) and revise the representation mechanisms for postgraduate and overseas students – all proposals being supported by the College Council early in 2009 and in time for sabbatical elections for the 2009/10 academic year. The role of the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) has been split into two new sabbatical roles: Deputy Presidents with separate remits for Education and Welfare.

The academic session 2008/09 also saw an Environmental Policy being debated and passed at the student Council of the Union. This will be fully adopted during 2009/10 and taken forward by measuring the use of resources and by improving our staff education on environmental issues. This will coincide with more education for Clubs and Societies on how to make their activities more sustainable.

3.1 Financial Implications

The Union will seek to increase efficiency by ensuring that staffing costs and expenditure are progressively reduced to the minimum necessary to support the effective conduct of its core functions.

4. Student representation and welfare

4.1 2009/11 – Years 1 & 2

During this period the Union will ensure that student representation is continuously improving and 2009/10 will see increased training for all academic representatives; undergraduate through the Faculty Unions and postgraduate through the Graduate Students Association (GSA). The training will include development of a handbook for representatives explaining all aspects of the role including the representation network structure, the meeting framework at all levels and where is appropriate to deal with various issues. Particular focus needs to be given to the representation of postgraduate Masters students as well as representation of the medical and Silwood campuses. Next year will also see the QAA audit and completion of the student written submission.

The Union will be working to increase awareness of the Union's Advice Centre as an independent service for students on a variety of welfare issues. Work to develop a 5-year plan for the centre with a target to increase the number of staff to two FTE by year 2/3 will be undertaken. It is hoped to increase the community spirit at Imperial by increasing the support for the student buddy system through a multitude of initiatives. It will be necessary and highly beneficial to expand the activities of the Union's Representation and Welfare Board to reflect its support by two Sabbatical Officers. The Union shall also be looking to expand campaigns to more education-related issues, particularly aspects such as plagiarism and disabilities, as well as continuing the successful existing campaigns.

The Union anticipates providing more outreach, support programmes and sessions for minority groups, particularly disabled students and the LGBT community. In 2008/09 the Union has worked hard to reinvigorate the work of the Community Action Group (CAG) and Raising & Giving (RAG). Support shall be given during the period to the work of CAG to continue their work with the homeless, but also to strengthen their ties with the local community. Targets for student involvement in RAG will be ascertained and we will work with College to bring the rest of the University in line with the medical school to have one day off lectures for fundraising activities for first year undergraduates.

The extra sabbatical role will also enable a Student Union led outreach programme to be developed, with students visiting local schools to explain the experience of being at University, to study science, and emphasise all the extracurricular activities on offer. The Union shall also be looking to expand welfare information to students in halls by working closely with the Hall Wardening Teams.

4.2 2011/2015 – Years 3 - 5

By year three the GSA will be fully established as the student representation network for postgraduate students, with effective representation within College meetings in line with what is currently seen at undergraduate level. Targets for overseas student involvement in representation and an increase in Masters student involvement will be introduced, with activities tuned to fit in with their work load and patterns.

During this period established networks created for distribution of welfare advice will be further developed as well as new avenues investigated to ensure continuous improvement, particularly the Union website's information and advice sections. It is hoped that by the end of year five the student involvement in CAG will have increased to 250 on a regular basis and that all first year undergraduate students will have one day off during RAG week for fundraising activities. The target for student involvement in RAG will be a quarter of all first year undergraduate students by the end of the period, which is still below what the medical school currently achieves.

4.3 Financial Implications

Although the current climate will not make it easy to allow a large and fast expansion of our representation and welfare activities, the Union is committed to maximising the resources that it already has and seeking to ensure greatest efficiency so that we can continue to improve and grow in these important areas.

5 Student activities

5.1 2009/10 – Year 1

Union Club & Society participation shows continued growth. In 2007/08 the number of memberships totalled 12,280. At the beginning of March 2009, the membership totals for this year have already exceeded 13,000. Over the past 5 academic years participation has increased by 29% in terms of unique participants and by 49% in terms of memberships spread across 325 Clubs & Societies, the numbers of which have, as in previous years, continued to grow. The number of sports matches we are required to play on an annual basis has increased by 30% over the past two years due to changes in the BUCS national competition structure. These factors combined mean that the support (financial, practical and staffing) is under renewed and increased pressure.

Imperial affords an unprecedented (among UK universities) participation rate in Clubs & Societies, currently at 53% of students; the ongoing challenge will be to evaluate if this participation rate is sustainable and whether it could be increased to 75% over the following five years. Student activities at Imperial are a leading light within Universities in the UK, our aim in five years time would be that our student activities are rated within the top five institutions in the World.

A major exercise to be undertaken in 2009/10 will be to analyse the support provided to Clubs & Societies, using data collected during a recent survey of members, as well as other indicators to examine whether the current models are sustainable into the future. A substantial part of this work will examine the student experience for those involved within our student activities programme (primarily currently through Clubs & Societies) and those currently not involved, dovetailing with the work being undertaken in developing the next iteration of the Union's strategy document.

Current work in hand will also take effect within 2009/10, such as a review of the space-time footprint of Clubs & Society usage within Sport Imperial facilities (with a look to increasing this) and a review of the Clubs & Societies grant distribution process. Work will also be undertaken during 2009/10 to ensure Club & Society activity is following best practice inline with current legislation in areas such as Corporate Manslaughter and processes surrounding the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

It has become increasingly apparent this year that the current number of minibuses is not sufficient to cover the demand from Clubs & Societies, especially given the continued increase in participation (particularly the number of sports matches that the teams are required to play). Therefore it is proposed that the minibus fleet will be increased by two vehicles during 2009/10.

5.2 2010/11 – Year 2

It is not envisaged that there will be a decline in Club & Society up-take or growth. It is likely that through our formal partnership with Sport Imperial, our sports clubs will continue to excel nationally through the BUCS leagues and competitions. 2010/11 will see the five year anniversary of that partnership with Sport Imperial, so a review would be prudent.

Following the review work undertaken in 2009/10 there will be a need to implement any significant findings during 2010/11; the bulk of the work for 2010/11 is anticipated to be in the area of non-Clubs & Societies related activities, such as a *give-it-a-go* programme. During this academic session we will aim to further develop our relationship with the Blyth Centre and other parties involved in the provision of arts and music at Imperial. There is potential for a formal working relationship such as that with Sport Imperial.

Changes to our room and space booking processes have been made during 2008/09 to ensure operational efficiency and maintain good relationships with our stakeholders. Joint training activities are planned to be completed by the end of 2008/09. It is expected that these processes will be trialled and run for the whole of 2009/10. A review of the operational relationship with Conference & Events team will then be conducted in 2010/11.

5.3 2011/15 – Years 3 - 5

The aim will be to develop activities within the Media arena, expanding the reach of our media output and strengthening the interrelationship between the various ICU media activities and other Imperial media functions. It is anticipated that provisions for social, cultural and overseas activities will also be cultivated, with a view to enhancing the support in this area and the student experience for our international student community. Making an assumption that the participation rate in student activities will have increased over the previous three years it would be prudent to review our staff support in this area in during 2012/13. A review will also be undertaken of facilities and support for student activities, with particular emphasis on the non-South Kensington campuses, such as Silwood Park, Charing Cross and Hammersmith. Dependent on external factors it would also be expedient to develop detailed plans for moving activities from Harlington Sports Grounds to a new location, in conjunction with Sport Imperial and inline with any work previously undertaken.

5.4 Financial Implications

Reduction in subvention will inevitably impinge on support for student activities. The Union will endeavour to maintain support at least at current levels with funds generated by commercial activities. The operational and depreciation costs for the additional minibuses will be entirely covered by income from Club & Society usage.

6 **Investment in the Estate**

6.1 2009/10 – Year 1

Phase one of the Beit project was completed in October 2007. Work on phase two started in July 2008 and will be completed in September 2009. The planning for and project management of the remaining work, including refurbishment of the 2nd floor Concert Hall and ground floor, in a third and possibly fourth phase will begin within this academic year. Further major construction work is not anticipated during this year.

6.2 2010/11 – Year 2

Finance being available, major redevelopment of the ground floor of the Union building will be undertaken to enable refreshment of the main social space on the South Kensington campus as a hub for Imperial students. In consultation with the College, the best possible solution to catering and refreshment provision on campus will be found.

Trustee Board
14th July 2009

6.3 2011/14 – Years 3 - 5

Although not part of the main Beit project, planning for a refreshment of the Beit West Basement which contains the Union's Media Centre would be prudent during this period.

6.4 Financial Implications

Unless suitable financing could support construction costs of the subsequent phases of the Beit project, there would be no activity in Years 2 – 5 and completion of the project would be in abeyance.