

**Imperial College Union
Board of Trustees / 13 July 2022**

Student Trustee Reflections

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Purpose: To provide Board with a reflection on the year as a Trustee of Imperial College Union.

What have you learnt during your time as a Trustee and what went well?

- Learnt a lot about the challenges of the environment the Union operates in and how these can be best mitigated.
- Having had minimal financial experience before undertaking this role, being a member of Finance, Audit and Risk was a great learning experience particularly with the support of Stephen and Dan.
- The induction and board away day at the start of our term was incredibly helpful in making me feel welcome at Board.

What did you particularly value being part of the Board as a Trustee and why?

- I've really valued getting to know the other members of board, it's one of the most diverse boards I have been on in terms of previous experience and that has been very beneficial in terms of shaping my views on the Union and its work.
- The informal sessions I've had in my mentoring group have been great at putting discussions at the board into context or sharing more of the unseen.

Did you experience any challenges as part of your role? If so, what were they?

- Student unions are unique in the charity sector, particularly from a financial perspective so understanding this and the Union's relationship with college has been challenging.
- Sitting on Finance, Audit and Risk meant often receiving lengthy papers with limited time before meetings and it was challenging to find time to read them, let alone to critically evaluate them so I could ask questions if needed.
- I found our mentoring trio incredibly valuable but our needs as trustees in that group were very different and that was difficult to manage at times.

What recommendations would you make for areas of improvement for Student Trustees in the future?

- The induction was great but greater clarity on the relationship between the union and college, such as with the stakeholder map would be incredibly helpful as I only became clear on the role of College Council etc, later in my term.
- Selection of mentoring groups through shared interests or perceived areas of weakness may increase the value of that time.
- The board away day to start the year was so helpful and should definitely be repeated.

Thank you very much! I've loved being on board this past few years and only regret not becoming a trustee earlier in my time at Imperial. It is so encouraging to see how well-run and well-supported the board is. Despite Tom and Jill leaving, with the incredible work and leadership that has been shown this year, I'm sure the union will continue to flourish. It has been a pleasure working with and getting to know you all. Good luck to the incoming trustees and everyone staying on board next year!