



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
of the first ordinary meeting of
the
Council
of the
Imperial College Union
in the 2012/13 Session

The meeting of the Council was held in the Union Dining Hall on the 8 October at 6.40pm.

Present:

Council Chair	Michael Foster
President	Paul Beaumont
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Henry Whittaker
Deputy President (Education)	Doug Hunt
Deputy President (Finance & Services)	Stefan Nubert
Deputy President (Welfare)	Becky Lane
CGCU President	Temi Ladega
ICSMSU President	Shiv Vohra
RCSU President	James Tsim
A&E Chair	Adam Funnell
RSMU Chair	Lewis Ryan
GSA Chair	Maryam Habibzay
Silwood Park Chair	Isabel Fenton
ACC Chair	Jake Woods
Media Group Chair	Joe Letts
RCC Chair	Joe Rumer
OSC Chair	Wasim Khouri
ICSMSU Welfare Officer	Steve Tran
ICSMSU Education Rep 356	Sybghat Rahim
ICSMSU Education Rep 4, Biomed and Pharm	Matthew Hutchins
Permanent observers	
General Manager	Joe Cooper
Governance and Administration Co-ordinator (Clerk to Council)	Rebecca Coxhead

Observer: Felix Editor Tim Arbabzadah, GSA VP Natasha Strydom

Apologies: RAG Chair David Goldsmith, CGCU Welfare Officer Carol-Ann Cheah SCC Chair Lucy McGregor, GSA Medicine academic and Welfare Officer Natalie Kempston

Not present RCSU Welfare Officer Fredrick Barker, RCSU Academic Affairs Officer Cecile Borkhataria ICSMSU Rep 12 & GEP Ken Wu, BME Officer Bilal Khan, Campaigns Officer Chinemelu Ezeh, LGBT portfolio Officer Elizabeth Campbell, International Officer Jitin Li, Ethics & Environmental Officer Laura Johnston, Gender Equalities Officer Marisa Lewis, GSA Physical Sciences academic and Welfare Officer Ross Webster, GSA Life Science Academic and Welfare Officer Helen Pennington, GSA Engineering Academic and Welfare Officer Nicholas Ng, GSA Business Academic and Welfare Officer Simon Schillebeeckx

1. CHAIRS BUSINESS

NOTED:

- a) Council members were reminded that the meeting starts at 6.30pm and to arrive before this time to allow for signing in so that the meeting can start promptly.
 - b) It was reminded to request printed copies of papers in advance of the meeting if required.
 - c) Faculty Union Presidents were reminded to ensure their officers attend Council meetings.
 - d) Elections are currently open and Council members were asked to promote these.
 - e) The first email vote that was circulated after the last meeting of Council was passed unanimously and as such the following was resolved:
 - 1 - *To approve the nominations made by the Colours Committee.*
 - 2 - *To award Monya Zard Union Fellowship*
 - 3 - *To award Scott Heath Union Fellowship.*
 - 4 - *To grant Honorary Life Membership to the following*
 - President Scott Heath*
 - Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) Monya Zard*
 - Deputy President (Education) Jason Parmar*
 - Deputy President (Finance & Services) Michael Foster*
 - Deputy President (Welfare) Nicolas Massie*
 - Felix Editor Matthew Colvin*
 - ICSMSU President Suzie Rayner*
 - College Secretary Rodney Eastwood*
- i. The second email decision seeking changes to the Constitution fell.

2. MINUTES – 01.05.12

RESOLVED:

- 1) **To pass the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.**

3. MATTERS ARISING

NOTED:

- a) The possibility of a Postgraduate Sabbatical will be covered later in the agenda.

4. PRESIDENTS REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) A confidential paper was recently submitted to College Council from the President in response to College Accommodation Policy.
- b) The President will be emailing out the Union Strategy for consideration to Union Council shortly.
- c) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) **To accept the report.**

5. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS AND SOCIETIES)

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies)

NOTED:

- a) An update on the BUCS merger will be considered as AOB.
- b) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

6. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Education)

NOTED:

- a) A mums and dads social event will be taking place at the end of October. .
- b) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

7. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE & SERVICES)

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Finance & Services)

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

8. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (WELFARE) REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Welfare)

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

9. FELIX REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Felix Editor

NOTED:

- a) Felix now have a travel and puzzle editor in place.

- b) It was questioned if Felix has been distributed across the campus as there were a large amount of copies in the Beit Quad walkway all of Friday. The Felix Editor stated that they are distributed on Friday and then 'topped up' on Monday.
- c) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

10. GSA REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the GSSA President

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

11. CGCU REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the CGCU Representative

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To pass the report.**

12. ICSMSU REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the ICSMSU President

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

13. RCSU REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the RCSU President

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

14. RSMU REPORT

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the RSMU President

NOTED:

- a) The election for the vacancy caused by the Treasurer stepping down was held online which was a good test of moving RSM election online.
 - i. The online election process was successful and the RSM committee elections will most probably be held online.
- b) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

15. RENEWAL OF POLICIES

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) The Environmental Policy has been updated to remove the unrealistic targets.
- b) The Clubs and Societies Policy was withdrawn as this will be considered by Clubs and Societies Board in the first instance.
- c) Council moved to a vote on passing the presented amended policies with the exception of the Clubs and Societies policy, and they were all passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1) To pass the (see appendix)

- 1. Trading At Freshers' Fair Policy**
- 2. Transport Policy**
- 3. Reserved Powers Policy**
- 4. Mike The Micrometer Policy**
- 5. Prayer Space**
- 6. Use of Electronic Communication Devices Policy**
- 7. Equal Opportunities Policy**

To accept the modifications and renew:

- 1. Preservation of Queen's Lawn**
- 2. Environmental Policy**

16. IPPR RESPONSE

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) It was decided that the questions responded to were the most relevant to Imperial College Union.
- b) It was pointed by the President that this is the type of business that Council should be addressing and debating as this directly affects students.
- c) Council moved to a vote on accepting the response and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

17. OPEN ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote on accepting the response and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To lobby the Government to either (in order of preference):**
 - a. Change the proposal so that private companies do not profit from Government money.**
 - b. Find £50m from another source, other than research funding.**

18. LEAGUE TABLE FORMULATION

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) It is believed that the metrics used undermines Imperial College degrees.
- b) Students do not look at the science behind the creation of the league tables when considering tertiary education.
- c) The use of value added scores are flawed.
- d) Anyone who wants to be part of the working group are to email the President.
- e) Council moved to a vote on accepting the paper and it was passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To agree with the arguments in the paper. (see appendix)**
- 2) To seek support of national bodies.**
- 3) To lobby for changes to league tables to be reversed**
- 4) To form a working group to help the President achieve the resolves**

19. CHARITY REGISTRATION

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) The President is making time to meet with the various groups, such as Faculty Unions, Welfare Officers, Felix, AAO, MG Chairs etc, to discuss how the changes impact on them and to answer any questions before the next meeting of union Council.
- b) The repercussion of the Union not registering as a Charity will mean that it will become a department of College.
- c) Trustees have requested that a governance reform needs to take place before they take on increased liability.
- d) The unincorporated route is the way that the Union is working towards achieving.
- e) The majority of students on the board will be elected.
- f) The Appointments and Remunerations subcommittee will put forward the most appropriate students for ratification by Union Council.
- g) Court's remit would be shifted to under the Trustee Board and be renamed the 'Governance Committee' with a slight change to its operations.

- h) Currently the Executive Committee is still able to sign off expenditure for up to £500 000 which is extremely risky and this has been proven by recent extreme loss making events that have been signed off by the Executive Committee.
- i) The function of Executive Committee on CSP's is not being changed.
- j) In regards to the RSM becoming its own entity, it was stated that the RSM became absorbed into the CGCU when the departments merged.
 - i. Representation wise on Council, the RSM would not be 'overpowering' due to Ordinary Members having proportional power.
 - ii. Concern was raised that there is a danger with Faculty DUGS being presented with differing student opinion which will weaken the student voice. It was reminded that all students' views should be balanced and the role of the reps is to give all opinions.
- k) In regards to the funding for the Postgraduate Sabbatical, this is still in the process of being secured from College and this is proving to be difficult.
 - i. Realistically if funding is secured, this won't be until next year.
 - ii. Consultation will take place with Postgraduates to gauge what they expect and want from a Postgraduate Sabbatical.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

20.1 BUCS MERGER

NOTED:

- a) The Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) gave background to the ICSMSU/IC BUCS merger.
- b) The ICSMSU President stated that there was supposed to be a vote at the BUCS AGM in regards to the merger however this did not occur.
- c) There are 2 current options – combine at ICSMSU/IC BUCS teams or forcibly split which would mean that only Medics could play for ICSMSU etc.
- d) The ramifications on actual BUCS points are marginal however the effects on the teams are massive.
- e) It was decided that the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) and ICSMSU President arrange a meeting with relevant parties and bring back a response to Council for approval.

RESOLVED:

- 1) The Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) and ICSMSU President arrange a meeting with relevant parties and bring back a response to Council for approval.**

20.2 SENATE

NOTED:

- a) Council were asked to ratify the President as the second representative on College Senate.
- b) There were no objections and it was passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the President be the second Union representative on College Senate.**

Meeting closed 7.30pm

Approved as a correct record at a
meeting of Union Council

on _____ 2012/13

_____ Chair of the Meeting

Space for Friday Prayers

The Union Notes:

1. That congregational Friday prayers are an obligation on Muslims.
2. That congregational Friday prayers have been performed weekly, during the lunch break, in the Union building for the past two years.
3. These are organised by the ICU Islamic Society and in excess of 300 Imperial College students and staff regularly attend prayers.
4. That in the past, there was a block booking at the old Southside Gym which guaranteed an adequate place for Friday prayers every week.
5. That in the past Friday prayers have taken place in numerous venues, resorting to the Queen's Lawn in the rain when no other location was available.
6. There have been situations where Union space is unavailable, either because of a booking clash or because of construction work. This has meant alternative, and often inadequate, arrangements have had to be made for Friday prayers.
7. There is great difficulty with informing and directing in excess of 300 people to different locations every week for the Friday prayer.

The Union Believes:

1. That students should have the right and access to provisions to practise their religion.
2. That according to the Clubs & Societies policy, the Union has a duty to ensure that resources are provided for welfare needs – this includes congregational Friday prayers.
3. That the College has the responsibility to provide adequate facilities to clubs and societies of Imperial College Union in line with the Code of Practice it has with ICU.

The Union Resolves:

1. For the Union to ensure sufficient space is available for Friday congregational prayers.
2. To provide at least one week's notice of changes to the Friday prayer location.
3. For the President to lobby the College to provide alternate space, should Union space be unavailable for reasons beyond the Union's control.

Preservation of Queen's Lawn

The Union Notes:

1. That Queen's Lawn is one of the few remaining green spaces on the South Kensington campus.
2. That Queen's Lawn is extensively used by students and staff as a social area throughout the year and especially during the summer months.
3. That Queen's Lawn is used for several prestigious and important events including Freshers' Fair, the Summer Ball and Commemoration Day.
4. That the croquet club use Queen's Lawn for their core activity.
5. That Queen's Lawn is home to three memorials to both students and staff, the sites to which these memorials will be relocated have not yet been identified and it is questionable that established living monuments will survive transplantation.
6. That building on the Queen's Lawn will greatly inconvenience a large proportion of the staff and students based in South Kensington and will have a large and negative impact on the quality of their working environment for a number of years.
7. That the Central Library suffers from unfavourable levels of natural light.
8. That College has submitted a planning proposal to Westminster City Council (ref: 06/02104/FULL) to erect a three storey temporary building, covering 1/3 of Queen's Lawn for a period of two years as well as a two-storey temporary building on the car-park next to the Skempton Building.
9. This planning application was submitted on the 17th of March, yet students were not informed, the statutory planning notices were not placed in the immediate vicinity of the site and the proposed development was only discovered the day before the deadline for objections.
10. The impact of placing a temporary building on the Queen's Lawn will last longer than the two years that the building will be present as it will take time for plants and the lawn itself to become re-established.
11. The designs for the development are not sympathetic to the surroundings which set the scene for a Grade II listed building.
12. Placing temporary structures on green space is less environmentally sound than placing them on hard-standing.

The Union Believes:

1. That it is important to maintain green space within the campus.
2. That the loss of even part of Queen's Lawn would significantly impact on the enjoyment that is gained from it.
3. That erecting unsightly Portakabins would detract greatly from events held on the Queen's Lawn.
4. That the proposed development would further reduce the levels of natural light in the Central Library.
5. It is disrespectful to remove the memorials currently situated on and around Queen's Lawn.
6. That students have a right to have input into developments on campus.
7. That alternative sites are available by placing Portakabins on hard-standing rather than green space (such as the car park outside Chemistry which had Portakabins on it housing building works until recently).

The Union Resolves:

1. To lobby college to abandon the proposed development and find suitable alternative sites that will not involve the destruction of green space.
2. To follow a policy of active protest should College refuse to revise the development.

3. To seek ways of ensuring that Queen's Lawn and other areas of green space are protected for future generations.
4. To ensure that students are informed of any future developments on campus.

MIKE THE MICROMETER

1. Mike the Micrometer is the inviolate mascot of Imperial College Union.
2. It is inappropriate for any constituent part of ICU to violate an ICU mascot.
3. It is unacceptable for any constituent part of ICU to steal an ICU mascot.
4. Mike the Micrometer should attend all important Union events at the discretion of the President.
5. The President may appoint a "Mike-Bearer" if he or she feels incapable of bringing Mike to any event.
6. Mike the Micrometer shall remain under the guardianship of the President.
7. Mike the Micrometer shall remain in the President's Office when not attending events.

No-one should repair, alter or modify Mike the Micrometer without first obtaining consent from ICU Executive Committee.

RESERVED POWERS POLICY

1. All policies and resolutions of the Trustee Board shall be reserved to the Trustee Board (as “reserved matters” under the Constitution) unless specifically devolved by the Trustee Board.

2. Authority to amend or revoke the following Council policies is reserved to the Council alone:
 - i. Clubs and Societies Policy parts A and B only
 - ii. Colours Policy
 - iii. Disciplinary Policy
 - iv. Equal Opportunities Policy
 - v. Felix Policy
 - vi. Transport Policy parts A, B and C only

3. The Clubs and Societies Board and the Representation and Welfare Board may pass or amend Union policy relevant to their areas of activity.

4. Only the Union Council may approve policy that obliges the Union to adopt a unified public stance on a political matter.

TRADING AT FRESHERS' FAIR

ICU Notes

1. The Union provides an annual Freshers' Fair at the start of each academic session.
2. That the event is aimed at encouraging the student body to participate in the wide range of Clubs and Societies on offer at Imperial.
3. That the event also marks the best opportunity for Imperial College Union to market its central services and activities to the students, especially Freshers.
4. In addition, there is a corporate presence at the event.
5. In the past there has been a rule that no trading shall take place during the fair. This has applied across the board, to externals and clubs and societies. However Union Ents was exempt from the policy.
6. Although this rule does not appear in current Union Policy, it has always been included in the Terms and Conditions on the booking form for external organisations.
7. The launch of online sales of tickets and club membership via www.imperialcollegeunion.org enables electronic sales to be made during the time of Fresher' Fair. Restricting the online sales part of www.imperialcollegeunion.org for the time of the Fresher' Fair is an impractical option.

ICU Believes

8. Corporate presence at these events is welcome.
9. That the intention of the restriction on trading is to avoid students paying to join many clubs and societies and later realising that there simply isn't the time to pursue a large number of extra-curricular activities.
10. That students expect to be able to purchase food and drink from College and Union bars and catering outlets during the event.
11. That it is convenient and beneficial for both students and the Union for tickets to Union events to be available for purchase during the fair.

ICU Further Believes

12. Collection of membership fees at the Fresher' Fair by clubs and societies is not in the best interests of the student body, though the option to buy membership online will exist during the time of the Fresher' Fair.
13. Trading by a corporate body will not be in the best interests of the student body present at Fresher' Fair.

ICU Resolves

14. Trading at Freshers' Fair, either in memberships or in other goods or services shall not be permitted.
15. Any external organisation given use of a stall or space at Freshers Fair shall not be permitted to exchange goods or services for payment.

Transport Policy

A. General

1. This policy covers the use of the Union's transport fleet including vehicles owned by any constituent part of the Union, and sets out responsibilities and procedures for use of the vehicles, registration of drivers and incident procedure.

2. Parts A, B, and C are the preserve of council while the Executive Committee determines operational policy (remaining parts).

B. Responsibilities

3. The President has ultimate responsibility for the transport fleet, strategy, and driver and passenger conduct.

4. The Union shall ensure that the fleet is maintained in a roadworthy condition, and overseeing that minibus drivers are of an acceptable standard.

5. The Union shall be responsible for receiving and recording accounts of vehicle bookings and incidents, and reporting these as required in this policy.

6. The Silwood Park committee are responsible for maintaining and booking any of the Union's fleet in their possession.

7. The driver of a vehicle is legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle and conduct of it's passengers when on the road. If for any reason a driver or passengers are concerned with the condition of the vehicle then it should not be used.

C. Disciplinary action

8. The President shall from time to time, in consultation with the members of the Executive Committee issue a set of recommended fines and charges for minor offences, which shall be available to any Member of the Union or registered driver. The fines and charges may be added to the hire charge in instances of carelessness, or paid personally by the concerned driver, all drivers, or some or all passengers as appropriate in cases of more serious negligence.

9. In the case of more serious incidents, indicating dishonesty, substandard driving ability, or behaviour likely to cause a danger to passengers, the President or his or her nominee may:

- i. deregister and ban a driver for a period of time or indefinitely,
- ii. require a person to undertake a new test to reregister as a driver, alongside such extra tuition or testing as may be required,
- iii. deregister and ban drivers within a club or society or group (where the behaviour of the group as a whole warrants it),
- iv. ban a club or society or group from using the Union's fleet.

10. Action in paragraphs 8 and 9 constitute summary punishment under the Disciplinary Policy and are subject to appeal and written notification, as detailed in that policy.

11. The President or his nominee is responsible for writing to any individual whom action has been taken against under paragraph 8, informing him or her of the decision, other action that has or will be taken, rights of appeal, and reasons for it as soon as is practically possible. This action shall also be reported to the Executive Committee.

12. The most serious incidents may involve an individual or club or society being referred to the Disciplinary Committee as per the Disciplinary Policy. Action of this nature shall be reported to the Executive Committee.

D. Registration of drivers

Requirements for drivers

13. All registered drivers of Union vehicles must be a registered student at Imperial College (Union Full Member), a member of the College staff or Union staff, or a Union Life or Associate Member.

14. All registered drivers of Union vehicles must also be at least twenty-one years of age and have a held full European Union B manual category (car) driving licence for the previous two years.

15. Drivers shall sign a declaration stating that they have complied with the requirements for drivers in this policy and any other decision of the Executive Committee. Any previous

disqualification from driving, valid endorsements or current restrictions on a driving licence must be declared, and driving history provided with this declaration. Changes to any information provided on a declaration must be reported via a new declaration.

16. Individuals shall cease to be registered drivers if they no longer fulfil the terms of paragraphs 13-15.

How drivers are registered and tested

17. The Membership Services Department shall appoint a number of individuals who shall be permitted to approve drivers for registration. The Executive Committee shall approve guidelines for the Membership Services Department with respect to individuals applying for driver status.

18. The Executive Committee shall approve a form of assessment which must be undertaken and passed by prospective drivers. This assessment will include a theory element which includes, but is not limited to, the current legislation applicable to minibus driving in the UK.

19. Registration as a driver shall normally be valid for three years in the first instance, subject to the driver still fulfilling the terms in paragraphs 13-15. The Executive Committee shall approve a form of reassessment for individuals wishing to extend their driver status beyond this.

20. A list of registered drivers shall be kept by the Union.

Concerns about drivers

21. In the event of an incident the procedure in Parts H and C are to be followed.

22. If a person has private concerns of the driving ability or conduct of a registered driver, then they may bring the matter up in confidence with a member of the Membership Services Department.

23. If the concerns are of the driving ability or conduct of a member of the Membership Services Department the matter shall be brought up with the President.

24. No detrimental action of any kind will be taken against a person who makes such concerns known, provided the complaint is made in good faith and without malice. A complainant must make himself known to the responsible authority in paragraphs 22 and 23, but may request their identity be withheld from other individuals. Individuals are however encouraged to put their name to complaints.

25. The relevant member of the Membership Services Department or President as appropriate or their nominee shall consult with the driver concerned and make such investigations as appear necessary. That person shall refer the matter to the President who may take action under part C. If the allegation concerns the President, then the matter shall be referred to the Council Chair, who may take action under part C.

E. Maintenance of the fleet

26. The Union shall ensure vehicles are insured, taxed, MOT tests are carried out and other legal administrative duties are carried out at the appropriate times. The Union shall remove from use any vehicle that no longer complies with relevant road traffic legislation.

27. The Membership Services Department shall supervise elementary repair work on vehicles, but shall refer any more serious problems to a qualified mechanic or garage, as appropriate and within budgetary constraints.

28. The Membership Services Department shall remove a vehicle from use which in their opinion does not comply with road traffic legislation or is for some other reason unsafe to use.

29. In the event of a vehicle being removed from use, the authority removing it from use must inform the Union and any person whose booking may be rescinded immediately.

30. Users of vehicles have a responsibility to conduct checks at the start of their use of the vehicle, and report any minor faults which are present.

F. Booking vehicles

31. Vehicles shall be requested through the union website – www.imperialcollegeunion.org.

32. Requests for the hire of a vehicle may be made at any time in advance of the start of the proposed hire.

33. Requests for vehicles between October and March will be held in the order in which they were received; bookings will be made on the morning of the day of the proposed booking two

weeks hence. If the supply of vehicles is insufficient to meet requests, the Membership Services Department staff will allocate vehicles accordingly in the following priority order:

- i. Requests received after the bookings have been made for the period will only be accepted if there is availability at the time of receipt – existing bookings will not be displaced.
- ii. Length of booking – longer bookings will get priority over shorter bookings. This is to try to achieve a higher income for the vehicles.
- iii. Number of customers able to be accommodated (multiple bookings on a bus with are dovetailed will have priority over one booking of equal financial value).
- iv. Specialist equipment – roof racks and tow-bars. The more essential need will gain priority.
- v. The order in which the requests were received.
- vi. Multiple vehicles requested by a single customer for overlapping periods will be booked only if there is still availability after all other requests have been processed.
- vii. Requests for vehicles between April and September will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

34. Fees for use of vehicles shall be as determined by the Executive Committee.

35. If any vehicle has been purchased partly with contributions on behalf of a constituent part of the Union, the Executive Committee may determine a booking priority and fees according to the size of external contribution.

G. Motorised mascots

36. The former Constituent College Unions' motorised mascots (which include the car "Boanerges", the bike "Derrick", the truck "Clem" and the fire engine "Jezebel") are bound by this policy, but are also the responsibility of their respective clubs. 37. These mascots all remain permanently inviolate.

38. These vehicles are exempt from Parts D, E and F (driver registration, maintenance and booking). Appropriate driver registration and maintenance procedures shall be administered by their respective clubs. The respective clubs may make additional requirements upon drivers and their respective driver registration procedures are subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

39. The respective clubs are exempt from reporting incidents 41 *i),iv), and viii)* to the Union (though they may if they wish) with respect to their motorised mascots.

40. The respective clubs shall have a clear policy passed by their main policy-making body on the use and administration of their motorised mascots, including:

- i. holding the President of the club as ultimately responsible to the Sabbatical Officers for all use and administration of their mascots,
- ii. a line management and accountability structure for health and safety, finance, bookings and vehicle maintenance,
- iii. qualifications required of drivers (see paragraph 38) and their assistants,
- iv. who is permitted to use the vehicles and under what conditions, and
- v. dealing with minor incidents referred to in paragraph 39.

H. Incidents

41. An 'incident' shall be defined as:

- i. A vehicle breakdown,
- ii. An accident or situation that could easily have resulted in an accident
- iii. Use of the emergency equipment,
- iv. Any damage to the exterior or interior of the vehicle
- v. Any criminal driving offence or parking offence,
- vi. Consuming alcohol or smoking in the vehicle,
- vii. Use of a Union vehicle without permission, or on un-agreed terms,
- viii. Non-payment of charges for use,
- ix. Complaint from another road user,
- x. Failure to report an incident in this paragraph, and

xi. Any other incident that may give rise to action under the Union Disciplinary Policy, or breach of Health & Safety regulations.

42. Incidents include:

i. An incident involving a minibus, van, or other motorised vehicle owned or leased by the Union, and

ii. An incident involving use of a motorised vehicle on any activity organised by the Union, or its clubs and societies.

43. It is recognised that these incidents may not all be the responsibility of the driver or group using the vehicle. It is also recognised that the driver of the vehicle has a duty of care to the passengers and is responsible for incidents directly related to his driving, though this does not absolve the duty of passengers not to distract the driver or otherwise misbehave.

44. An incident as defined in paragraph 41 must be reported by the driver to the Union in soon as possible, but within twenty four hours.

45. The details of any incident and the driver at the time shall be recorded in writing by the driver on the appropriate form.

46. In the event of a more serious incident, or any incident listed in paragraphs 41 *iv* to 41 *xi*,

i. the President and Deputy President (Finance and Services) shall be informed,

ii. the President or his or her nominee shall make further investigations as to the circumstances of the incident, and may on the advice of the Membership Services Department take further action under Part C.

47. All incidents except those of a trivial nature, or exempt under paragraph 38, shall be reported to the Executive Committee.

**Imperial College Union
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

Imperial College Union Notes:

1. That human activities are having significant negative impacts on the planet including climate change, deforestation, pollution, biodiversity loss and general environmental degradation. 2. Part L of Building and Approved Inspectors (Amendment) Regulations 2006 require that all building work is carried out such that *“Reasonable provision shall be made for the conservation of fuel and power in buildings...”* and that *“...the building can be operated in such a manner as to use no more fuel and power than is reasonable in the circumstances”*.

Imperial College Union Believes:

1. That we as a Union have a responsibility to ensure that our activities and the activities of our members consider these impacts and include measures to minimise these impacts. 2. Employing methods to reduce our environmental impact will be to the benefit of both our current and future members by educating current members on methods of reducing these impacts and by preserving our environment for future members. 3. Small financial investments to mitigate negative environmental impacts result in potentially huge savings over the long term.

Imperial College Union Resolves:

WASTE REDUCTION:

1. The Union shall aim to establish what quantity of waste ICU produces annually[ci1] and estimate what proportion is disposed in landfill sites.
2. The Union aim to reduce waste sent to landfill to 70% of 2012 levels by 2014 by following the “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” philosophy.
3. The methods employed by the Union to reduce its waste should include but not be limited to:
 - a) Catering suppliers tasked to only deliver in minimal packaging (eg without lids)
 - b) Exploring reusable packaging (eg crates)
 - c) Reducing waste by using reusable crockery and cutlery instead of disposable crockery and cutlery in our catering outlets. For the purpose of maintaining the take-away option, biodegradable disposable alternatives may be used.
 - d) Reusing waste by using reusable glasses, for example made from hard plastic, instead of using single-use skiffs, except for high capacity events where this is impracticable.
 - e) Recycling waste by providing segregated recycling bins wherever there is currently an all-purpose bin in all Union buildings.
 - f) Ensuring that the Union’s food waste continues to be included in the College’s composting scheme.
 - g) Educating and encouraging all students to recycle their waste.
 - h) Where the equivalent product exists with a higher recycled and / or manufactured content, this should be procured preferentially where practicable. .
 - i) We will endeavour to print all documents on 100% recycled paper using vegetable based inks at a printer holding an ISO 14001 accreditation.

WATER USE:

1. The Union will cut consumption through installing simple devices in existing appliances that use water. This should include but not be limited to:
 - a. Low volume flushes (twin flush buttons).
 - b. Low flow, aerated showerheads (flow level <9litres/minute)
 - c. Percussion taps
 - d. Tap Inserts
 - e. Waterless urinals using a new valved system

2. When replacing appliances, The Union will choose water efficient models. The “DEFRA and HM Revenue & Customs Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme for Water Technologies” shall be used to set a minimum benchmark for water efficiency in appliances (www.eca-water.gov.uk).
3. Work with catering suppliers to improve the efficiency of water use during production
4. Train all staff in water efficiency practices

CARBON EMISSIONS:

1. The total carbon dioxide emissions of the Union for electricity and heat from July 2009 to July 2010 is 178.92 Tonnes CO₂ per year. (Imperial College London Carbon Desktop)
2. The Union shall seek to reduce its carbon emissions by 20% of the July 2010 baseline by August 2014, in line with the College’s target, by following the “Low Carbon Hierarchy” approach.
3. Specific methods to be employed by the Union to reduce its carbon emissions shall include but not be limited to:

Energy:

- a. Publicise the Union’s carbon emissions from heat and electricity to its students by linking to the Union’s Carbon Desktop page from the Union website
- b. Reducing energy use through maximising building energy performance. Both through building design and efficient end use. Any future building work shall incorporate energy efficiency initiatives including secondary glazing, low-energy lighting (including motion-sensor controls), draft reduction and services insulation.
- c. Turning off all electronic equipment such as computers, printers and plasma screens when not in use, especially overnight in the SAC and Union Offices. Plug sockets should also be switched off when not in use.
- d. Substitute carbon-emitting energy for renewable energy by lobbying the College to use energy supplies from a low-carbon source.
- e. Support and where feasible, pursue proposals for installation of onsite renewable energy/low and zero-carbon technology on Union buildings and/or IC campuses generally.
- f. Avoid use of patio heaters and similar appliances and discourage the use of personal heaters.
- g. Set double sided printing as standard in the SAC and Union Office.
- h. Training all staff in energy efficiency practices
- i. Minimise energy use in food production, transportation and storage via:
 - i. Usage of energy efficient equipment
 - ii. Reduction of suppliers / multi-temperature vehicles via liaison with College Commercial services

Transport:

- j. The Union will continue to send all waste cooking oil (estimated at 40L/week) to be made into Biodiesel in line with College’s policy.
- k. The Union shall work towards storing Biodiesel in College for the minibus fleet, to be used by clubs and societies.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING POLICY

The Union aims to offer sustainable catering and retail products that are produced, processed and traded in ways that:

- Contribute to local economies and sustainable livelihoods
- Avoid damaging natural resources and contributing to climate change
- Protect the welfare of animals

To achieve this, the Union aims to:

- Ensure that the products it buys for catering and retail are of the highest environmental certification, and are sourced as locally as possible within reason.
- Only source meat which is reared according to sustainable farming methods and locally sourced where possible.
- Consider the use of cost effective cuts of meat that promote responsible animal welfare
- Work with Assured Food Standards to procure “Red Tractor” products where practicable
- Use free range eggs and win the ‘Good Egg’ Award
- Reduce the amount of foods from animal origin (meat, dairy and eggs) served by providing more vegetarian and vegan options and identifying them on the menu
- To consider the embedded water when choosing products, ingredients and services.
- Include the Part Time Carnivore affiliation logo on menus to encourage students to choose vegetarian options
- Only use fish from sustainable sources (those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council), and achieve MSC accreditation
- Maintain Fairtrade Accreditation as laid out in the Fairtrade Policy and commit to buy Fairtrade produce where possible
- Menu planning to reflect seasonal foods
- Offer some organic meal options

N.B. The Union currently uses College suppliers for most of its catering procurement. The measures the suppliers are aiming to implement are marked with (College)

Bottled water

The Union recognises the negative environmental impact of bottled water consumption and so resolves to:

Only sell brands of ethically sourced bottled water in any Union outlet where bottled water is sold as determined by Executive Committee.

Encourage College to invest in more water fountains and look into making more available in the Union building, as well as raising awareness of pre-existing water fountains

Make reusable drinking bottles available in the Union shop and newsagent at a price our students consider reasonable

GREEN WEEK:

1. Green Week shall be set to take place during the first term of the year. . a. Green week shall include a ‘meat-free’ day, on which everything sold or given away by any Union outlet must be vegetarian. There must also be at least one vegan option. This includes drinks.

b. It should seek to educate as many students as possible about the full range of environmental impacts their actions have and ways to reduce them, as well as informing on global environmental issues

2. The Environmental Officer is in charge of Green Week and can assemble a committee to help him/her.

3. The duties and responsibilities of the Environmental Officer are laid out in the Representation Policy.

HALLS

The Environmental Officer shall ensure that a Halls Green Rep is elected from every Hall as part of their Halls Committee each year, and is responsible for communicating environmental campaigns to them as well as lending support to their efforts to reduce the environmental impact of their Hall.

The Environmental Officer shall liaise with Estates and the Student Switch Off Campaign to publicise campaign events to encourage as wide a participation as possible.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. It is the responsibility of the Environmental Officer, the Deputy President (Welfare) and ultimately the President to ensure that these policies are upheld.
2. The entire organisation, notably staff responsible for areas directly affected by the policy, will support the implementation of this policy.
3. The Environmental Officer shall submit a report to Council at the end of each term summarising the condition and progress of the Union's environmental record. a. The Autumn term report should be to the first Council after Green Week to report on that week.

4. The Union shall lobby college to mitigate its contribution to climate change through the implementation of similar policies.

Future Projects

The following measures are considered goals for the future but are currently unfeasible due to their high cost:

1. Water from guttering being diverted to a water tank for use as grey water in toilets
2. Installing solar water heaters and or panels on the roof of the Union Building
3. Installing green roofs on the roof of the Union Building

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Statement of intent

1. Imperial College Union as an employer, a service provider and a representative body for students is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all. The Union wishes to develop and maintain an environment that encourages all to contribute fully to the life and work of the Union and which is supportive of the dignity and self-esteem of individuals.
2. Any election, selection, promotion and training of officers and staff will be based solely on merit, competence and skills. Unfair discrimination and harassment are not permitted in any area of Union activities.
3. All staff, job applicants, students and other people having dealings with the Union will receive equal treatment regardless of race, colour, sex, nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, disability, parental status, religious and political belief, socio-economic background, HIV status, trade union membership, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, age, degree status, degree subject and degree year (all subject to the law). Unequal treatment upon these grounds constitutes unfair discrimination.
4. All Union business including that within Clubs, Societies and Projects shall be conducted in English only excepting where an alternative is used specifically for educational purposes and does not inhibit the ability of any student to participate.
5. It is the shared responsibility of all staff and students to help foster an environment free of unfair discrimination and harassment. However the burden falls upon the shoulders of the Union Officers the permanent staff and Union Officers to ensure that Imperial College Union is free from institutional bias, hatred, unfair discrimination and harassment.
6. The Union also recognises its role under law (particularly section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010) to secure freedom of speech, within the law, for its members, guests and visitors, and not to deny use of its premises on any ground connected with the beliefs or views of an individual or of any member of a body, or the policy or objectives of that body; to the extent permitted by law.
7. It is recognised that some of the, and societies and projects may provide activities or enter competitions which discriminate on certain grounds (such as separate men's and women's teams or age requirements). Such discrimination shall be considered fair, but only to the extent that it is permitted by law and is reasonable.
8. It is recognised that, in exceptional circumstances and as a consequence of the Union's duty of care for its members, there may be a requirement to prohibit individual involvement of students in some activities where the student's actions, through negligence, recklessness or lack of skill could cause danger to themselves or others.

Implementation

Policy

9. The Deputy President (Welfare) has overall responsibility to the President for the formulation and monitoring of this Policy.
10. Imperial College Union will ensure that all Union staff are made aware of the Policy - all permanent staff will be issued with a copy and it will be referred to in the student staff handbook and at training. All new staff members will be provided with a copy of this Policy in their employment packs. Students will be made aware of this policy on regular occasions - via the Student Handbook, posters and other awareness events. All clubs and societies will be provided with a copy of this Policy.
11. The Equal Opportunities Officer (whose remit is described in the Constitution), with assistance from the Welfare Officers (whose remit is described in Point 36 of the Representation Policy), will monitor discrimination on campus and promote equality among the student body via campaigns and liaison with affiliated clubs, societies and projects.

12. Imperial College Union will ensure that all published material is consistent with this Policy.
13. Any member or employee of the Union who fails to comply with this policy may be dealt with under the "Removal of officers", "Removal of members" and staff disciplinary procedures outlined in the Clubs and Societies Policy, under the Union Disciplinary and Complaints Regulation, Disciplinary Policy or College policy.
14. Any club, society or project which fails to comply with this Policy or which promotes aims and objectives in conflict with this Policy shall be suspended by the process outlined in the Clubs and Societies Policy and will cease to be granted the use of Union resources and facilities, including those under its control.
15. The Representation and Welfare Board should review this Policy every year, and this review reported to the Council.

Subordinate Union rules

16. Any Union policy (except that of the Council), subordinate constitution or other Union rule which contravenes this policy may be struck down by the Union Court. The Union Court may draw to the Council's or Trustee Board's attention any of its policies or resolutions which breach or appear to breach this policy.

Employment practices

17. Day-to-day implementation of this Policy in respect of staff falls to the General Manager.
18. Imperial College Union can only enforce this Policy within the bounds of applicable law.
19. The Union will advertise all posts in accordance with College HR Policy.
20. All job advertisements will carry the statement "Imperial College Union is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in employment."
21. No application form for employment will require information that could be used to discriminate against applicants on the grounds stated in section 2, except in a detachable and voluntary form for the sole purposes of monitoring the composition of applicants by reference to age, sex and marital status.
22. The composition of applicants regarding age, sex and marital status will be monitored, as will the composition of the Union's staff.
23. A flexible hours working arrangement will be adopted for all posts, where such an arrangement does not impinge on the availability or quality of Union services.
24. Imperial College Union will consider job sharing for all appropriate posts.
25. Where possible the provision of childcare for the children of staff will be pursued in negotiations with College.
26. The Union commits to making all employees aware of the support they are entitled to, such as parental leave.
27. The attention of all members of selection panels will be drawn to the requirements of this Policy and no one shall be appointed to such a panel who does not accept it.

Harassment

Statement of intent

28. Imperial College Union is committed under its Constitution to advance the education of its members and to promote, without prejudice, their welfare at all times.
29. It is the responsibility of all staff and members to ensure that individuals do not suffer from any form of harassment and that they are supported in any way necessary.
30. However, a larger burden must fall on Union officers and senior managers with regard to ensuring the Union is free from bias and harassment and to ensure that those who may have suffered harassment are offered support and advice with taking the complaint forward.
31. Imperial College Union holds any case of harassment as serious. Action may follow under the Union Disciplinary Policy, or the case may be referred to College. The Union Disciplinary Policy

provides a mechanism for a fair appraisal of the complaint, support for those suffering and punishment for those deemed to have harassed others. Such mechanisms will also be flexible enough to deal with cases where false allegations may have been made maliciously or mischievously. The Union Disciplinary Policy will be used against those found to have made such false allegations.

Defining harassment

32. **Racial harassment** - is committing or inciting any hostile or offensive act or expression by a person against another person which is motivated by racial or ethnic difference. Such behaviour includes derogatory name calling, insults, and racist jokes, racist graffiti, verbal abuse and threats, physical attack, and ridicule of an individual because of cultural differences.

33. **Sexual harassment** - occurs in a variety of situations that share a common element i.e. the inappropriate introduction of sexual activity or comments into any situation. It often involves relationships of unequal power and may contain elements of coercion. Sexual harassment includes: unwanted sexual advances, sexually explicit remarks or innuendoes, intentional physical contact, the display of pornographic, sexually offensive or inappropriate material, verbal threats or abuse, and other actions which cause the person to feel threatened or humiliated. Members of either sex can experience sexual harassment.

34. **Other forms of harassment** - can include bullying or repeated reference to personal traits, appearance, or on the grounds referred to in the Statement of Intent. Actions designed to undermine an individual's professional competence or confidence are unacceptable. Such actions may include public or persistent unwarranted criticism or exclusion from normal activities. The distinction between strong management / leadership and bullying is that, whilst the former is intended to promote desired work performance, the latter is intended to hurt or undermine the individual.

35. These are examples of well-observed forms of harassment, however they are not meant to be exhaustive. Differences in culture or attitude, and misrepresentation of certain social signals, can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another.

36. This Policy shall take behaviour that is intimidating to the recipient and would be regarded as harassment by any reasonable person as the defining feature of harassment.

Dealing with harassment

37. Some forms of harassment can be remedied by approaching the person, explaining the nature of the complaint and stating that such behaviour is unacceptable.

38. If such behaviour does not stop, then the complainant can advise the person that they will make a note of the details and dates of any relevant incidents (to include the way in which the behaviour may have affected his/her day-to-day activities) with a view to bringing a formal complaint if the behaviour does not stop. Should the complainant wish to take things further (for example if the behaviour does not stop after advice from the complainant or the complainant does not wish to speak to the alleged harasser due to fear of approaching them) they should approach the Deputy President (Welfare), or the Union Adviser for confidential advice. Faculty Union Officers and Central Union Welfare Officers should act as points of contact in this regard and should work with the Equal Opportunities Officer to resolve any cases.

39. If the first approach does not result in satisfactory progress the complainant is encouraged to approach either the Deputy President (Welfare) or the Union President.

40. In cases of alleged harassment as an employee of the Union it may be appropriate to first approach the Union General Manager for confidential help and advice.

41. Those approached are required to deal with all complaints of harassment with all possible speed. Investigations should be handled in a professional, independent fashion, remain objective and handled confidentially with respect to the rights of both the complainant and the alleged

harasser. The officer approached is encouraged to seek consent from the complainant to liaise with the Deputy President (Welfare) for help and advice in proceeding with the complaint.

42. Any initial discussions with the alleged harasser will not take place without the permission of the complainant nor will the complainant's name be released without prior agreement from the complainant. Further investigation under the Union Disciplinary Policy or Disciplinary and Complaints Regulation will require that the complainant's name be made available to the alleged harasser.

43. If the complaint is considered serious and the majority of the alleged actions occurred in Union areas, then complainant should be passed onto the Union President and action will be taken under the Union Student Disciplinary Policy or Union Disciplinary and Complaints Regulation.

44. If the complaint is serious and the alleged harasser is a member of the College staff, the complainant would be encouraged to follow the appropriate action laid down in College's Equal Opportunities Statement with full support from Imperial College Union.

45. Incidents of physical assault in Union areas will be dealt with under the Union Disciplinary Policy. Serious incidents or those occurring elsewhere that have been brought to our attention by the complainant will be followed up with College and could potentially result in a College Discipline Hearing.

46. It should be stressed that should the complainant feel unable to approach the alleged harasser, any subsequent action / investigation should not normally be impeded by such a decision.

47. Imperial College Union will seek to be part of the College's network of support advisers - intended to provide trained confidential and informal support to members and staff who feel they are being harassed. Those participating in the scheme will include the Deputy President (Welfare) and the Union Adviser.

Disability

Statement of intent

48. Imperial College Union is committed to protecting the rights of disabled people to work and use the Union as any other member of Imperial College Union's staff and membership. As part of this protection the Union may make "reasonable adjustments" if the employee arrangements or premises places disabled people at substantial disadvantage compared with those who are not disabled.

49. Imperial College Union recognises the definition of disability as laid down in the Equality Act 2010 - a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. As such the Union will not discriminate in terms of employment, service provision or representation for any reasons relating to disability.

50. The Union should foster an environment free of any negative bias, discrimination or harassment with regards to disability within the bounds of this Policy.

ICU Representation and Welfare Board

51. The Representation and Welfare Board should regularly review this Policy in context with other Union Policies and events and aid the Deputy President (Welfare) in its review and the subsequent reporting to Council on an annual basis as laid down in section 12.

Lawful Discrimination *Statement of intent*

52. Imperial College Union is committed to providing services to its members which are accessible, free from unfair discrimination and free from harassment.

53. Under limited circumstances it is necessary to limit access in order to provide services which are free from harassment.

54. Central Union Committees will consider individual cases of lawful discrimination on a case by case basis.

Services that are single sex are deemed acceptable when:

55. The service is provided for reasons of privacy or decency and is meant to avoid serious embarrassment which would be caused if members of the opposite sex were present,

56. Services are provided by student groups, voluntary groups or charities whose primary purpose is to provide services to one sex,

57. Services are offered by a religious organisation, to comply with the doctrines of that religion, within the bounds of UK law.

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The Executive Committee Notes

1. Several requests have been made this year to fund personal electronic communication devices from Union funds for officers.

The Executive Committee Believes

1. That the majority of Union officers could construct an argument as to why they should receive a subsidy for their personal electronic communication devices due to the fact that use of these devices is now so widespread.
2. That all Union officers should be treated consistently. It is not fair to allow some officers to claim against their personal electronic communication devices bills without affording all officers the same privilege.
3. Allowing all student officers to claim back part of their personal electronic communication devices bill on account of the fact that they have used it for Union business would be unaffordable.
4. Union officers currently have access to landlines free of charge in Union offices and that the overwhelming majority of Union business is of a non-urgent nature and can be conducted at a time of their choosing.

The Executive Committee Resolves

1. To prohibit the distribution of Union funds to student officers to pay for their personal electronic communication devices. In the case of an emergency where significant use of a personal electronic communication devices is necessary (for example running a large event) then permission for a refund must first be obtained in advance from the Deputy President (Finance and Services).
2. To mandate all CSC's and Faculty Unions who have allocated money for this purpose for the coming year to re-allocate it according to their own priorities.
3. To communicate this policy to the relevant officers with financial responsibility for CSC's or Faculty Unions

Appendix ii

IPPR “The future of Higher Education in England” Call for Evidence

Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7

Question 1

How should our HE sector be organised to achieve the best outcomes for individuals, institutions and society?

Before moving to a definitive answer, we seek to expand and consider the *multiple points of commonality* that exist between Higher Education Institutions. Using these links, we will then provide our opinions as to how each should be taken into consideration.

We believe that the current system of mission groups serves a purpose, for the mission of an institution is indeed an important point of commonality between itself and the rest of the sector: shared interests and best practices are relevant to similarly focused institutions. A common mission statement is not the only point of commonality between institutions though. Points of commonality with other institutions outside of mission groups are already appearing – as are sects within mission groups based on further similarities. As mission groups tend to be quite large, the range universities in the same mission group span - when considering other points of potential commonality such as funding, academic standing and demographic - is vast.

For example, The Russell Group contains the twenty four most research intensive universities in the country, however they spread across the top forty in terms of academic standing: the 1994 Group take many of the other top forty places in terms of perceived academic standing.

Since no two Universities teach to the same curriculum, Imperial College Union believes that it is not possible to say that all courses are equal. Courses with the same name do not conform to a standard, or syllabus – Physics between institutions can range through different emphases, often determined by the strengths of the institution: from theoretical to practical, to astrophysics to nuclear physics. The quantity of material taught between institutions on courses of the same name varies wildly too: Imperial College London is repeatedly told that it teaches too much by external academics who examine and review our courses. The increased variety of material that is covered though means that students receive a broader, fuller, grounding in their subject.

Linked to this, the academic standing of a University – as deemed by its peers, industry, the research it produces and the quality of the graduates it creates – can be deemed as another point of commonality between institutions. In this respect, St Andrews is of a similar academic standing to Universities within the Russell Group, and is compared against by many of the top academically ranked Universities in the Russell Group, yet, in the current organisation of the sector, it is not 'linked' to these Universities as such.

Some Universities rely heavily on local students – Glasgow and Derby to name two – purely due to the demographic of their surrounding area. In certain areas, many businesses support and rely upon the Universities close to them for recruitment: Derby has strong links with Rolls Royce, Aston has introduced a mandatory year in industry. This is potentially another point of commonality between institutions: whether they exist for a specific industry, or to give a broader, purely academic education. Links with industry –

for some Universities - promote employment upon graduating and are integral to the economic success of an area.

On the other hand, Imperial College's membership of the IDEA league (a group for 'STEM' Universities) does not have clear benefits for students. Whilst a comparison of Universities and their structures across international borders is interesting, it does not serve its intended purpose of furthering 'best practice' due to the different European education systems and the different issues their students face. A domestic group of 'STEM' Universities would probably be of benefit to Imperial, though there are no others in the country. This could work for specialised institutions that do have domestic institutions with similar specialisations.

Imperial College Union strongly believes that there is no case to separating teaching from research, as one feeds the other. Despite being benefactors of large research grants, we appreciate the importance of teaching and believe funding from a government body could be based on teaching quality too. How else can a research institution survive without young talent being grounded in the basics? Essential not only for research, of course, but teaching allows Bachelors and Masters graduates who don't progress into research to apply themselves to industries outside of the sector.

Whilst being supportive of using teaching to gauge funding in principle, the indicators used to determine the quality of teaching across institutions must be considered carefully. Value Added Scores and NSS Student Satisfaction do not reflect the quality of teaching: they reflect how hard a course is and whether students enjoy it. No two courses are the same: some are more academically stretching than others, and a proper measurement of the academic quality of a course must first be found before teaching can be used to distribute funding.

Overall, Imperial College Union believes that the sector should contain smaller groups of Institutions with as many points of commonality between each other as possible. This is already happening informally, with, for instance, the G5 – Cambridge, Imperial, LSE, Oxford and UCL. One perceived failing of a sector divided by mission groups is that bonds are being created outside of said mission groups. We do not see this as a failing, and would support more fluid relationships between institutions that have any point of commonality – making them the norm, rather than the exception. An alternative suggestion is that each institution should be a member of multiple 'groups', each of which reflects a potential point of commonality (mission, size, academic standing, industry training or purely academic, etc).

Question 2

To what extent should the overall structure of higher education be determined by market forces and to what extent should government play a strategic role?

Imperial College Union believes there can be a healthy mixture of collaboration and competition between Universities. Rivalry between London Universities is strong; yet, institutes such as the Francis Crick are centres for collaboration. One could argue that research should be collaborative, but teaching competitive: the battle for undergraduates between Imperial and UCL is still fierce despite partnering in research projects.

Whilst the National Union of Students is against the creation of a market, Imperial College Union supports it. The introduction of competition will cause the sector to innovate and improve faster. We believe that the poorer performing institutions will be forced to improve when overtaken in the rankings and by peer perception of other institutions (private or otherwise); injecting competition into teaching improves the quality of the teaching available to all students.¹ A market that caters to different demographics of students and offers more varying opportunities can only be a good thing.

For example, institutions that offer accelerated learning courses for those on a tight budget or keen for quicker progression could come one step closer to reality with private providers who are keen to create a market for themselves. An evaluation of 'pathfinder' accelerated courses by the Higher Education Academy found strong interest for such courses, as well as higher results than in the corresponding 'conventional' course - with accelerated students outperforming their peers by two-thirds of a degree classification.²

We strongly believe that the quality of education should be closely monitored: whether privately or publicly funded. This should mean that private Universities are regulated in some way. We also believe there needs to be regulation of non-educational aspects, such as admissions processes. For instance, the University of Phoenix has statistically some of the highest dropout rates and we believe that this is due to their aggressive recruitment tactics that lead students who are not completely committed to enrol. Given that these students have access to Government funding, this generates the company that runs the University a profit, but leaves the student in debt: and, if they've dropped out, without a degree.

Imperial College Union believes that government can and should play a strategic role without limiting the powers of a University. We propose that the Government adopt a set of principles to abide by, that set the support Universities can expect. The suggested principles are:

- Academic Independence
- Freedom for international migration

¹ 1994 Group press release, <http://www.1994group.ac.uk/newsitem.php?item=433>

² http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/flexiblelearning/Pathfinder_2011_AW_2_281111_1614.pdf

- Consultation on all matters affecting education
- Financial support to further knowledge

We support the government initiatives for widening participation and social mobility and welcome their strategic involvement in developing more socially diverse communities in higher education. Those that have the natural academic ability to study at a leading university, but are limited by the quality of their education in early life should still be given a chance to study at a top institution. This links to our proposals in Question 6 with regards to the whole education system.

We disagree with the belief that the rise in tuition fees has led to a drop in applications:

- The demographic of 18 year olds in the country is lower than normal
- The number of gap years taken last year before the new fees system was introduced dropped substantially
- When considering both of these factors, the difference is 1% on applications: natural variation.

Question 3

How can we fund an expanded HE sector in a way that is fair to graduates, universities and the taxpayer?

Graduates

We agree with the political consensus in the UK is that some form of contribution to higher education funding from graduates is necessary, as long as access to education itself is not based in any way on financial means.

However we are not convinced that a ‘full graduate tax’ would differ dramatically from the current settlement. In practice, the current fee repayment scheme is effectively a graduate tax with a individual maximum liability, with considerable flexibility in repayment conditions.

Unfortunately, widespread misunderstanding of the way the system works is having a negative effect on debt-averse families when considering higher education.³ A sector-wide effort to educate parents and prospective students would improve the perception of the graduate contribution to the HE sector as ‘fair’.

It is Imperial College Union policy to lobby for the extension of the new funding system to taught postgraduate students, as the requirement for up-front payment of fees excludes large numbers of qualified potential students from applying. This regressive ‘exclusionary step on the education ladder’ is a significant barrier to fairness in the wider HE sector beyond undergraduate study. We also believe that interest should not be charged on student loans for students who are still in higher education, regardless of whether it is part-time or full-time.

We agree that there is a strong social bias in university admissions, and that there is a role to be played by universities in tackling this, through school outreach programs and contextual admissions among other initiatives. We believe the root of the problem is not just in admissions, but in applications. It is unrealistic to expect university-led schemes alone to significantly change the social composition of university applications and admissions, particularly at elite universities, until major changes in early-years support and primary education have been made in order to reduce geographic and social educational inequality.

Universities

We also argue that the Browne Report and the Government’s White Paper was a missed opportunity to further explore a diversification of income sources for the sector, including contributions from employers and industry. Further investigation should be made into the fairness of, and possible Government support for, employer-support schemes that would see employers enlist students before they commence study, and ‘pay off’ their student debt in return for a minimum period of employment. Such schemes have the potential to encourage greater uptake of STEM subjects by debt-

³ Independent Taskforce on Student Finance Information – ‘less than one third of school pupils and prospective students fully understand’ the new system.

averse students, and give confidence to employers that a supply of qualified, competent future employees can be guaranteed.

The link between a graduate and their university would also be broken with a straight graduate tax, which is arguably unfair and not reflective of each institution's individuality in teaching abilities and provision of academic resources.

Attempting to prescribe or predict a 'balance' of private and public funding for the HE sector is not economically valid or possible, as this will continue to differ widely between individual institutions and mission groups.

Taxpayers

We believe that the idea of a graduate contribution to higher education is fair on taxpayers as it aligns the costs of the HE sector more accurately with the personal and social benefits. However, an ongoing contribution from the taxpayer to the HE sector, particularly in supporting research, is absolutely crucial to maintaining the UK's research and innovation base.

Question 4

What role can higher education play in promoting a rebalanced economy across England and safeguarding our position in the global economy?

Imperial College Union believes that higher education should play a different role across different part of the country, dependent on the needs and state of the local economy. The only way to solve the problem with the economy on a national scale, is to solve each local issue separately on a smaller scale.

We suggest devolving more power to local government, so they are empowered to do what is right for their local economy. In London, an area of relative affluence, this could include specifically protecting the international market of Higher Education. This should include measures to take international students out of the net migration figures and lifting the far too strict visa application procedures. In areas with weaker economies, it might mean giving more power to strong Higher Education Institutions in weak Local Education Authorities to develop links with industry and to increase the quality of the workforce by improving the quality of the education received; from child to graduate.

In response to the second part of the question regarding the country's position in the global economy, the argument for removing international students from net migration figures is also valid.

Students' Unions across the country are normalising and advocating entrepreneurship. Imperial College Union would like the government to aid and support this activity. In our organisation, we do this by inviting students to find fault, improve, and develop the Union as a profitable charity.

We give financial responsibility and training to two thousand volunteers a year, teaching them how to manage money and run finances efficiently and effectively.

Question 6

What contribution should higher education make to improving social mobility and building a more socially just nation?

Imperial College Union believes in the fundamental principle of social mobility – that an individual’s potential and quality of life should not be determined by accident of birth or class, and a nation is not socially just until that is true. We believe that further and higher education are fundamental tools in that goal which is why we support the principle of access to university based on ability rather than means.

However, as mentioned earlier, we believe that the potential of higher and further education to bring about social justice can only be fully realised when early-years support and primary and secondary education are capable of compensating for social circumstances in educational outcomes.⁴

We also support the diversification of study types – part-time, mature, flexible, distance – as this can only increase the number of potential students who would otherwise have not been able to consider study as an option. Universities should be increasingly free to offer courses of varying speeds and intensities in response to applicant demand, and innovation in this respect should be welcomed and supported by higher education agencies.

Imperial College Union also feels that particularly in subjects not offered widely, for instance Latin or Greek, or indeed Physics where some schools and colleges are struggling to attract teachers for certain disciplines, foundation courses may provide a solution. Pre-University courses would not restrict students’ choices of course or institution by opening previously closed opportunities to otherwise disadvantaged students.

⁴ Frank Field Review on Poverty and Life Chances: <http://www.frankfield.com/campaigns/poverty-and-life-changes.aspx>

Question 7

Does higher education have a role to play in shaping our national culture and strengthening ties of common citizenship?

Imperial College Union believes that there is little difference between the question of taking advantage of the entire HE sector's international standing, and the question of how HE can rebalance local and regional economies.

The globally competitive nature of the UK's HE sector offers an additional benefit to all universities: the opportunity to develop an internationalised workforce for and from their region. If regional universities are to boost job markets and growth in their local areas, then investment in international students, overseas graduate retention and overseas industry links are as important as similar schemes on a local level.

We fully support the idea of universities strengthening ties of common citizenship, but we do not see this as detracting from the idea of 'internationalising' UK students – but instead, as offering a new, global dimension to local civic identities.

League Table Formulation

Background

Imperial has been badly affected in recent league table results. Although this is partly due to the increased weighting of student satisfaction – which is a powerful lobbying tool when dealing with College – it has the detrimental effect of undervaluing our degrees.

Reversing these changes will be particularly difficult to propose without appearing whiny, which is why I propose seeking the help of as many influential (and sometimes similarly badly affected) groups.

I wish to argue that these changes are disadvantageous to all school leavers considering applying to a top university. Many school students will – understandably – rely on the league tables without taking into consideration the ‘science’ or ‘algorithm’ behind the table: they expect the institution running the league table to be acting in their best interests. In my opinion, the reality is they’re not.

Newspapers with a large amount of influence owe a duty to school leavers to fairly represent what students want (not to autocratically “move the goalposts”⁵ as was stated on twitter on launch of last guardian league table by its Editor).

The whole concept of a **Value Added Score** is flawed. This does not take into account how challenging a course is to students. Top Universities – to protect their reputation and the reputation of their graduates – will not confer top honours on their ‘average’ student. This in itself could be seen as the Guardian supporting the ‘watering down’ of standards that has proven to cause so many problems with A-Levels – eventually culminating with the introduction of the A* because so many students achieved an A grade.

“The value-added score compares students' individual degree results with their entry qualifications, to show how effective the teaching is. It is given as a rating out of 10”⁶. This is wholly untrue: a top institution that takes students with top A-Level grades, will still confer a range of degrees due to comparisons of exam scripts relative to their peers and is not representative of how effective teaching is in the slightest.

My other major concern is the **weighting of student satisfaction versus traditional indicators**. To determine the weighting of factors in a league table, we must first consider “*why do students go to university?*” Job prospects⁷.

“The survey is a measure of student opinion, not a direct measure of quality. It may therefore be influenced by a variety of biases, such as the effect of prior expectations. A top-notch university expected to deliver really excellent teaching could score lower than a less good university which, while offering lower quality teaching, nonetheless does better than students expect from it”⁸.

Indeed, the Guardian even themselves state that the most important reason is prospects:

“Pollsters asked 130,000 UK students, who had applied to university in the summer of 2006, but had not yet started their courses, why they wanted to go on to higher education and why they had chosen their particular course. The main reason most of them (35.1%) gave for going on to university was that it was part of their long-term career plan.”⁹

⁵ Source: <https://twitter.com/#!/judyfriedberg>

⁶ Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2012/may/22/key-to-university-guide>

⁷ Source: <http://www.futuretrack.ac.uk/public/2006resultscareer.php>

⁸ Source: <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/key/>

⁹ Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/mortarboard/2008/mar/17/dostudentschoosesubjectsfo>