

Imperial College Union
Minutes of the fourth ordinary Meeting of Union Council 2021/22
11 January 2022 6:30pm –8:30pm

Council Representative (UG Medicine)	Aigun Gassanova (AG)	Absent
Silwood Chair	Alex Auyang (AA)	Present
Council Representative (PG Science)	Ang Li (AL)	Present
Postgraduate Taught AWO (Medicine)	Anjola Onifade (AO)	Present
International Officer	Anvesh Rajeshirke (AR)	Present
RCSU President	Aparna Pillai (AP)	Apologies
Postgraduate Research AWO (Medicine)	Aryan Niknam Maleki (ANM)	Present
CGCU (Wellbeing Officer)	Aurna Maitra (AM)	Apologies
Disabilities Officer	Awais Seyyad (AS)	Present
Sports Sector Chair	Beckett Marshall (BM)	Apologies
LGBTQ+ Officer	Calyste Revel (CR)	Present
Ethics and Environment Officer	Camilla Billari (CBi)	Present
Postgraduate Research AWO (Natural Sciences)	Ceire Wincott (CW)	Present
Mental Health Officer	Charlotte Barot (CB)	Present
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Christina Wang (CWa)	Present
Council Representative (UG Science)	Ding Ding (DD)	Present
Council Representative (PG Medicine)	Eman Adair Adair (EA)	Absent
RSM Vice President Welfare	Emily Li (EL)	Present
Interfaith Officer	Esha Kamran (EK)	Absent
RSM Vice President Education	George Morgan (GM)	Present
Working Class Officer	Grace Fisher (GF)	Present
CGCU President	Hayley Wong (HW)	Apologies
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Hilliam Tung (HT)	Present
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	India Marsden (IM)	Present
CGCU (Education Chair)	James White (JW)	Present
RSM President	Jasmine Crocker (JC)	Apologies
Postgraduate Taught AWO (Business)	Jenaifer Farhad Sethna (JFS)	Apologies
ICSMSU Academic Chair	Julia Komor (JK)	Present
Postgraduate Taught AWO (Engineering)	VACANCY	N/A
Council Representative (PG Engineering)	Lintong Li (LL)	Present
Union President	Lloyd James (LJ)	Present
ICSMSU Welfare Officer	Camellia Richards (CR)	Present
Gender Equality Officer	Malinda Davies (MD)	Present

Postgraduate Taught AWO (Natural Sciences)	Manasa Reddy Sanaga (MRS)	Present
Knowledge Chair	Matthew Hamer (MH)	Present
Council Chair	Michaela Flegrova (MF)	Present
Council Representative (PG Business)	Molly Gao (MG)	Present
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Nabeel Azuhar Mohammed (NAM)	Present
Deputy President (Welfare)	Nathalie Podder (NP)	Present
A&E Chair	Niamh McAuley (NM)	Present
RCSU Vice President (Education)	Nicolas Barykin Pankevich (NBP)	Present
Council Representative (UG Engineering)	Rea Tresa (RT)	Present
Black & Minority Ethnic Students Officer	Rebekah Christie (RC)	Present
Deputy President (Finance & Services)	Sam Lee (SL)	Present
ICSMSU President	Samuel Hammond (SH)	Present
Council Representative (UG Science)	Stefano Fiocca (SF)	Present
RCSU Vice President (Welfare)	Tianyu Wen (TW)	Present
Postgraduate Research AWO (Engineering)	Tin Hang Un (THU)	Absent
Deputy President (Education)	Daniel Lo (DL)	Present
Council Representative (PG Engineering)	Yusen Wang (YW)	Present
Council Representative (PG Business)	Zhun Tang (ZT)	Present

In attendance:

Milia Hasbani (MH)

Samuel Lovatt (SLo) – Felix Editor

Cat Turhan – ICU Representation & Advice Manager

Dipto Basu – ICU Policy & Research Officer

Clem Jones – ICU Governance & Democracy Coordinator

Item	Actions
<p>1. Informal start and discussion of OT</p> <p>1.1. It was not possible to split into groups via breakout rooms on MS Teams due to technical difficulties, so Union Council immediately proceeded to the next order of business.</p>	
<p>2. Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>2.1 MF welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>2.2 MF introduced CJ as the new ICU Governance & Democracy Coordinator, who will act be assisting with Union Council administration.</p> <p>2.3 Apologies were noted as above</p>	

<p>3. Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>3.1. MF presented the draft minutes of the previous meeting and asked if members wished to propose any amendments</p> <p>3.2. CGCU Welfare Officer sent a correction to MF that she was present.</p> <p>3.3. IM wished to correct the minuting of her statement under 13.9 to read that there are candidates standing for some management group positions, not most positions.</p> <p>3.4. Union Council approved the draft minutes of the previous meeting as an accurate record of proceedings, subject to the minor revisions above.</p>	
<p>4. Action Tracker</p> <p>4.1. Extending VONC and Censure Powers (continuous action from Item 7 of 30.09.21 meeting)</p> <p>4.1.1 LJ noted that the nature of this action point was to ensure that these considerations would be included in the Democratic Structures Review, which will have its first Working Group meeting later in the week. LJ reported he would ensure these considerations are included in the scope of the review set by the working group.</p> <p>4.1.2 MF suggested changing the due date to the next Union Council meeting and LJ agreed to this approach to the tracking of this action.</p> <p>4.2 Cheerleading training (action from Item 6 of 02.11.21 meeting)</p> <p>4.2.1 SL reported that this is to be discussed in more in depth with the new health and safety manager starting at ICU and stated he hopes to have this conversation before the next Union Council meeting.</p> <p>4.3 Interdepartmental Coordination on Shared Modules (action from Item 7 of 30.11.21 meeting)</p> <p>4.3.1 IM confirmed she and DL had met to discuss, and that DL is going to take the matter forward with reps in the relevant fora, at which point she will be updated as the matter progresses.</p> <p>4.3.2 DL reported he would continue to lobby not just Faculty of Engineering staff but also other senior faculty staff to make them aware of this issue and discover a solution, noting that he had already had an initial talk with the Vice-Dean of Education from the Faculty of Engineering.</p> <p>4.3.3 MF asked if could provide an additional update on progress at next Union Council and DL agreed.</p> <p>4.4 UCU Industrial Action (action from Item 8 of 30.11.21 meeting)</p> <p>4.4.1 LJ confirmed he had communicated the Union's position to the College Provost.</p> <p>4.5 Management Group Role(s) (action from Item 12 of 30.11.21 mtg)</p> <p>4.5.1 MF confirmed that IM had let her know that another person had been elected.</p> <p>4.5.2 MF asked IM if she reckoned there would be any such further elections this academic year. IM indicated no, noting that no individuals were willing to put themselves forward despite multiple attempts at encouragement.</p>	<p>ACTION CJ update action tracker</p> <p>ACTION DL to provide additional update at next Union Council</p>
<p>Matters for Decision</p>	

5. Reinstating lost Council seats

5.1. MF noted that if a Council Member misses two consecutive meetings, they forfeit their position on Union Council, however, Council has the power to reinstate lost seats.

5.2. MF noted that ZT and AL were unable to the in-person Union Council meetings last term due to being in China and asked if anyone wished to speak for or against the motion to reinstate them.

5.3. NM - Not against them getting their seat back, but what will we do going forward to ensure they can attend meetings? MF said next meeting may well be remote.

5.4. MF put the proposal to reinstate ZT to a vote:

27 for

1 against

0 abstain

ZT was therefore reinstated to their position by Union Council.

5.5. MF put the proposal to reinstate AL to a vote:

24 for

0 against

0 abstain

AL was therefore reinstated to their position by Union Council.

6. Implementation of the Recommendations of the PG Engagement Review

6.1. LJ gave an overview of the motion, noting that over the last six or seven months the Union has been undertaking a review of postgraduate engagement. LJ noted this had started specifically as a review of the Graduate Students Union and the GSU structure (which had been motivated by some concerns over the performance of the GSU President last May), and that it had gradually grown into a broader review of how postgraduate students engage with the Union e.g. through democracy, representation, interactions with venues, CSPs etc. LJ highlighted that a working group of himself, MF, MH, CW and Leonie Stromich had reviewed at wide range of evidence, as detailed in the review report. LJ noted that the working group had formulated a number of recommendations, including changes to the structure of postgraduate representation. The working group proposed clearer delineation between taught and research postgraduate representation, and the development of a department-level focus (looking at how we support smaller scale initiatives) coupled with a better program of college-level events, supported by the Union centrally. The recommendations also included recommendations around what ICU can do to better support postgraduate wellbeing. LJ noted that a consequential recommendation of the above is that IC should not continue with the graduate students' union based structure which the Union has had for approx. 10 years. LJ noted a lack of consistent performance and a lack of overall impact of that structure, due to the existing structure delegating a lot of responsibility to a volunteer committee. LJ summarised that the alternative approach the working group are proposing is one that is envisaged will be better for the reasons that are outlined in the report. LJ welcomed questions.

6.2. MF added that there was broad agreement among the working group on the conclusions of the report. MH highlighted that a lot of work had gone into the review and that the GSU was not the only motivating factor but rather a lot of positive, reflections such as: Where do we want to be? How do we want to see postgraduate students engaging with Union? How does the Union want to engage with them? MH encouraged Council members track the implementation of the review should the motion pass, noting one of the recommendations was for a

progress review in a couple years' time to see whether the changes have taken place and if they've actually led to improvements.

6.3. CW commented a lot of time and thought had gone into the review, noting that it looked at where postgraduates want their support to come from and how best to secure that, whether that be at a departmental level or a Union level.

6.4. NP highlighted that under clauses 11.3 and 13.4 of Byelaw A, the DPE and the DPW are stated as being responsible for training CU reps but training for postgrad reps is not mentioned, and so suggested it may be worthwhile to specifically codify this responsibility as part of the review. LJ proposed to include that proposed amendment in the motion vote.

6.5.

AA asked a question about how ICU would support departments to organise events. LJ highlighted, from his OT update, that funding has been secured from College for research to identify, on departmental level, what support is available for organising events, peer support, etc., in order to identify discrepancies between departments and to rectify these. AA also commented that CU's and departmental societies are largely run by undergraduates and part of the GSU's role was to take pressure away from burdening those students with organising postgraduate representation and events as well. LJ responded that it is not the intention that departmental societies and CU's will now be burdened with additional responsibility, but rather the intention is to facilitate better communication, noting that some departmental societies departments already have postgraduate reps. CW added at the moment there's a big disparity between what each department currently offer their postgraduate students and that a lot of it is done informally outside of the Union. CW expressed that the hope of this review, with the Union's support, is to go to departments and make it clear that there should be some kind of minimal offering for all postgraduate students. AA added that some departmental societies are less functional than others and highlighted that if responsibility for representation and engagement for postgraduates is being moved from a GSU to another group it will be important to make sure the Union is not taking away what the GSU provided and then giving it to a group that that does nothing. LJ responded that to the extent that the review proposes to replace things that the GSU already does, those things will be facilitated by the Union centrally, and so occasional big events may be done both in partnership with the Graduate School and the Union venues team, and that a departmental focus from societies is something that will add to the overall provision rather than replace anything. MH added that it is not known successful this implementation is going to be, which is why Council monitor this and see if it's having the intended effect. MF moved to a vote, noting as the motion proposed changes Byelaw A, a 2/3 majority was required to approve the proposed changes to the Byelaw.

Vote:

For: 25

Against: 1

Abstain: 3

<p>7. Motion to prevent the installation of “Alert”</p> <p>AA presented the paper. Thinks that students should have been consulted. JW – can we take a step back – how did the College get this approved? Seems anti-democratic. AA – I was linked to a big set of files, public process of getting approved in the borough. Can share if like? JW – would give us insight (Links shared in the chat) LJ – realistically, think it is going to happen anyway due to College progress LJ suggested to propose an amendment under Union Resolves to add a clause to resolve to refer to the plaza as ‘dongle plaza’ from now on due to the statue’s phallic nature. AA declined the suggestion to move such an amendment but encouraged LJ and others to feel free refer to it like that anyway should they so wish RC – What relevance does Gormley or his work have to Imperial anyway? AA – he is relatively well known SF – If we put a statue there, realistically it will stay for ever. Worried it will damage our reputation and loose us money in the future/long-term; if the statue is not build now we might be losing some money in the short term compared with to a lot of money in the future. LJ – That’s a fair argument. Not sure if it will persuade anyone in the college though - I think the problem is people in the College like be relatively serious and sort of pretend that it does look like it’s a man squatting and that it is a perfectly serious piece of art, rather than acknowledge what it actually looks like. AS – there are a lot of children passing through South Kensington on a regular basis, I don’t think it’s good impression for them. GF – I seconded this motion and various members know of my reaction when I first heard the news about this statue. Getting into the detail, there are EDI issues, money issues etc. to do with this statue and I feel strongly about it. Vote: For - 29 Against – 1 Abstain – 2</p>	<p>Action: AA to share links (completed in meeting chat)</p>
<p>Matters for Report</p>	
<p>8. Felix Report</p> <p>SL – report and role different from other FT union staff as generally no news is good news – we produce a weekly issue if there are no problems. Readership has gone down in Plan B.</p> <p>AA – praised the issue covering Alert</p> <p>2.52 satisfaction score.</p>	

9. ICSMSU Report

SH –

Have included update on finances as requested – includes about funding available from faculty, not too much of change since last year, since last year they effectively agreed to fund my salary, our clubs and socs and events.

Events side of things – refreshers successful, and then all events cancelled in December

Vacant mgmnt role now filled.

Report released by ICSM late November (external report done into racial discrimination), harrowing reading.

Prayer room included in Charing Cross refurbishment plans

SSLGs and monthly meetings with faculty for feedback going well.

JW – I'd like to expand a bit on the Reynolds refreshment little bit 'cause the other day I was in Reynolds and I was chatting to the duty manager on shift and as well as some of the staff too. And apparently not only is there going to be refurbishment of the actual bar itself, but apparently there were other flaws in the building that also can be refurbished in order to make up for the loss of the same areas campus or something like that.

SH – Yes, there are two refreshments. Plan one of the entire building based on as you say, the sale of Saint Mary's to recoup some of the losses that we're facing because Saint Mary's is probably the nicest campus we have. The library's worth millions and we're going to lose all of that, so they've committed to a refurbishment of the entire building. That's the one that's slower. It's going to take a much more time a in terms of the timeline, because it's going to cost more money. Essentially, no one's coming forward and saying I'll pay for all of it, which is unsurprising, and then the bar and cafe is more of a union side of things that refurbishment will come earlier hopefully and that has kind of been in the works for I would say longer and it's kind of been a long time coming. So yeah there are two separate ones and the bar and cafe will be done first.

2.64 satisfaction score

10. DPE Report

- 10.1. In-person exam group, communicated general feeling of preferring TRAs over in person exams. Depts and students waiting for College to make a decision.
- 10.2. GM – any sense of when decision is going to be made on exams?
- 10.3. Education Committee is where snr ed staff set policy, happening next week on the 20th.
- 10.4. RT - To what extent are College taking into account student opinion?
- 10.5. DL – In-person exam group consulted me to collect student feedback on what dep reps and student body would, so when the feedback was collected, those concerns were reported.
- 10.6. SF – we know that physics is an outlier – most physics students don't want to maintain the open book exams from last year, dept. made

<p>them too hard, 80% of students want closed book, DOUGS has back-tracked. Did you make sure to emphasise this? DL reported he did.</p> <p>10.7. JW - in Engineering I brought up the mention of a safety net policy depending on what's happening with the rest of the year, and they said that they were going to do something similar to last year, but of course I've not heard anything from the representation side of things either, and when it comes to say different departments doing different things, well, surely there should be an element devolution here so it's not just all from the top down there because different departments have different ideas?</p> <p>10.8. DL - I remember I wasn't in that meeting due to meeting clashes, so that's the first time heard off there might be possibly wanting a safety net. They've already cancelled this Friday's faculty teaching committee meeting, but I will still look into it by the end of the week and check whether that's still the way they want to go.</p> <p>2.08 satisfaction score.</p>	<p>DL to check and feedback</p>
<p>11. DPW Report</p> <p>11.1. Last week of last term worked on lobbying college to make sure communication was as clear and concise as possible, and that it had as much relevant and pertinent information as possible in those communications, as one of the key things that was communicated by reps were concerns around pandemic/isolation.</p> <p>11.2. Going to be in core working group for College Disciplinary review work</p> <p>11.3. Going to be working with IM and the student opportunities and development team to look at review of CSP culture</p> <p>11.4. Going to be working on the union's EDI Strategy and Action plan with an external consultant.</p> <p>11.5. Going to be working with the counselling service to do a project for postgraduate research students and improving the relationship between postgraduate research students and their supervisors</p> <p>11.6. Sexual Misconduct Survey Report – thanked DB for her research and drafting work.</p> <p>11.7. Outlined report aims: identify problem areas; write a series of recommendations to ameliorate problem areas; make a benchmark which we can use to measure progress.</p> <p>11.8. Key findings: top two venues of concern were halls and union bars and venues. Hoping to use this to feed into security review.</p> <p>11.9. MH - really curious to hear more about the lighting survey</p> <p>11.10. NP - Done by MD, identified top 3 areas of concern, have submitted to College Director of Estates: one area mentioned path on queen's lawn</p> <p>11.11. MH – was path in WhiteCity sides of the bridge was noted?</p> <p>11.12. – this project focused on South Kensington</p> <p>2.79 Satisfaction score</p>	

<p>12. DPCS Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12.1. Preparing for budgeting 12.2. Ran training with SL 12.3. Ironing out how we are going to manage budgeting for Sport 12.4. Working on ADF and NAC 12.5. Spent a lot of time doing recruitment last term – new members of activities team joining <p>2.50 satisfaction score</p>	
<p>13. DPFS Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13.1. Currently got quite a lot of shortages in the venues team due to COVID and people being under the weather, so we are trying to do our best in in ensuring we're trying to maintain things being open as much as possible. 13.2. Working with Sam regarding Reynolds 13.3. Union Sustainability Strategy – working on with CT and DP 13.4. SF – people had to be seated in union venues, some students haven't had best experience with security 13.5. SL – not a legal requirement anymore, but encouraging people to sit down, but not as strict as last year 13.6. NM – re: Summer Ball, do you plan on putting together the event committee soon so students can be involved 13.7. SL - I'm trying to organize a meeting for ideally next week or to start discussions about some of the plans that we've got. As you're aware, Covid is a thing and we have to factor that into the consideration for the Ball and so discussions that we've started having with key college people is about where the Ball takes place. Obviously if we do it inside. COVID capacities do get limited by the college, so we're trying to focus on being outside, so one of the options is Queen's lawn or Dangoor Plaza. <p>2.36 satisfaction score</p>	
<p>14. Union President Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14.1. LJ – taking report as read, probably the most significant thing is the conclusion of the Postgraduate Experience Review, and the fact that we've won. £44,000 from the college to support that implementation going forward 14.2. Democratic structures review – assembled working group, first meeting later this week 14.3. NP great job on the PG engagement review. Question about your objective on reintegrating the community, you mentioned some work around the Student Experience survey. Do you know when that's going to happen? LJ – SES is live now, includes some new questions around what contributes to sense of community, which I think will be very useful to look at. I'm not certain offhand, when that closes, and when we get the data. I presume it will be towards the end of this term. 14.4. AA – objective 4 ('leadership and management training for constituent Union presidents is a priority for this month') was copy/pasted from last report, what has been done? LJ - I'm fairly sure isn't copy pasted because I think I referred to January. I think the wording is similar, but I've updated the wording to emphasize that it will be done, as was always the intention, after the postgraduate review concluded, so I wouldn't have said 'this month' in my previous report. 	

<p>14.5. MF – thanked LJ for finishing the PG Engagement Review in time for this council meeting.</p> <p>2.39 satisfaction score.</p>	
<p>15. AOB</p> <p>MF asked council if they preferred in person or remote meetings.</p> <p>CT confirmed if Plan B is still in place by the time of the next meeting the guidance is for Remote Meetings.</p> <p>MF closed the meeting at 2005hours.</p>	