



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
of the eighth 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 30 May 2013 at 6.30pm.

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
ACC Chair	Jake Woods
A & E Chair	Adam Funnell
OSC Chair	Wasim Khouri
RCC Chair	Joe Rumer
Gender Equalities Officer	Marisa Lewis
ICSMSU Welfare Officer	Steve Tran
CGCU Welfare Officer	Carol-Ann Cheah
ICSMSU Education Rep 12 & GEP	Ken Wu
GSA Physical Sciences Academic and Welfare Officer	Ross Webster
GSA Life Sciences Academic and Welfare Officer	Helen Pennington
GSA Business Academic and Welfare	Officer Simon Schillebeeckx
Disabilities Officer	Moeko Maiguma – Wilson
Non Faculty Ordinary Member	Jasper Montana
CGCU Ordinary Member PG	Richard Simons
RCSU Ordinary Member	Mariza de Souza
RCSU Ordinary Member PG	James Bannock
RCSU Ordinary Member PG	Xiaoran Lai
ICSMSU Ordinary Member PG	Maia Kavanagh Williamson
RCSU Ordinary Member UG	Stuart Haylock
Permanent observers	
Governance and Administration Manager (Clerk to Council)	Rebecca Coxhead

Observers: Felix Editor Tim Arbabzadah, Matt Allison, Yasmin Edwards

Apologies: ICSMSU President Shiv Vohra, GSA Chair Maryam Habibzay, RSM President Lewis Ryan, RCC Chair CGCU President Temiloluwa Ladega, UG, CGCU Ordinary Member UG, Joseph Gibbs, Member UG Jason Parmar, ICSMSU Ordinary Member UG Tagore Nakornchai, Interfaith Officer Aemun Reza, RAG Chair David Goldsmith, , CGCU Ordinary Member International Officer Jialin Li Silwood Park Chair Isabel Fenton CAG Chair Alihusein Kapasi Media Group Chair Joe Letts ICSMSU Education rep 4, Biomed and Pharm Matthew Hutchins CGCU Ordinary Member UG Thomas Lim ICSMSU Ordinary Member UG Shrawan Patel

Not present:

BME Officer Bilal Khan, RCSU Academic Affairs Academic Affairs Cecile Borkhataria, Campaigns Officer Chinemelu Ezeh, LGBT Portfolio Officer Elizabeth Campbell, CGCU Academic Affairs Officer Leonardo Paoli, , GSA Medicine Academic and Welfare Officer Natalie Kempston, GSA Engineering Academic and Welfare Officer Nicholas Ng, , ICSMSU Education Rep 359 Sybghat Rahim, CGCU Ordinary Member PG Tianyun Ye, Ethics and Environment Officer Laura Johnston RCSU President James Tsim RCSU Welfare Officer Fredrick Barker CGCU Ordinary Member PG Marianne Kordab

1. CHAIRS BUSINESS

NOTED:

- a) Reports from CU's and Felix will be presented at the next meeting of Council
- b) Elections and Union Awards are currently going on and Council were encouraged to promote these.

2. MINUTES – 30 April 2013

NOTED:

- a) Various typographical errors were pointed out.

RESOLVED:

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

NOTED:

- a) In regards to the follow up of PH Healthcare, the Deputy President (Welfare) stated that she is extremely frustrated by being blocked when asking the questions that have been asked by Council.
 - i. An example was given where a student was turned away from the Health Centre with experiencing an anaphylactic episode and an ambulance had to be called instead.
- b) The President stated that in regards to Departmental Cocktail Parties, there is a College and Union Space Agreement that needs to be abided to.
 - i. The agreement stated that Alcohol outside of the Union property can only be sold by College as it is under their licencing remit.
 - ii. College are being made aware of Departments breaking the rules and these are being addressed.

The agenda was reordered at this point to discuss agenda item 5 as the next item

5. UNIONS STANCE ON GRAD PAD

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

NOTED:

- a) The Council Chair welcomed the 2 representatives who live in Grad Pad who were there to offer their experience.
- b) Grad Pad exists over 3 sits with rents ranging from £190-£350.
- c) It is a potentially unrealistic expectation to expect international students to negotiate with the private market.
- d) College offered a £25 bursary this year for those who were offered a place in to Clayponds which then was replaced by Grad Pad accommodation.
 - i. College are not offering this bursary again and have justified this by stating this was a one off event.
- e) It was suggested that PG students should be entering in to the private housing market after a year however it was stated that some students have put down roots and established this as their home.
- f) It was pointed that PG's studying for a year the ones that are impacted the most.
- g) College should be offering affordable PG accommodation.
- h) It was suggested that the Union should be giving advice on alternative accommodation options.
- i) College have no legal requirement to offer accommodation.
- j) Imperial Home Solutions is 'useless' and it was queried if any vetting of agents occurs before they advertise their properties.
- k) If an International student does not have a UK based guarantor, they are asked to pay the entire 51 week rent up front.
 - i. The private market typically ask for between 3-6 months up front.
 - ii. There is no information for PG students on the website in regards to Moving in London.
 - iii. It was suggested that College should do a lot more to help students in their move to London – put info on web.

- iv. PG's receiving funding at different points in their studies.
- l) It was agreed to add resolve 3 'To lobby college to give information on private accommodation alternatives to Grad Pad.'
- m) Council moved to a vote on the paper and it passed unanimously

RESOLVED:

- 1) To pass the amended paper (see appendix i).**

4. UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) There was debate over the use of the word 'condone' in the paper and it was agreed to strike this from the paper.
- b) The Career service has a policy on not advertising unpaid internships unless it is in the charity sector.
- c) It was questioned what is charity and what is volunteering and it was stated that the volunteering isn't necessarily done for charitable purpose.
- d) The Westminster auction off of internship was a mistake at departmental level.
- e) Should we be lobbying College to make sure that the career service continues to not advertise unpaid internships unless in the charity sector.
- f) Council moved to a vote on the amended paper and it was passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To pass the amended paper (see appendix ii).**

6. SCC SUMMERY REPORT

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

NOTED:

- a) The reports give the Union the knowledge and information to where improvements have happened and where to lobby.
- b) Council moved to a vote on the report and it was passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report**

7. STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Received: The paper was presented by the Deputy President (Welfare)

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

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report**

8. SABB ROLES AND REMITS

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) It was reiterated that this is a paper for discussion only.
- b) The presented paper was discussed at last meeting of Trustee Board.
- c) The paper is a result of an away day that the Sabbatical Team has recently had where it was identified the area that the Union can improve its activity and support.
- d) The name change will not happen in the next year.
- e) The Union historically does not centrally run radical welfare campaigns.
- f) CSP's define a large part of what the Union does and should have their financial aspect supported.
- g) The appendix on what other Universities have is to compare and benchmark against similar organisations and getting best practice across the sector.
- h) This will be a change to the bye laws
- i) Sabbatical office is for one year and the officers have a limited time to effect change and so shouldn't be taken up by operational works.
- j) Sabbs will know how to do operational tasks but not expected to do so.
- k) Internalisation is about mixing groups. From an educational perspective this means international mobility and making a rounded student.
- l) A big part of PG unification eventuates from social engagement.
- m) All sabbaticals are trustees and responsible for the finances of the union as they are liable and are Deputy Presidents first and foremost.
 - i. They have a responsibility of fiduciary function of the union.
- n) It was suggest that the Deputy President (Finance & Services) name has historical roots and may attract the wrong candidate or misrepresent what they do if is is changed to development and skills.
 - i. It was pointed that there is no 'wrong candidate' and the name of the role will affect the type of candidate.
 - ii. It was suggested that Union Development is a reasonable name to reflect the role of Deputy President (Finance & Services).
 - iii. The role should drive the name, not name drive the role.
- o) All sabb roles do inevitably cross over.
- p) The President stated that Union Staff are there to support the union, not derail it.
- q) It was questioned if the Union need a sabb specifically interested in finances and services.
- r) Council unanimously agreed on point 1.
- s) Deputy President (Finance & Services) stated that in his experience the role in its current form is able to expand and fill the gaps and people shouldn't just run on a name.
- t) The Union would still function in the eventually that a sabbatical with no financial experience was to come in to office.
- u) The President stated that he will send out a survey to all of Council, including the incoming sabbaticals to seek those opinions on those who are not at the meeting.

9. GRADE POINT AVERAGE

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

NOTED:

- a) It was highlighted that this system will not work for the School of Medicine as their grading system is differed.
- b) It will help to differentiate students.
- c) College have given no indication that this option is being considered.
- d) It was suggested that this could get horrifically confusing and puts too much of a focus on numbers.
- e) This would be specific to UG's

- f) The UK specialise earlier than students in the USA.
- g) There is the possibility for marking schedule bias
- h) Students may choose easier courses to get higher grades
- i) Makes it good to increase comparability.
- j) The majority of council were against the Grade Point system.

10. PRESIDENT REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the President

NOTED:

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

11. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS & SOCIETIES) REPORT

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

NOTED:

- a) The Beit redevelopment is moving forward with the design works going ahead in the next week.
- b) Council moved to a vote on accepting the report and it passed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

12. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION) REPORT

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

NOTED:

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

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the report.**

13. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE & SERVICES) REPORT

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.**

14. 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.**

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 ACCOMMODATION PRICES

NOTED:

- a) The President stated that he is trying to track inflation compared to the cost of accommodation charged by College and if any members of council had information on how much they paid in halls over the past few year, he would greatly appreciate this information.

Meeting closed 8.20pm

Approved as a correct record at a meeting of Union Council

on _____ 2012/13

_____ Chair of the Meeting

Imperial College Union's Stance on GradPad

Background

GradPad is the provider of the Postgraduate only halls of Imperial College London. Last year it was decided that Clayponds would close down, this was a Postgraduate only hall but not part of GradPad. Students that had opted to live in Clayponds before hearing of its closure were offered accommodation in GradPad with the addition of a bursary to help ease the financial pressure of accepting a more expensive accommodation option. This bursary has been available for the academic year 2012-2013. Management Board decided that this scholarship will not be available for the year 2013-2014. Students were told that there are other forms of financial support available to them, but on further inspection it emerged that these forms of support are only available to students that have not yet started their PhD. It is worth noting that the basic PhD stipend is less than a year's rent at GradPad, who only offer 51 week contracts and insist that international students pay all 51 weeks of rent up front.

Beliefs

Postgraduates can be as vulnerable as first year Undergraduate students. Entering the private accommodation sector regardless of age if students have never studied in London or the UK is challenging. PRES survey data indicates loneliness as a huge issue faced by Postgraduates amongst many others. There is no such thing as a typical 'Imperial Postgraduate student'. The Postgraduate accommodation strategy should take into account the welfare of Postgraduate students.

Asking an international student to pay 51 weeks rent in advance is unfair; Imperial College does not ask this of international students in Undergraduate halls. The relationship between GradPad and Imperial College appears to be a complex one which warrants more investigation, however Imperial College should not be supporting external providers that don't treat students in the same manner as the College do with their halls. Paying in termly instalments puts an unfair financial burden on Postgraduates who receive a minimum stipend in monthly instalments.

Any financial assistance available to students to help them afford the rent in GradPad should be available to all students, regardless of whether they have already started their PhD.

Resolves

To lobby College to:

1. Develop a Postgraduate Accommodation Strategy that incorporates the welfare needs faced by Postgraduate students, and provides a range of financially viable options.
2. Ensure that any financial assistance that is in place is available to all students, regardless of where they are in their studies.
3. Provide information on private accommodation alternatives to Grad Pad.

To lobby College and GradPad to:

4. Allow international students to pay their rent in instalments.

Unpaid Internships Policy

Beliefs

1. Imperial College Union should, as a membership organisation, be primarily offering opportunities with equal and fair access for all.
2. Students should never be exploited.
3. Organisations that have the means to pay interns, should.
4. The Imperial College Union should, where possible, be employing students, and as such, as an organisation should not normally take on unpaid internships.

Resolves

1. Imperial College Union (and any organisation it affiliates with) should advertise paid internships for organisations that have the means to pay interns.
2. Imperial College Union should not itself advertise unpaid internships.
3. Imperial College Union may affiliate to an organisation that advertises unpaid internships, on the condition that the affiliate agrees:
 - a. To only advertise unpaid internships for organisations that do not have the means to pay interns.
 - b. That the responsibility for deciding which organisations Imperial College Union deem to have the means to pay (or not) shall be decided by the Executive Committee.