

Minutes of Education & Representation Board Agenda

The third Ordinary Meeting of the Education & Representation Board for the 2019-20 Session will be held on Thursday 30th January

Location: G05, Royal School of Mines, South Kensington campus

Attending:

Deputy President (Education) - Meeting Chair	Ashley Brooks (DPE)
RCSU President	Alex Auyang (AA)
CGCU Vice President (Education)	Poppy Oldroyd (PO)
RCSU Vice President (Education)	Michaela Flegrova (MF)
RSMU Vice President (Education)	Alexander De Saint Germain (AG)
ICSMSU Academic Chair	Waseem Hasan (WH)
AWO Engineering (Research)	Raya el Laham (RL)
Horizons Dep Rep	Ray Wang (RW)
Horizons Dep Rep	Juliette Desforges (JD)
UG Aeronautics Dep Rep	Victor Lafaurie (VL)
UG Biochemistry Dep Rep	Isabelle Zhang (IZ)
UG ESE Dep Rep	Samuel Casement (SC)
UG Materials Dep Rep	Susannah Lea (SL)
PG Chemical Engineering Dep Rep	Tanya Moller (TM)
PG Computing Dep Rep	Zifeng Niu (ZN)
PG Medicine Dep Rep	Jaye Sahota (JS)
PG Physics Dep Rep / Union Council Chair	Lloyd James (LJ)

Apologies:

Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Thomas Fernandez Debets
Deputy President (Finance & Services)	Fifi Henry
GSU President	Mohit Devgan
GSU Vice President (Representation)	Milia Hasbani
GSU Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering)	Clementine Ewins
GSU Research Academic & Welfare Officer (Natural Sciences)	Emma Couves

UG Chemistry Dep Rep	Stephanie Cheng
UG Civil Engineering Dep Rep	Tomas Schuscheim
UG Computing Dep Rep	Kapilan Cholan
UG JMC Dep Rep	Mayeul Fournial
UG Mathematics Dep Rep	Lorenz Wolf

Absences:

Union President	Abhijay Sood
Deputy President (Welfare)	Shervin Sabeghi
CGCU President	Fatima Khan
GSU Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Business)	Fangjie Cheng
GSU Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Natural Sciences)	Tilivaldi Ilahunov
GSU Taught Academic & Welfare Officer (Medicine)	Niza Ravi
GSU Research Academic & Welfare Officer (Medicine)	Xiaolei Zhang
ICSMSU President	Ben Russell
RSMU President	Christopher Carter
Silwood Chair	Conor Nicoll
Silwood Vice President	Pablo Lechon-Alonso
UG Bioengineering Dep Rep	Abhishek Roy
UG Biology Dep Rep	Guo Ni
UG Chemical Engineering Dep Rep	Athanasios Charos
UG Chemical Engineering Dep Rep	Mingrou Xie
UG Design Engineering Dep Rep	Higor Alves De Freitas
UG EEE Dep Rep	Kanav Agarwal
UG EEE Dep Rep	Sofija Dimoska
UG EIE Dep Rep	Naim Govani
UG Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep	Dhabya Alfalasi
UG Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep	Georgios Papatotiriou
ICSMSU Academic Affairs Officer (BSc Year)	Anita Bolina
ICSMSU Academic Affairs Officer (Biomedical Science)	Nayana Iyer
ICSMSU Academic Affairs Officer (Clinical Years)	Aditi Reddy

ICSMSU Academic Affairs Officer (Early Years)	Robert Grogan
UG Physics Dep Rep	Aparna Pillai
PG Chemistry Dep Rep	Gitanjali Sharma
PG Civil Engineering Dep Rep	Ahmad Damaj
PG ESE Dep Rep	Gabriel Atak
PG EEE Dep Rep	Jochen Cremer
PG Materials Dep Rep	Zhongyao Jiang
PG Mechanical Engineering Dep Rep	Dania Ahmed

Minute Taker:

Representation Coordinator (Wellbeing)	Gabi Fulton
--	-------------

FORMAL BUSINESS

1. Welcome, Apologies, Absences

- a. DPE commences meeting by welcoming and introducing guest speaker, Hailey Smith (HS).
- b. HS is a project manager for the Learning and Teaching Strategy and is here to speak about iExplore.

EXTERNAL SPEAKER

2. Hailey Smith – iExplore comms

- a. HS work in the education office, particularly on the Learning and Teaching Strategy which is the College's 10-year plan for education. The 'curriculum review' is the first stage of this. A big feature from the review findings was that students felt was lacking from their education was a chance to engage in subject taught outside of their degree program.
- b. Without losing the depth of your studies, we wanted to increase the breadth. This is the aim of the iExplore Program. 1st year students now will take an iExplore module on as part of their studies. It is an opportunity to gain academic credit on something outside of the core curriculum. It will broaden perspectives outside their discipline. There are 4 streams: Imperial Horizons, Business for Professional Engineers and Scientists (BPES), STEMM Modules and Multidisciplinary Modules.
- c. The first group of students who will take iExplore modules will do so in their 2nd year. We are hoping to get 1st years to choose their modules this May. We are looking to post an online catalogue of the modules. HS requests ERB members for recommendations on what students would like to know about the module before taking it and what would influence you in taking it – ERB members discuss this.
- d. HS advises that if anyone has any further feedback then to please email hailey.smith@ic.ac.uk

FORMAL BUSINESS (continued)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

- a. No comments. Minutes taken as approved.

4. Matters Arising

- a. No ERB members have any matters they would like to discuss.

MATTERS FOR REPORT

5. DPE Report

- a. NSS: A list of recommendations on from the NSS are on Teams. Requests that Dep Reps look and fill in the columns to assess where we are at with the recommendations. Please fill in the columns with the relevant colours (explained on document) and add in comments if you can. Thanks departments who have done it already. It has been talked about in a few meetings at College and it has caught a lot of attention. Encourages everyone to please fill it on to the best of your knowledge. If you are unsure with anything then please fill in grey and put a comment in.

ACTION: DPE will repost this on Teams.

- b. A similar thing is in place for PGs with the PRES. We have set up a few meetings that are going through the PG Research regulations for which some of the members of the GSU are a part of. We have been looking at ESA, LSR, milestones, degree outcomes as well as the PRES recommendations. For Masters students the PTES survey will happen around May or June.
- c. NSS: response rates are lower than last year, please encourage students to take part.

6. Faculty Rep Reports

- a. RCSU Vice President (Education)
 - i. Have been have 1-2-1 meetings with Dep Reps which has been useful. Haven't have a faculty education meeting yet or an SSC meeting yet. At the end of Dec, we had an informal meeting with all the Year Reps and coffee and cakes – hoping to do more of that. Planning a social with all RSU volunteers – with this we will be encouraging students to run for volunteer roles during the upcoming elections.
- b. ICSMSU Academic Chair
 - i. Lots of SSC meetings and have discussed various things such as response to new curriculum which has been positive. Have found SSC meetings successful in general with staff responding to our recommendations. Have had issues with feedback being delayed/poor and will be addressing this.
- c. RSMU Vice President (Education)
 - i. Broadly speaking, things within RSMU have been running smoothly. We have reduced the Academic Reps from 2 to 1 per year – will following this up in June to make sure it gets done. We have been having meetings to look into the interview process, no outcome as of yet but will keep you updated. We are also looking into student shapers project proposal and a midterm survey.
- d. CGCU Vice President (Education)
 - i. Everything is CGCU is going smoothly. Have been having 1-2-1s with reps. Running a town hall on the 18th – promoting election things and tying it in with a social event for volunteers.
- e. AWO Engineering (Research)
 - i. Not much to update. Focusing on organising the PG ball – sales are going well. A lot of things are being done differently in different departments, we trying to get

feedback from reps around how departments are run and figuring out where processes are done more efficiently to try and standardise this.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

7. ERB Policy Review

- a. Higher Education Policy: DPE asks for initial thoughts. RW: It looks fine however; I question that to actively campaign about any attempt to increase tuition fees (irrespective of whatever the context might be) is too absolute in terms of the policy. DPE understands where AW is coming from and had similar initial thoughts. There probably is some sort of inflation rise with tuition fees and not sure if we would consider that necessary to actively campaign against that.
- b. Michaela Flegrova will take ownership of the policy with assistance from the other Faculty reps and DPE. Will bring it back to next ERB with any amendments.

EXTERNAL SPEAKER

8. **Craig Walker** "Provision and parity of informal learning and social spaces (e.g., common rooms, study space, etc)".
 - a. DPE welcomes Craig Walker (CW) and Kieron Creagh (KC) from the Education Office at the College. Will be talking about spaces that are in line with the Learning and Teaching Strategy and a College wide review of under-utilised spaces. We are now in a good position to talk about tackling this issue and get student reps involved.
 - b. CW introduces himself. Works of the Vice-Provost (Education). We want to enable Learning and Teaching Strategy to take away barriers such as education spaces. (AA enters meeting).
 - c. We are here tonight for a validation from the student perspective of what we are planning. An ideal outcome would be a survey that goes out to students and we want help from ERB to plan this and identify the spaces that will be improved.
 - d. We are focused on informal spaces that students use when you're not timetabled but you are still on campus. We want to improve access to more social spaces, better power sources and devices such as screens. We want these spaces to be local to where teaching happens and that they are welcoming and comfortable.
 - e. KC: To summarise, we have the budget to improve informal spaces, but we cannot do it all at once. We would like your help to identify what students want and need when they are not timetabled in lectures/classes.
 - f. KC runs an activity in which ERB members identify what they WANT and what they NEED in terms of various different uses for informal learning spaces. The use of these spaces discussed include *spaces to conduct group work, spaces to eat in, spaces to relax in, and spaces for CSP committee meetings*. This activity runs for approximately 5 minutes. KC thanks members for taking part.
 - g. CW: We are going to use the information we obtain from you to design a survey and target very specific spaces to find out what you need and how do you use these spaces. We want reps to find the spaces that aren't necessarily a learning space and tell us where they are, and we will go check them out. From this we will build another survey to go out to the rest of the student body which will be quite minimal. Essentially, you decide spaces, we design the survey. This survey is going to be quite minimal. You decide spaces, we design the survey. We will then decide which spaces have potential to improved.

ACTION: Send out survey to ERB members. Please fill this out for your department.

- h. The more input that we can get, the more funding we can potentially get. One of the drivers for this is the NSS but we are also working alongside the Learning and Teaching Strategy. We want to make sure that all departments have equal access to better spaces.
- i. CW invites everyone to email if they have any questions. Please fill out this survey that we will have ready by Monday. DPE will send this to all ERB members. Please pass it on to the Year Reps. The Education Office will have the next survey that is informed by the reps ready for all students by the end of February.
- j. DPE invites people to leave if they need to as the time is 20:02. Thanks CW and KC for coming to present.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (continued)

9. SACAS/Union Awards 2020

- a. DPE explains the splitting of resources across SACA and Union Awards. The idea is to bring to two events together to become one event to more effectively split the resource and create a better overall event for everyone. DPW will update ERB on progression of this project.

10. ERB Membership

- a. DPE: There is an issue around the voting membership of ERB and having quoracy when we have issues that we need to vote on. There has already been some discussion around who the voting members should be. One suggestion that has been put forward is to have the Faculty Reps as the core voting membership but there has been push back on that because we have Dep Reps who are a big part of ERB too. If you look around the room, there are many Dep Reps who are not here, so with this approach it will be difficult to achieve quoracy.
- b. LJ: There has not been a quorate meeting for ERB in the last 6 years – possibly longer.
- c. DPE: We do not vote on all that many things, we come to agreements but if we did need to have a vote then this will become an issue, so it is better to deal with this issue before it becomes a problem. DPE presents the suggestions that ERB voting membership could be done in such a way that you could lose your vote if you don't not attend an ERB meeting once or twice (for example).
- d. LJ: It was brought up in a council meeting that one option would be to do what Council does which is if someone misses 2 consecutive meetings you essentially lose your vote, but you can be reappointed. There would be issues if ERB did the same thing. One is more of a conceptual problem, meaning it defeats the point of having a quorum at all which is you want to ensure that the attendance of giving meeting is representative of the breadth of people who are members of that committee. For council, in terms of removing people from the voting record, that's only ever a few people a year so it doesn't really cut into the total membership too much. For ERB, if you wanted to make sure that more meetings were quorate than not, I think you would end up having to shave between half and 2 thirds of the membership off which defeats the point of it. The second issue is, this model wouldn't work in practice. I looked at all the minutes for last year meetings and compiled them into a spreadsheet of attendance and found that if we applied the same method of voting as council then 5 out of 6 meetings last year would not have reached quoracy. The attendance drops off more quickly than quoracy does. There is a small number that never show up to a meeting and most attend a couple of meetings throughout the year, so it just doesn't work.
- e. MF suggests that DPE and Faculty Reps are the core voting members of ERB. The Dep Reps that do show up to a meeting get to have a vote during that meeting. Dep Reps who

do not show up, do not get a vote. We would define quorum as ‘do we have a majority of Faculty Reps?’ and is we do; we have a vote and Dep Reps who are present can also vote as long as they turn up. LJ: You would need to change the bylaws to do that and I just don’t really see how that fits into the democratic processes that we have. It’s not like anything we do at any other committee. Another point that we have missed is that ERB is not like any other subcommittee of Council. Most subcommittees of Council are composed of member of Council and they exist to make decisions on policy within that remit. ERB is kind of a fusion of that and what I would describe more as a kind of ‘focus group’ to provide feedback on issues. That is partly why my initial recommendation at the start of the year was not to change the voting membership, it was to change the membership so it was purely the Faculty Reps, but as it has been pointed out having Dep Reps on this committee has proven to be very useful and do give a valuable contribution.

- f. MF: In the future, could we split ERB into two – one would be a committee composed of Faculty Members and one would everyone else. Members around the room agree that we don’t need more meetings. MF: It would be very useful for the DPE and the Faculty Reps to meet and that wouldn’t mean more meetings because it could mean that the 1-2-1s I have with the DPE could be replaced by those meetings.
- g. DPE asks for thoughts from the Dep Reps. SC: For my department (ESE) which has very different needs from the Materials Department, which is to only other one within my faculty, then I don’t think that our Faculty Rep could represent both of us in a vote. Sometimes we are very happy with how things are run when Materials are not and vice versa. LJ: That is a fair comment but that is also something that is always true of any kind of representative democratic structure.
WH: Let’s assume only Faculty Reps have a vote at ERB. Could we have the capacity to open voting to Dep Reps or do the bylaws not allow that? LJ: If you did that, it wouldn’t be such a binding vote, but you could take an indicative vote from the Dep Reps and agree to go with that.
- h. DPE asks Dep Reps if they would still come to meetings if they did not have an official vote and the Dep Reps in the room agree that they would. The whole idea of having an indicative vote seems to satisfy this issue. It seems the most sensible way forward.
- i. ERB takes an indicative vote whether to keep ERB Membership as it is, the voting membership to be Faculty Reps only and Dep Reps to give an indicative vote.
Yes: 16, no: 1, abstain: 0.
- j. DPE thanks everyone for coming and reminds everyone to keep filling out the NSS spreadsheet in Teams.

Meeting Concludes at [20:26]

Next meeting

Thursday 27th February 2020, 18:00 – 20:00, Room TBC