

 **Imperial College Union Board of Trustees**

**30th October 2019**

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| **AGENDA ITEM NO.** |  |
| **TITLE** | Deputy President (Welfare) Trustee Board Report |
| **AUTHOR** | Deputy President (Welfare) – Shervin Sabeghi |
| **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** | Below is a description of my key goals against which I will be providing updates throughout the year. I have also outlined other key matters to update on.Key goals:1. Reform Liberation Structures
2. Review WBRN
3. Improve student support
4. Communication/Felix Welfare
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| **PURPOSE** | To update Board on my goals and work so far.  |
| **DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED** | No action required. |

**Key goals:**

Goal 1: Reform the Liberation and Community work of the Union, and ensure the College's EDI strategy works for students – ***in progress***

Acknowledging that a) Liberation and Community Officers aren’t currently set-up to be fully able to do their roles and b) this is a really important part of what the Union does, I plan to re-structure the Union’s L&C work including how our officers are supported, and how staff are involved in the work. Furthermore, there are a number of EDI related issues on the College’s agenda this year (particularly application to the REC, and renewing Athena Swan) so it’ll be important to embed students and the Union in these.

**Progress/Updates:**

* Devised the 2019/20 Action Plan for Liberation and Community under current structures.
* Researched liberation activities of other universities, explored ICU's 2017/18 Liberation Review, and created loose initial idea for Liberation reform. Presented a summary of findings to CWB and received feedback. Got a sense that there is an appetite for the change, and that members want to be involved. As requested by CWB, I will set up a working group for this.
* On the College side, I’ve convinced the Assistant Provost (EDI) to include all 4 Liberation Officers in the EDI Forum. The first Self-Assessment Team meetings of the year have happened for the REC and Athena Swan – there is nothing of significance to note after these.
* Also, on the College’s side, I attended the first EDI Strategy Group meeting of the year. The main outcome was the approval of the College’s new conferences policy which will need to be adhered to by students running activities too. It will be officially published by College ‘soon’.

Goal 2: Fully review and set a course of action for the Wellbeing Representation Network – ***not yet started***

After 2 years of existing, I plan to produce a full review of the WBRN including recommendations for changes. There have been two year-evaluations which will inform this.

**Progress/Updates:**

* The review hasn’t been started yet due to many operational priorities in the last few weeks. However, some changes in WBRN training have been made to reflect a more focused remit of WBRs and to put a greater priority on involvement with EDI matters.

Goal 3: Improve student support services – ***in progress***

This is an umbrella goal covering a number of things. As well as a wide stakeholder management piece with the student support services (the general department, as well as individual services), I have specific goals therein. I plan to lobby to remove the £95 charge on assessments at the Disability Advisory Service (DAS). Furthermore, I want to put the question out to students about what sanitary product provision they would want and use that to inform the case made to College to provide this.

**Progress/Updates**

* Started conversations with the DAS, Director of Student Services and Vice-Provost Education who are all on-board to make a change to the current assessment charge model. I’ve requested a number of figures from the DAS looking at the charges from the last 3 years. They haven’t been able to produce all of them yet, but the headline figures show that there will need to be roughly a £16,000 increase in budget to accommodate this. It is likely this change will be reflected in the next planning round.
* It is now public and official that the Counselling Service have nearly doubled their space, and have hired new counsellors increasing their FTE total from 6.7 to 9.6. I’ll be regularly keeping check of how these changes are received by students and what effect there is on waiting times.

Goal 4: (Re-)establish the Felix Welfare Section – ***in progress***

As part of a wider communications piece, I plan to re-establish the *Felix* Welfare Section that existed some years ago. This will be fairly general and multi-purposed, and give students an outlet for talking about welfare related issues.

**Progress/Updates:**

* Started conversations with *Felix*editor and established version of the section. Produced first introductory article for first edition of the year.
* Since the first article, there hasn’t been any more in this section. I’ve mentioned to CWB about it and hopefully there will be some uptake. I’m keen for this to be a student led thing that’s facilitated through me.

**Operational/Other Matters:**

* An unexpectedly large amount of time has gone into managing relationships with Halls. I made edits to the Social Fund Policy based on previous feedback from Wardens, but there was general unhappiness about this and a working group with a number of interested wardens was requested to finalise the policies. There will need to be work this year to re-evaluate the relationships between ICU, Halls and relevant College departments to ensure that our involvement is sensible and genuinely to the benefit of students.
* I was involved in two College recruitment panels: one for a disabilities advisor and one for the new Counsellors.
* After 10 months of the role being vacant, we have hired a new Representation Coordinator (Wellbeing) who will be able to help lift the operational burden that has partly fell to myself.
* Following a month of planning, we delivered the first ever ‘Rep Academy’ on 23/10/19 training a majority of the currently elected Departmental and Faculty Academic and Wellbeing reps. This was, in general, a success and the format is likely to be used in the future.
* Using the Union’s Bursary Response produced last year, the level of bursary offered to students was accepted to remain the same at the latest Access, Participation and Student Support Working Group. The matter is not completely settled, though, upon opening up to suggestion that the figures should be