

Education & Representation Board
Minutes

*The first Ordinary Meeting of the Education & Representation Board for the 2017-18
Session will be held on Thursday 12 October 2017.
Location: Meeting Room 3*

Deputy President (Education)	Nicholas Burstow
Biochemistry Dep Rep	Lidia Ripoll Sanchez
CGCU President	Claudia Caravello
CGCU Academic Affairs Officer	Alejandro Luy
Chemical Engineering Dep Rep	Shen Gan
Chemical Engineering Dep Rep	Pedro Alonso Ariso
Earth Science & Engineering Dep Rep	Beth Holman
Electrical & Electronic Engineering Dep Rep	Kaan Giray
Electronic & Information Engineering Dep Rep	Mwanakombo Hussein
GSU Deputy President	Alexandre Adler
Materials Dep Rep	Alice Robinson
Mathematics Dep Rep	Michael McGill
Physics Dep Rep	Michaela Flegrova
RCSU President	Michael Edwards
RCSU Academic Affairs Officer	Abhijay Sood
RSMU President	Rob Tomkies
RSMU Academic Liaison Officer	Alice Bennett

Observers

Wellbeing & Campaigns Coordinator	Laura Regan
Head of Timetabling	John Crook
Operational Excellence Coach	Craig Walker
Service Line Manager (Education)	Mike Horner
Digital Partner	Kat Parkins

Formal Business

1. Chairs business

- a. Deputy President (Education) (DPE) begins introductions of the board
- b. DPE gives apologies on behalf of ICSMSU Representatives who are unable to attend

2. Minutes of last meeting – 1 June 2017

- a. DPE asks the board to review the minutes of the last meeting
- b. It is noted that the board have not received the minutes

ACTION – Laura Regan (LR) to send the board the minutes

3. Matters Arising

- a. DPE informs the board that the Terms of Reference for the Education & Representation Board (ERB) will be updated and a paper will be sent to the first Union Council

Matters for Report

4. Updates from the Deputy President (Education) (**Verbal**)

- a. DPE reports that the National Student Survey Response has completed in record time and been sent to the Learning & Teaching Committee, Senate and Provost Board. DPE notes that College appear to be happy with the Response and that he will continue to update the board with any updates
- b. DPE reports that the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey is finished and will be going to relevant committees in next couple of weeks.
 - i. GSU Deputy President questions whether the GSU has any input in the Response. DPE states the GSU President has co-authored the Response
- c. DPE raises the point of the Feedback Traffic Light audit, to be revisited in further detail later on in the meeting

5. Updates from Academic Affairs Officers (AAO) (**Verbal**)

- a. CGCU AAO
 - i. Committee have been increasing visibility of the Constituent Union (CU) with a social media publicity campaign which has had success so far with an increase in ticket sales within departments

- ii. Encouraging students to run for Year Rep positions and gave welcome talks to each department explaining what the networks do
 - iii. Getting in touch with Dep Reps and Year Reps to help get them started and train them effectively
- b. RCSU AAO
 - i. Spoken to all the Dep Reps to understand how they all function
 - ii. Have delivered welcome talks in departments and also planning a faculty-wide talk and social for 30 October to explain how the RCSU works. Hoping that forming a social bond will encourage people to stay in their roles
 - iii. Committee is looking at ways to gather information and develop a feedback system with Reps
 - iv. RCSU committee will ensure DPE and Deputy President (Welfare) are invited to the social event as well as all RCSU volunteers
- c. ICSMSU AAO
 - i. ICSMSU AAO (Science and Early Years) submitted a written report which the board received
- d. RSM AAO
 - i. It was noted that the change in Dr. Lorraine Craig's role has not been too disruptive
 - ii. The Committee has been promoting the Academic and Wellbeing Rep Networks
 - iii. The Committee are planning Rep training which is more specific to the Materials and Earth Science & Engineering departments.
- e. GSU Deputy President
 - i. The Committee have visited all departments to introduce themselves and encourage students to run in the elections and to vote
 - ii. Contacted various faculties to look at organising an inter-faculty event for Postgraduates, possibly focussing on professional development
 - iii. Looking at ways the GSU can emulate the Wellbeing Representation Network for Postgraduates, considering merging the roles as research groups can be very small
 - iv. CGCU President asks whether there is a pre-existing Wellbeing Network structure for Postgraduates. GSU Deputy President states there is not an existing structure
- f. The board discuss the possibility of having updates during the elections on how many people are running for positions and which positions do not have any candidates

ACTION – DPE to ensure that CUs are given updates during the nominations period of number of candidates running for positions

Matters for Discussion

6. Exam Timetabling Policy

- a. DPE introduces John Crook (JC) and Craig Walker (CW) to the board
- b. JC gives the board a brief background on the examination timetabling project and the Space Programme. JC states they are looking for feedback from the board on a survey that will be distributed to all students, the survey is intended to be fairly broad as a first step in collecting data
- c. CW asks the board whether anyone has experienced a poor exam venue. The board share the following responses:
 - i. Small rooms
 - ii. Overcrowded basement classrooms where you can't see the clock
 - iii. Slanted desks so your exam paper slides down
 - iv. CW states the College are aware of issues, including 35 degree heat in classrooms and discrepancies between venues for the same exam papers.
- d. GSU Deputy President questions whether College would consider winter exam seasons. CW states they would like to see whether this is a popular idea through the survey
- e. The board discuss the issue of unfair external conditions affecting students sitting the same exams in different rooms
- f. GSU Deputy President states they would not like exams to be held externally
- g. CW asks for feedback on the proposed all-student survey. The board give the following feedback:
 - i. On Q.3.i. add a response about the venue as well as the time
 - ii. Add a response about limiting number of exams per week
 - iii. Simplify the scale of measurement to yes/no
 - iv. Clarify what you classify an exam, some departments have different classifications
 - v. Consider Business School and Horizons exams that may clash
 - vi. Consider adjusting the formatting into a grid rather than lots of questions
 - vii. Consider looking at Winter exams as well as Summer exams
 - viii. Consider how changing exam timetabling will affect the autonomy of individual departments
 - ix. Think about adding a third exam timetabled per day. CW states this has been discounted for several practical reasons
 - x. Consider consulting with Faculty Level student representatives. CW states consultation will be going to Faculty Teaching Committees
- h. CW states that getting rid of the immediate worst student experiences is a priority for quick, immediate wins
- i. DPE thanks JC and CW for their contributions

7. SOLE Alternatives

- a. DPE introduces Kat Parkins (KP) and Mike Horner (MH) to the board
- b. MH informs the board the College are looking at ways to accurately record the voice of students and improve on the current system, SOLE. MH asks the board for their feedback on SOLE:
 - i. Would be useful if students had access to the comments made about individual courses. MH states this could contain personally identifiable information
 - ii. Make it more mobile-platform friendly to encourage usage
 - iii. Consider integrating the service with Blackboard. RSMU President states that Earth Science & Engineering so not use blackboard but the idea of integration is helpful
 - iv. Answers available are very subjective which are not useful
 - v. Not always helpful to see negative feedback on compulsory modules. DPE states this is written into the NSS Response
 - vi. The board discuss the timing of the survey highlighting pros and cons of having the survey at the end of the year when changes will not benefit the student, versus a mid-year report
 - vii. Consider having the report at the end of a course rather than the end of an academic term
 - viii. Include a general comments section
 - ix. Rebrand moving away from SOLE
 - x. Don't use short and sharp surveys throughout the year, look at tackling the communication problems
 - xi. Ensure there is total anonymity
 - xii. Ensure there is clarity about who is responsible for ensuring students complete SOLE, likely to get more responses
 - xiii. Ensure students starting halfway through a project have an opportunity to feedback
- c. DPE questions whether KP and MH would like to consult further in a working group

ACTION – Representation Coordinator to email the board and ask if you want to be part of a working group around November time

8. Learning and Teaching Strategy

- a. DPE states that the paper was not ready to send to the board ahead of the meeting and proposes to move the point of discussion to the next ERB meeting
- b. DPE asks whether any members have any questions
 - i. GCU Deputy President questions when the Curriculum Review is being implemented. DPE informs the board implementation has already begun
 - ii. Materials Dep Rep questions whether revealing past marks and mark schemes is that still part of the strategy. DPE confirms this is the case

ACTION – Representation Coordinator to send the condensed Learning & Teaching Strategy to the board. Point of discussion to be added to the next ERB agenda

9. Feedback Traffic Light audit

- a. DPE introduces the work he has been doing on a key manifesto point. DPE outlines how the Feedback Traffic Light audit is designed to hold departments accountable to a new policy stating students should receive feedback within 10 days. DPE welcomes feedback on the proposal for first year Year Reps to carry out an audit within each department. The board feedbacks:
- i. Where are Reps inputting the data and who can see it? DPE states it will be a Share Point excel spreadsheet. It is agreed that one per department is most convenient
 - ii. What is considered feedback, many departments give an initial grade and then personalised feedback later. DPE states there will be a comment box to allow Reps to detail when this happens
 - iii. Is this the same for group projects? DPE states that the policy is best practice but there is leniency and students want quality marking over timeliness
 - iv. Consider that for labs they are marked by different people so there is a lack of consistency in representation
 - v. What is considered coursework? DPE states any work that needs monitoring is considered coursework although exams will not be included in this audit
 - vi. It was suggested that departments who collect this data already should be used as a quality assurance
 - vii. It was decided the tutors would not be told about the audit in order to get an honest representation of feedback times
 - viii. It was decided that Dep Reps would help the DPE in contacting first year Reps
 - ix. It was decided that Dep Reps will notify AAOs and the DPE of Reps who are not completing the audit
 - x. It is agreed the data will be used to inform College on what is happening rather than telling them what to do with specific tutors

ACTION – The DPE and Dep Reps will monitor the spreadsheet to ensure data is being entered on a weekly basis

- b. DPE confirms that College's current audit process is department specific and there is not a unified College-wide procedure
- c. DPE clarifies that the data is not being compared department to department but is being compared with policy standards
- d. DPE states the data will be ready by Friday 20 October with an accompanying communications plan
- e. DPE states that in the years to follow, we hope the College will take ownership of the audit process

10. National Student Survey (NSS) Results

- a. DPE gives a brief summary of the NSS Response. DPE comments that the recommendations from the NSS Response were all items in the Learning & Teaching strategy. DPE states he will get a breakdown of the approved recommendations for the board.

ACTION – DPE to give the board a breakdown of the approved recommendations by College after meeting with the Vice Provost (Education)

- b. RCSU President states the NSS Response works well with the issues identified in the Faculty of Natural Sciences and the RCSU will be using it when meeting with departments
- c. The board discuss the relevance of the NSS Response and agree that it will be very relevant in light of the Teaching Excellence Framework and as a tool for community building within Imperial

AOB

11. DPE – Doodle Poll

- a. DPE requests that all ERB members respond to the poll sent by the Representation Coordinator regarding training dates

12. DPE – Study Spaces

- a. DPE asks the group what spaces they use to study other than the library. DPE will then pass this information onto the Vice Provost (Space)
- b. The board give the following responses:
 - i. Computer rooms
 - ii. Mechanical Engineering 7th floor computer rooms, both collaborative and silent working spaces
 - iii. Civil Engineering workshops spaces
 - iv. Mechanical Engineering ground floor space
 - v. Materials common room
 - vi. Chemical Engineering conference rooms
 - vii. Empty lecture theatres
 - viii. Departmental shared spaces
 - ix. SAF tutoring rooms on the ground floor
 - x. Royal School of Chemistry department allocated labs (silent spaces)
 - xi. Work from home
 - xii. St. Mary's library
 - xiii. Quiet study space on first floor of Blackett
 - xiv. Student bookable rooms but these are only up to an hour
 - xv. Business School café and the study pods in their corridor

- c. It was noted that the board agreed the library was overcrowded and in most instances a last resort for study space
- d. It was noted that some rooms are locked for no apparent reason and climate control in some rooms was done centrally making the rooms difficult to use (i.e. too cold to work)

13. CGCU President – Central Timetabling

- a. CGCU President raises the issue that College timetabling came very late, subsequently cancelling several days of teaching within one department in the Faculty

ACTION – DPE to find out for the next ERB meeting what issues there were with central timetabling ahead of term 1 and whether there is a College policy for timetable release

Meeting concludes 19:50