

Deputy President (Welfare) – Council report

Shervin Sabeghi – 11th May 2021

Introduction

Hi everyone! Believe it or not, I've finally been able to get going with some project work. There's been a fair amount of progress on discipline policy work, which also contributes to the ongoing club culture project. Really coming to the end of my time in this role now – 2.5 months left, and a lot I want to nip in the bud so I'll be focusing quite heavily on these final bits of project work that I want to have seen through before I leave.

How I've spent my time since the last report (15th March – 30th April)

College Meetings and 121s	Union Meetings	Desk work (day-to-day)	Time with students + comms	Project work	Recruitment
17%	30%	19%	8%	17%	9%

Key latest updates (roughly chronological)

- Bursary for MBBS students: at the end of last term, I took a paper to the College's Provost's Board (where all the big dogs make big decisions) advocating for extending the Imperial Bursary to cover also the 5th and 6th year in MBBS (it currently only covers 4 years). There was provisional agreement for this, as those involved were very keen on parity of experience, HOWEVER it is subject to approval at a funding meeting happening in June so *we will see*. Regardless, I think it very unlikely that there won't be more financial support for 5th and 6th year MBBS students next year.
- Recruitment: we had interviews for a new Representation Coordinator to support the rep networks at the beginning of the month. Unfortunately, we didn't find a candidate that we felt was right for the role and will be advertising the role again very soon and making some amendments to the job description to make it more suitable.
- Representation Networks: we have new Reps of the Month. Our March winners were Yuki Agarwala for Academic RotM and Nick Bitterlich for Wellbeing RotM – congrats!
- Monitoring attainment for different demographics: I've pressured the College to make good on promises they made in September that they'd monitor the early in-year performance of students from different demographics (e.g. ethnicity, socio-economic background, bursary status) to ensure that any disparity is addressed. It's now reached a point where they've identified departments to trial this and the different metrics to measure. I'll update on progress in my next report.
- Safety/harassment: I've been having conversations with the College about things they're planning to do in response to student concerns about safety (mainly following the murder of Sarah Everard in March). They're planning immediate measures such as providing personal safety alarms and safety comms, but are also very keen that a more holistic approach is taken that includes training and education (i.e. not making this about victim blaming, but education and prevention).

- Discipline project work: I've finally been able to spend a fair amount of time on project work (yay!). I've mainly been focusing on disciplinary procedures within the Union. I've developed a framework that identifies three key areas: individual student, CSP and venues (i.e. the bars) disciplinaries. The next piece of work is to develop these policies and plans for implementation – they're all at various different stages right now and the next piece of the project work will be developing them in consultation with various student groups.
- College committees:
 - The Race Equality Charter had it's 21st meeting and the application to the charter is near completion; once it's been submitted in July, the meeting will become an implementation monitoring meeting.
 - The Access Programme Board met and outreach programmes to Black British students were discussed and agreed upon as part of the Access and Participation Plan.
 - The Residential Life Committee met and, alongside some operational stuff around the recruitment of subwardens and processes around discipline, we discussed how to support students moving into private accommodation. I had a follow up meeting with the student hub to input into events they're planning this month – particularly around finding housemates.

My 2020/21 objectives

Here are updates against my objectives.

- 1) **Liberation and Community (L&C) Development:** not much to update.
- 2) **Representation Network Review:** Due to start working on when Cat starts.
- 3) **COVID-19 Response:** Ongoing ESOG (Education Strategy and Operation Group) meetings dealing with all COVID student experience and teaching issues. In collaboration with the College's Registry, I've put together a template for different streams of the ESOG - Student Experience committee for different streams (e.g. Wellbeing Support, Extra-Curricular Activity) to plan how it will be delivered in the next academic year. After these have been completed (around mid-June) they will inform comms to students about what to expect next year.
- 4) **Student Discipline and Harassment:** Progress here has been outlined above. I'll also be putting together a group of students to form something of a Union Sexual Harassment Working Group to start to get some work (both internally and facing the College) going. I do want to keep it reasonably small with a specific group of relevant volunteers, however if there are any Council members particularly interested to join, please let me know.
- 5) **Campaigns and Student Voice:** Work on this is to be incorporated into the Petitions System project which is in progress. A kick-off meeting occurred just before Easter to start to get this going.

Congrats if you've read this far! Please feel free to drop me an email whenever at dpwelfare@imperial.ac.uk if you've got any questions or feedback.