



Imperial College Union Board of Trustees

01/05/2019

AGENDA ITEM NO.	19
TITLE	Union President Report to the Board of Trustees
AUTHOR	Rob Tomkies
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	Report on activities
PURPOSE	Inform
DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED	NA

Union President Report to the Board of Trustees

Introduction

Firstly, apologies for my absence this Board – if there are any further questions on the contents of this report please just let me know. It’s a challenging time at the Union at the moment – many of the goals we set ourselves as OTs are now completed and for those that haven’t been there is a growing sense of urgency to complete them in the remaining couple of Months. This report breaks from the normal structure of reports that I have submitted here and focuses on the main projects and functions that have filled my time since the last Board.

Project Work

Policy Framework - I have had repeated frustrations on the complexity of where Policies have been stored – not knowing renewal periods – having multiple due at the same time and numerous recommendations on what to tackle first and no assigned ownership and accountability. Below is a framework tool that I have built to, based on pre-determined criteria, automatically set the policies that need to be renewed as a priority and when for each committee for the year. This enables all governance deadlines to more or less be brought into one place and help prevent the situation we are currently in with almost entirely outdated polices. The criteria for prioritisation will be brought to Governance to discuss in more depth. This goes alongside all of the other work mapping the current policies and automates the work started by Nas, Chippy and myself. A complete renewal framework should be constructed in the coming month.

The image shows two user interface forms. The top form is for creating a policy and includes fields for: Policy Name, Start Date/ Last Review Date (dd/mm/yyyy), End Date (dd/mm/yyyy), Reviewal Period, Archive, Owner, Legal Requirement, Category, Numbers Affected, and Impact. A 'Create Policy' button is located below these fields. The bottom form is for updating a policy and includes fields for: Policy Name, Owner, Archive, and Update last Review/Renew date (dd/mm/yyyy). An 'Update Policy' button is located below these fields.

The user interfaces

Body	Start of review period	Due date	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Union Council	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Societies & Projects Board	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Education & Representation Board	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Community & Welfare Board	01/04/2019	01/06/2019	This is an attempt		
Sports Committee	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Communications Committee	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Finance and Risk Committee	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Governance Committee	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
People, Appointments and Remunerations Committee	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Board of Trustees	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Services & Sustainability Board	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Governance & Identity Board	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Leadership	01/04/2019	01/06/2019			
Union Council	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Societies & Projects Board	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Education & Representation Board	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Community & Welfare Board	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Sports Committee	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Communications Committee	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Finance and Risk Committee	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
Governance Committee	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			
People, Appointments and Remunerations Committee	01/06/2019	01/08/2019			

The framework (empty currently)

Graduation Speeches – After initially getting agreement, ahead of the PG graduation I have re-written and had accepted a reviewed graduation speech. This is the first time this has been done in (50 ish?) many years. The core ideas behind the changes were:

- More inclusive language
- More in line with the values of the Union
- Removing parts of “tradition” that no longer represent our membership
- Preserving the same sense of history and occasion that comes with the day

The new speech is attached as an appendix for those interested.

Operations

Leadership Development – The transition in the way that the Leadership team are working together is going well. A large amount of time has been spent tackling the Unions financial state and business model. This has looked at project mapping, Task and finish groups for income generation, route cause analysis etc. This is gone into further in another Board paper.

Election – I was heavily involved in the design of elections as well as being a contact point throughout the actual elections period. Congratulations should be given to the Elections Team for what was a very successful election and good luck to the incoming teams.

College Council strategy away day - I attended the College Council strategy away day – this focused on planning for difficult times ahead, anything from Brexit to financial crashes to classical subject areas such as “physics”, “medicine”, “mechanical engineering” no longer being relevant and desirable subjects. Here I made sure that focus was maintained on the risk to student experience as well as simply the research and commercial sides.

Fundraising appeal for the student support fund - I am supporting an appeal with college to raise for the student support fund with advancement and so have been interviewed and will be writing out to our alumni to help raise awareness and donations to the fund.

Key areas moving forward

College Ethical Approach – There has been a clear increase in conversations at College financial / risk-based committees on its approach to ethics (investment, donations etc). While a small amount of progress – this transition is something that students have pushed for a number of years now. This increased conversation and awareness looks to be really positive with the adjustments that will be coming through the DPFS role next year in working more closely on colleges strategic financials.

College EDI approach – College have had some really positive steps towards EDI recently – particularly around Access and Participation (presenting today). Becky and I have been frustrated at a number of Colleges approaches towards the wider issues surrounding EDI. We are in the process of pushing for College to have a much more structured approach with students and the Union to be viewed a) as partners in this work and b) the priority rather than an afterthought to staff whom we outnumber over 4:1. This pressure and work will be hugely important pushing forward.

College Union Disciplinary – Real progress is occurring on steps towards a more joined up approach for data sharing with College and Union disciplinary procedures. Currently we are examining

different forms of data sharing agreements for Sexual Misconduct cases as well as developing and providing more comprehensive training for all those involved in these types of cases.

Appendix – Graduation Speech

Please be seated.

President, family, friends and honoured guests, it is my pleasure to welcome you to [Commemoration] Day 2019.

We meet today to recognise the outstanding achievements of [undergraduate] students of Imperial College. Ultimately our time at Imperial is measured and recognised through our academia achievements, however today is about so much more than that – today we recognise as well our sporting triumphs, artistic and musical excellence, diversity of culture, diversity of ideas, the willingness to and time spent volunteering, and most of all the continued commitment to excellence and bettering of the world around us that every single student graduating today has displayed. Our time as students has never solely been focussed on academia or achievement but to develop as fulfilled, rounded and capable individuals.

As graduates of Imperial, we are perfectly positioned to grapple with some of the largest problems that face the world today, in fact as a group of people here we must recognise we have an enormous potential to contribute towards the advancement of mankind as a whole. This comes with a burden of expectation, and the achievements of those before us can provide both inspiration and apprehension. But moving forward remember that, whilst now we stand on the shoulders of giants, in future years yours will be the shoulders upon whom others stand.

Today we must reflect on those people whose work came before us, to continue the metaphor - the shoulders on whom we stand - and without whose work we could not achieve what we have or will. Starting with our founder, Prince Albert, who founded Imperial as part of his vision of Albertopolis - a multifaceted community of innovation cross cutting all disciplines and the arts - we now lead research in topics ranging from new drugs to treating cancer to directing rovers across the surface of Mars.

Imperial is proud of its history, its origins, its traditions – one such is today and the date we hold it. In 1945 their Majesties King George and Queen Elizabeth visited the college to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Royal College of Chemistry, a forerunner of Imperial. It was then that King George stated “Regard your knowledge and your skill always in the light of a trust for the benefit of humanity, and thereby ensure, so far as in you lies, that science may never be put to uses which offend the higher conscience of mankind.”

It is with this in mind that I hope we all move forward. Remember the shoulders upon whom you stand and keep a clear eye on where you are going. Be innovative - make change, start something new, seek knowledge – but always for the betterment of mankind. Congratulations on what you have achieved and best of luck with all that is to come.