**Taught Academic Representative Forum (TARF)**

**Date:** Monday 3rd February 2025

**Time:** 18:00- 20:00  
**Location:** Royal School of Mines, 301E

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| Agenda | |  |
|  | Welcome and updates  19 Attendees  Present – EH (Emina Hogas – Deputy President Education)  CB - (Charlotte Baker – Representation Coordinator)  Mitigating Circumstances  EH updated on her manifesto point, lots of work has been done in this area since the last forum. Current work is focused on gathering student case studies & forming review groups.  Consensus from staff is that students abuse the system, so trying to pull together evidence to support the miscommunication & disparity in systems.  Work is continuing on a mock digital system to roll out across the university to be used by all to make it centralised.  Assessment and Feedback  Student shapers (student appointment) are looking into assessment workload, with staff support. They have already delivered a first round of student focus groups but hope to do more soon.  Regarding PGT resists, EH is working on trying to get the resists in the academic year rather than the next academic year.  Also working on alternative assessments as another avenue to the work going on with MCs.  UROP & UKRI  UROP bursary is being reviewed as to how its currently administered & delivered but work on this has been pushed till the summer.  ICU are working towards working with other London universities to increase stipend on UKRI bursaries to enable PGR students to study more comfortability.  Inclusivity  Lastly EH updated on her work on the inclusivity page which is now up & running in a range of languages & will be fully live soon. | No actions  Slidedeck |
|  | EH promoted her student case studies MC survey to share with networks & fill out individually.  NSS 2023 – 2024  EH moved on to a focus on NSS comments that were sent to students previously with discussion focused around whether there had been any progress in these areas.  \*not all departments were discussed as there were no reps present.  *Aeronautics*  Pos – High levels of approachability & knowledge. Engaging content & opportunities to collaborate and work outside of the classroom.  Neg – Research focused & an overreliance on written exams. Staff tend to be research based.  2025 – Although its acknowledged that staff are more research based, this has been laid out by them personally at the beginning of the academic year.  *Bioengineering*  Pos – Overwhelming positive response to teaching staff & wellbeing support.  Neg – Lack of feedback and communication around marking. Overall, there seems to be poor organization due to lack of staff and vagueness in communication.  2025 – This seems to still be apparent as well as confusion as to why they are learning certain topics as it doesn’t seem relevant.  *Chemistry*  Pos – Enjoy course structure,content and support. Good response times and are making effort to implement student feedback.  Neg – Covid specific transition issues. Exam content sometimes differs with course content.  2025 – Reps felt they are still effective at actioning feedback, but it can be challenging to deal with negative feedback as it can be quite specific and does carry over from year to year.  *Earth Science & Engineering*  Pos – There seems to be a lot of care from staff and community between staff and students. Appreciated the mental health support and consideration for student voice.  Neg – Regarding assessment & feedback, there is a lack of clarity and consistency.  2025 – Assessment & feedback issues are still apparent with no mark schemes available; exam structure is changed without communication & there are no action trackers for SSCs which can make continuity challenging within reps.  *Life Sciences*  Pos – Like the course content & delivery as well as practical opportunities.  Neg – Also struggled with assessment & feedback. Feedback & marking is late & inconsistent. There appears to be a level of disorganization and lack of communication.  2025 – Students would like access to their transcripts but aren’t allowed yet some courses can take photos leading to disparity in delivery. There is still a sense of disorganization with typos and errors in scripts.  *Materials*  Pos – Positive about sense of community and environment.  Neg – Feedback is vague and late. It is a high pressure environment with a lack of organisation.  2025 – Feel staff need training on how to feedback to students but were overall positive about the course.  *Mechanical Engineering*  Pos – Praised the high level programme & that student voice was valued.  Neg – Students felt there is a high workload.  2025 – Reps felt that they are supported and communicated with but still feel the workload is high with second years having to sit 9 exams in 2 weeks due to university policy. They also cannot access any exam papers.  *Medicine*  Pos - The course and faculty were praised with student voice being listened to.  Neg – This was mainly surrounding placement, with lack of support & organisation. Assessment and feedback were stated to be unclear, vague & inconsistent with a lack of past exam papers.  2025 – Overall reps felt this department were good on assessment & feedback and that there had been and effort to focus on feedback.  *Physics*  Pos – Support for teaching staff and opportunities.  Neg – Intensity of workload, assessment & feedback marking processes and criteria are unclear with marks being inconsistent and exams are poorly organised.  2025 – Assessment & feedback is still particularly bad with no feedback and mixed practice regarding exams feedback.   * Overall a lack of community in departments was expressed, with funding desired in order to be able to put on social events. * Reps asked if best practice could be shared, EH to talk to EM. * A discussion centered around reasonable adjustments and OFS work to make it that you don’t need to submit evidence/diagnosis. Reps shared best practice that temporary measures are currently being offered at a department level until you have confirmation. | No actions  Slidedeck  Summary NSS comments document provided by EM  EH to talk to EM about best practice NSS comments. |
|  | Soft services survey  Off the back of the love your buildings project, EH raised that ICU are working to gather feedback on what facilities are under par and for reps to share with their network. |  |
|  | Communication & transparency  EH raised her manifesto point around communication with reps and asked whether they currently liked the forums in their current format instead of moving towards a system where she meets monthly with faculty & dep reps. Overall reps felt they are a nice low-pressure environment, easy to talk in and year reps get a chance to engage. EH stated she tends to find them too frequent but overall reps felt that are fine as they are. Moving forward forums will continue and EH will still meet 1 to 1. |  |
|  | CB update  CB updated on student voice conference happening Weds 12th Feb with sessions focused on employability & networking.  CB also promoted leadership elections with nominations opening next Monday 10th Feb for senior volunteer positions.  Signposting cards  CB then gave out the current signposting cards, a resource for students to have quick access to signposting. These are not quite finished so new ones will be given out at SVC and available on the helpdesk soon. |  |
|  | Assessment tender project  EH updated on the assessment tender project to trial different platforms and they are asking for student volunteers more information follow. |  |
|  | Learning well event  EH also promoted the learning well events taking place next week and to check out more information on the Imperial website. |  |
|  | General Feedback   * Chemistry doing well * EH floated her idea of dept tea & coffee sessions for reps to gather feedback. This was liked but noted that some socs or depts already do that or give out free food vouchers. * PG medicine students felt there needed to be budget for events as many feel very lonely & there is no commitment to a social space especially for those who aren’t always on campus. * Genomic medicine in particular felt the communication was not clear on the structure of the course, action for EH to raise with FoM and to feedback to Anya & Ella. In Genomic Med, they didn’t receive feedback on their 1st assignment till after 2nd assessment which students felt was unfair. * Issues with marking, sample essays are not received and so there is a lack of clarity on how to write a PGT essay, this is across the university but particularly a issue at PGT. EH to raise with PG FoM. * EH talk to Jacob about EDI seed fund. * Disparity in communication and funding regarding CU events in departments. EH to raise with ICU teams to see what we can do. * Regarding white city, students felt it is only good for those that study there as the accessibility is so poor. EH to raise. | EH to raise with FoM and to feedback to Anya & Ella around genomic medicine.  EH to raise with PG FoM around marking and lack of old exam papers  EH to talk to JE about EDI seed fund for FoNS.  EH to raise with ICU teams regarding CU events/dep soc events & funding. |
|  | Forum updates   * Flag with FoNS why students have to fill out eportfolio before they get their results (still ongoing) * Talk to FoNS regarding buildings (cold, broken etc) (still need to be raised) * Talk to estates about maps and signage around campus and using the my Imperial app (work has been done on the myImperial app to make it 3D) * Find out whether departments pay the same for rent on different campuses (still to raise) |  |
|  | AOB  Once gathering feedback, where do we go with it?  EH replied that she is happy to look at responses but also to speak to programme team.  Do all the department reps have tankards and are they updated?  Action for CB/EH to check.  Could year rep elections for 2nd/3rd years be run earlier so from the next academic year they can be reps straight away and there isn’t too much information?  EH to raise. EH raised that they could be appointed/elected but would need to check governance. | EH/CB to look into tankards.  EH to raise with ICU around year elections and look at governance. |