**Taught Academic Representative Forum (TARF)**

**Date:** Thursday 28 Nov 2024

**Time:** 18:00- 20:00  
**Location:** Blackett Lecture Theatre 2

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| Agenda | |  |
|  | Welcome and updates  28 Attendees  Present – EH (Emina Hogas – Deputy President Education)  CB - (Charlotte Baker – Representation Coordinator)  Mitigating Circumstances  EH updated on her manifesto priorities in her first term as DPE.   * She is building a portfolio of MC case studies to present to the University. * Lobbying for one system for MCs submission and removing the standard MC word document, current platform amongst some departments is ZINC. Looking into SharePoint integration for MCs.   Feedback from students is that they don’t know where to go for clarity regarding MCs and that there are different approaches in different departments.  Assessment and Feedback  On the backburner, as EH wants to gather some student case studies.  There is a university advisory group currently looking into A&F to look at different types of assessment, but they want involvement and collaboration with reps and student shapers.  UROP & UKRI  Collectively the officers are working on increased financial support for PGR students.  UKRI lobbying for London stipend increase as its not reflective of living wage for PGR students. Currently students only receive 2,000. The bursary provided by the university (UROP) number of available bursaries has decreased so the OTs are lobbying for increases.  Inclusivity  On the ICU website, working on an about us page available in 9 languages with key information about us as an origination, student unions and how to get involved. | No actions  Slidedeck |
|  | PTES/PRES/MEQ   * PTES (Jan 2025) launch – Postgraduate Taught Education Survey * MEQ (Module Evalutation Survey) out now, EH stressed really important to fill out and promote. | No actions  Slidedeck |
|  | Learning well programme  EH advertised a new learning well programme taking place in February aiming at creating sustainable study strategies and how these can be linked to wellbeing. | CB to advertise in the rep newsletter with specifics of the programme eg time  Slidedeck |
|  | Digital Learning Student Group  \*(Actual name) Digital Education Student Group  EH advertised this as a chance to have a say in digital education through feedback. Benefits include offer of training, project experience and reference with support by Digital Education services.  Another opportunity was promoted to have assessment student testers to trial software (completing mock assessments, invigilation and marking). | No actions  Slidedeck |
|  | Student Shapers  Run by the Education Office, opportunity for a paid student and staff partnership to enhance education. This is a part of the learning and teaching strategy, offering financial support for partnership and a framework to ensure inclusive collaboration.  A working group are also working alongside this towards coming up with actions for tangible change. | No actions  Slidedeck |
|  | Educational Gain  EH led a discussion on educational gain or in other words ‘what you actually get out of University’. This could be academic or soft skills – anything that enables learning and development.  EH gaged an understanding of rep's knowledge of the TEF (teaching excellence framework) and stated that the current gold ranking means the university are able to promote value of education and can charge higher fees. | No actions  Slidedeck/paper |
|  | Study spaces  EH showed some statistics regarding the London average for students per seat in comparison to Imperial at 15.6 per seat. This is vastly overpopulated in comparison to the space available.  ICL is increasing in students without growth of facilities.  EH highlighted the importance of student voice regarding their experiences of space and facilities.   * Students stated that they often are fighting for space in the library, especially as they tend to use the library more than students at other institutions. | No actions  Slide deck |
|  | Union Council Paper on Rent  EH presented the current work being driven by the OTs on the proposed rent increase.  30% rent increase with some accommodation increasing to a average of 58% such as North Action.   * Students stated they chose North Acton because it was cheap   EH stated that in negotiations the proposed rent increase has changed to 24% but costs being proposed keep changing. Finally, EH stated that the university want to be net 0 by 2030 but this financially will have an effect on students.  Conversations moved to wardens. EH stated that currently they get reduced rent or do not pay rent at all which is extreme.   * Students suggested that they don’t interact with students so them paying little to no rent is frustrating. | No actions  Slidedeck |
|  | White City  EH broke down the current White City development project and asked reps what their understanding is of current work.   * Students asked whether if departments move campuses will they move space or will they be split across campuses. * Student feedback included: no library currently in white city despite there being two open floors for a library space and that there is not enough space for all the staff. * Students asked what the level of confidentiality around the project was. EH stated that this depends on the legality regarding property. * Students felt in the current plans there are duplications on facilities   Ideas for space (brainstorm session)   * Library * Place for staff (professional services) * Union bars * Common rooms * Communal spaces * More food and beverage options * Central walkway * Sports facilities   EH mentioned ‘naming Imperial places’ a new campaign coming but ideas are wanted. EH and students felt this could be slightly performative. | Action EH to find out whether departments pay the same for rent on different campuses.  Action EH to find out if the White City student engagement opportunity is open to reps as well on the 3rd December.  Slidedeck |
| Items for discussion | | |
|  | Students as Partners  EH moved on to key menti questions regarding the topics above.  Effective Student Representation   * Students felt that surveys can effectively get feedback rather than waiting for them to come directly to you as many are struggling with engagement. EH highlighted the importance of reps being open as possible.   Key values for students as partners   * Responses were recorded on the menti * Active listening and collaboration * Students stated they are encountering issues as some students are quite introverted and communication and coordinating with fellow reps can be difficult.   Roles and Responsibilities   * General conversation about gathering feedback and conversation centered around how to do this such as QR codes on slides and lectures. * Incentivization is often needed but possibly screws results. * General feeling that feedback loop isn’t closed as well as communicating with students what happens with their feedback which contributes to survey fatigue. * The general consensus are that students are still struggling to communicate with the cohort. | Menti |
|  | Student Feedback  General discussion on receiving student feedback and delivering it, recorded on menti. | EH Action to flag with FoNS why students have to fill out eportfolio before they get their results  EH action to send menti questions out to faculty and dept reps separately for more feedback. |
|  | Parity of PG vs UG student experience   * Suggestion from students to have a greater focus on wellbeing events to foster collaboration and enable people to get talking to each other. * Discussion around finance for events, EH stated departments should support with this. * Students felt that departmental societies are focused towards UG which is challenging. | No actions  Menti |
|  | Study spaces   * Students challenged why the general student population are not being consulted. * Feedback from FoNS students where that buildings (Chemistry) are always cold and broken. * Overall students felt there are not enough non quiet zones within study spaces, they are always busy and hard to navigate – perhaps more signage is needed? * Suggestion of whiteboard and marker pens in study spaces, better ventilation and building temperatures need to be regulated, specifically in SAF. | Action EH to talk to FoNS regarding buildings  Menti |
|  | What is educational gain?   * Students felt there is a disparity amongst projects and opportunities and entreneurship particularly in FoNS.   EH highlighted best practice in Loughborough where they have introduced modules to complement degrees. Reps stated there are current horizons modules on skills.   * Reps would like the university to pursue microcredintials that students can get accredited by Imperial College. | Menti  No actions |
|  | AOB   * Reps felt there were a lot of things to share with students * NSS comments should be available to students, unredacted. * Students find signage across campus difficult and Blackett lecture theatre difficult to find. * Reps liked the time of the forums   EH asked for any rep wins from Term 1, these included the below.   * Office hours being made available on the timetable * Model answers released for assessments * Extra office hours introduced to help support students * Extensions and wider assignment support. | EH - Action speak about maps and signage  Verbal |