



**GSU**  
IMPERIAL GRADUATE  
STUDENTS' UNION

**This Union council report provides information on recent GSU activities**

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## 1. Election results – GSU committee 2018/19

It was a challenge to fill the GSU positions at the autumn elections. Only with considerable communications effort via a special Graduate School newsletter edition and personal emails to all PG administrators and directors most positions could be filled during by-elections. Three positions remain unrepresented.

<b>GSU President</b>	Ute Thiermann	Vote at Union Council
<b>Deputy President Operations</b>	Linghru Zheng	
<b>Deputy President Representation</b>	Ashley Brooks	Vote at Union Council
<b>GSU Secretary</b>	Rosie Riley	
<b>Academic &amp; Welfare Officer - Engineering</b>	Raya El Laham	Vote at Union Council (1)
<b>Academic &amp; Welfare Officer - Business School</b>	Sam Yu	
<b>Academic &amp; Welfare Officer - Medicine</b>	Jenny Kim	Vote at Union Council (2)
<b>Social Media Officer</b>	Carina Zhao	
<b>Marketing &amp; Publicity Officer</b>	Sandunika Hirimuthugoda	
<b>Sports &amp; Activities Officer</b>	Sandunika Hirimuthugoda	
<b>Events Officer</b>	Hannah Jones	
<b>Events Coordinator</b>	Clare Chan	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Joseph Tam	
<b>Sponsorship Officer</b>	Lorenzo Palmieri	
<b>Academic &amp; Welfare Officer – Physical Sciences</b>	none	
<b>Academic &amp; Welfare Officer – Life Sciences</b>	none	
<b>Website officer</b>	none	
<b>Volunteer</b>	Matias Andrade	

The GSU would like to suggest that the AWO representation at the Council can be shared between two AWOs, who can attend the council meetings in turns.

## 2. GSU Working Group with Union Management

The GSU President and Vice-Presidents are working together with Jarlath O’Hara, Fran Hyatt, Rob Tomkies and Alejandro Luy in order to **improve the representation of PGs by the Union**. It has been decided that the GSU should work closer with the Union to communicate centrally and organise events in a common effort. To improve the link between the GSU and the Union, two key contacts in the Union (one officer and one staff member) will be allocated to each of the GSU positions.

The **working group is now splitting in sub-groups** which will work on the following topics in regular meetings. Both members of the GSU and relevant union officers and staff will be part of the following four working groups:

- **GSU Governance and Representation**
- **GSU Activities and Events**
- **GSU Identity and Communications**
- **GSU Resources**

### 3. Progress in communication to PGs

- **GSU welcome video**

To welcome new students and explain briefly what the GSU is, we produced a 1.5-minutes video together with the Union Communications team. This was sent out in the Graduate School welcome newsletter and shown in PG welcome events:

<https://youtu.be/4qLiZWqCv-o>

- **GSU website integration to Union website**

The Union communications team agreed on integrating a PG-related page to the Union website, where the GSU and its mission, functions and positions are explained.

- **GSU newsletter and social media**

To be reviewed together with Union communications team in above mentioned communications related working group. The Graduate School agreed on sharing PG contacts to send this newsletter to the PG community in regular time intervals (1-2 months).

- **GSU goes Felix**

The Felix editor agreed to present PG related issues in a **special double-fold PG page every last Friday of the month**. One page will dedicate attention to anonymised "Supervision Stories" delivered by PhD students across College. The other page can be used to write about current PG issues and areas of interest.

### 4. Planned PG Events

In the GSU Working Group with the Union management, a timeline of events has been decided to be taken forward by the GSU in cooperation with the Union for the year 2018/19:

- PG Hammersmith Social (November 2018)
- PG Cooking class and social in GradPad housing (December 2019)
- PG Rep Networking event (December 2018)
- PG Specials at H-Bar (December 2018 and January 2019)
- PG Black Tie event (January 2019)
- PG events during all "Under Pressure" days
- GSU Connect (March/April 2019)
- Imperial College Data Challenge (May/June 2019)

## 5. GSU Engagement in College

The GSU is part of the **HEFCE Wellbeing Project Working Group** and is lobbying for stronger rules and quality assurance in PhD supervision, clearer communication of well-being services at College, and the engagement of College in mindfulness activities in form of a research project initiated by the PG Tutor of the Mechanical Engineering Department and two of his students.

The Graduate School would like to experiment with the principle of **“Co-Production”** of one of their new courses. The PG Director of the Mathematics Department and a group of students are interested in becoming the core of such an initiative.

## 6. GSU Presidency reflection

The GSU president positively recognises an **increasing interest in PG-related issues across College and the Union**. It has been widely recognised that PG students are declining in satisfaction and mental health levels, and that more efforts have to be channelled towards this specific target group. This also has made the GSU president become a figure in high demand in meetings and committees which largely exceed the hours contracted (6h/week). However, the GSU president is expected to continue working on the PhD full-time, with commitments towards project partners and supervisors. This frequently creates **conflicts of responsibilities which are hard to solve** and thus, necessarily make this position stressful and **less efficient than it potentially could be**.

## 7. Involvement of PGs in remote Campuses

It has been acknowledged by both the Union and the GSU that more attention should be given to PG students in remote campuses. This involves running specific campus social events as well as showing interest in connecting the representation structures. The GSU president is supporting Fran and Alejandro in their outreach to those campuses. In the future, specific campus-related GSU positions might help facilitate this process.

## 8. Suggested changes of GSU positions for 2019/20

The GSU president suggests constitutional changes in order to change/create GSU committee positions:

Change “Website officer” to **“Website and Felix Officer”**

Create Campus Officers to improve GSU presence in major campuses. These roles involve a travel budget to attend two GSU group meetings per month where no shuttle service is provided: **“Hammersmith Officer”, “White City Officer”, “Silwood Officer”**