Bullying and Harassment by Senior Management

Proposer: Lloyd James (Student Trustee)

Seconders: Ansh Bhatnagar (FoNS PG Council Rep), Clement Mawby, Geraint Northwood, Anthony Cheuk, Rein Leetmaa, Jonas Eschenfelder, Anna Mossop, Rosie Millns, William Pearson, Molly Edbrooke, Solvejg Benzon Soll-Lauritzen, Simone Barnes, Pietro Salvi, Ashleigh Cheyne, Theodoros Kokkoris, Charlotte Hope, Annie Cheung, Carl Thomas, Maria Wood, Ariel Flint, Lily Peck

Union Notes:

1. Imperial College has a zero-tolerance policy concerning bullying and harassment.
2. In June 2020, an investigation led by Jane McNeil QC was opened in response to allegations of workplace bullying and misconduct by Alice Gast, Imperial College President, Muir Sanderson, Chief Financial Officer, and Amanda Wolthuizen, Chief of Staff.
3. This investigation lasted several weeks and took witness statements and corroborations from around 50 individuals.
4. A report containing the findings of the investigation verified the claims of bullying and harassment made against Alice Gast and Muir Sanderson, and made recommendations for the organisation. This report has not been made publicly available, nor has it been made available to members of College Council.
5. Despite the verified claims of misconduct, the College Council has taken a position supportive of the Senior Leadership.
6. Students and staff were not made aware of this matter until after an MP discussed this matter in the House of Commons on 24th November. [1]
7. On December 7th, the Officer Trustees reached out to College Leadership for further detail, requesting a redacted version of the report for the sake of transparency. In response, the College shared some information but fell short of sharing the detail that was requested. [2][3][4]
8. Imperial UCU, the union representing staff at Imperial, have already called on Alice Gast and Muir Sanderson to resign. [5]
9. Further details were released in extensive press coverage, a selection of which can be found in the references. [6][7][8]

Union Believes:

1. If there are verified claims of bullying and harassment made against members of College leadership, it is not consistent with the College's zero-tolerance policy for these individuals to retain their positions.
2. It has no confidence in Alice Gast and Muir Sanderson.
3. The failure of the university to take decisive action on this matter may have negative consequences for students (and staff) who have been subject to similar kinds of bullying and harassment. The university cannot foster an environment for students and staff that is free from bullying and harassment if the College leadership are thought to endorse or partake in these behaviours.

Union Resolves:

1. To call for the resignations of President Alice Gast, and Chief Financial Officer Muir Sanderson.
2. To mandate the Officer Trustees to take an escalating series of actions to secure this outcome, including but not limited to:
   a. The Union President authoring a letter to members of College Council setting out and justifying the request of Resolves (1).
   b. The Union President writing to the Universities Minister and the Office for Students calling on them to investigate this matter further.
   c. The Union distributing via email to all students a petition calling for these resignations.

References
[1] Written questions and answers - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament
[2] Request for clarity in response to December 4th Council Chair's Message | Imperial College Union
[3] Message from the Chair of Council and Provost to ICU leaders | About | Imperial College London
[4] College is at a crossroads | Imperial College Union
[5] UCU - Union calls for Imperial College President to resign over bullying admission
[6] Imperial College London leaders admit they bullied colleagues | Imperial College London | The Guardian
[7] 'Bullying' university leaders keep jobs | News | The Times
[8] Imperial students call for VC Alice Gast to resign after she admits to bullying claims (thetab.com)