**Full Time Officer Report**

**Author:** Issy Cooke

**Position:** President

**Email:** president@city.ac.uk

**Meeting:** Annual General Meeting

**Date:**  09/11/2015

**Action:**  To approve

**Achievements:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Achievement** | **Significance** |
| **Secured a new website based on a better web platform** | Access to information in an easy, accessible and transparent is at the heart of my manifesto and work this year. A core step change activity to achieve this is the website. The have transitioned over to the new site, we are currently working on updating the website and functionality of the website. |
| **Received additional funding from the University for a Media and Communications Officer** | This has been a key campaign for the Students’ Union for a number of years. Having someone responsible for a our internal and external communications, student media and marketing is going to make a huge difference to how students find out about opportunities and engage with our services and democracy. The role will improve our communications activities with students and better promote the work of the Union of a whole, with the hopes of engaging more of our members than ever before. We’ll be working to improve our visibility and branding on campus over the coming year and into the future, raising awareness of what we do for our members. |
| **Proposed a research project to have an evidence base for CULSU strategic plan** | We are launching our 5 year strategic plan in Summer of next year and it is crucial that the plan is based on thorough evidence about who are students are, why they have come to City, what they want to achieve at City and what students expect and want from our Students’ Union. Therefore we have proposed a research project working with an external researching organisation to collect this data. |
| **Received £5000 funding from Santandar for radio equipment for CityOnAir** | We were struggling to support our four media outlets with the resources in the Students’ Union. CityOn Air was particularly difficult as it depended on the Journalism departments resources which were only available past 18:00. It was decided the only way we would be able to keep CityOn Air is if we can get extra funding for radio equipment so students have more flexibility. |
| **Given an additional prayer room for Muslim students** | The Muslim prayer room was often over capacity. Being able to practice their faith is essential for students. |
| **Secured an additional space for multi-faith facilities in the Tate Level 1 renovation** | The Muslim prayer room was often over capacity. Being able to practice their faith is essential for students. |
| **Working with the students and the University on the design of the Tate L1 project which includes the Students’ Union Space, Café hub, Multi-faith Space** | Have secured a new Students’ Union space including plans for extended space and improved facilities. |
| **Secured continued funding for Keep Calm Study On campaign so we can bring back the petting zoo.** | We’re bringing KCSO back to campus this academic year. |
| **Worked with the University on re-forming the Student Community Working Group to become the City Community Sub Committee** | The City Community Sub- Community is now responsible for the City Communities hub of the Universities Education and Student Strategy giving more weight to the issue of City’s lack of community and giving students greater power to shape the hub and the strategy by deciding on priorities and monitoring progress. |
| **Successfully promoted and supported the CULSU elections which led to three times the votes that the previous year** | The Students’ Union By-elections were held to recruit student officers for a number of SU Executive positions, including School Representative Officers for 4 of the 5 Schools, a Black and Ethnic Students’ Officer and an Ethics and Environment Officer. Elections were also held for the Students’ Union Council and NUS Delegate.  We received candidates for every Executive position except SRO of SMCSE. We are currently discussing how to make sure that the student voice will be represented in SMCSE in the absence of an Officer. In the past, where a School fails to elect an SRO, the VP Education has taken on the responsibilities of the SRO in that School.  All but 1 of the Executive positions were contested and 785 votes were cast, which was more than triple the voter turnout for the previous by-election. |
| **Freshers Week 2015** | Worked with the VP Activities to plan an ambitious Freshers Week programme, utilising new campus facilities such as CityBar and CitySport to host 14 events to suit a wide range of students and enhance community at the university. All ticketed events sold out. |
| **Helped to establish additional student-led Societies.** | Worked with a number of student groups to encourage a number of student academic societies to be set up, including Midwifery, Psychology and Math Society. |
| **Began progress of auditing the Unions Governance and Financial Management Controls** |  |
| **Carrot Awards** | The Carrot Awards for the previous academic year are taking place on 7th December. Winners and guests have been invited, and planning is in its final stages. |
| **Friday Prayer** | Friday Prayer survey has gone out to all Muslim students, collecting their opinions on Friday prayer. In the process of lobbying the university for better facilities for Muslim students. |
| **Faith Campaigns** | The implementation of the Faith campaigns from 14/15 are underway, including the setup of the Friday Prayer Working Group and the Inter-faith forum, working with the Chaplaincy. We are continuing to meet and consult with students regularly to ensure that the campaigns maintain momentum and can be fully implemented in this academic year. We are also looking into the serious need for more spaces for students of different faiths to have a space for prayer and quiet reflection from now until the new multi-faith area is completed in 2017. |

**Other work to report on:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Area of work** | **Progress (what you have achieved since the last meeting)** |
| Successfully applied for an NUS interfaith pack | Interfaith week was held on campus. |
| Supported the International Officer to put international student guidance on the CULSU website | The elected International Officer felt there was a need for more channels of information to be provided for new International students around things such as accommodation, Healthcare and Visa compliance. We have therefore provided a page on the Students’ Union website dedicated to this information and guidance. |
| Contributed to the City consultation of QAA |  |

**Attendance at key meetings/events of note:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Meeting/Event** | **Date** | **Purpose and anything to report on** |
| Council | 10/07/15, 09/09/15 | To approve the Vision and Strategy of the University, its long-term academic and business plans, performance indicators, annual budgets and financial statements and to ensure that these meet the interests of stakeholders. To ensure the establishment and monitoring of systems of control and accountability, including financial & operational controls, risk management and a delegations framework. To assure itself that the student experience at the University, including student welfare, is delivered to a high standard.  Currently areas of interest for Council is the Vision and Strategy, UoL application and Gender Equality |
| Council Plenary | 9/07/15, 08/09/15 | University Council hears presentations from the University Senior Team – presentations have included Vision and Strategy 2026 and Academic Quality and Standards. |
| Strategy, Implementation and Performance Committee (Sub Committee of Council) | 17/09/15 | The Committee has been established to allow more time than is available at Council for independent Council members to review progress in implementing the Strategic Plan, to monitor the performance of the University and to consider any proposals or developments associated with the Strategic Plan. The Committee will seek assurance on these matters, advise Council and assist the Executive in bringing any matters to Council by the process of constructive challenge. |
| Senate | 14/09/15 | Council in the Charter for the enhancement of academic quality and assurance of academic standards. UoL application, NSS, Assessment Feedback Turnaround Times, Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM) Report and Gender Equality |
| Education and Student Committee | 22/09/15 | A big part of the work of the Education and student committee has been the implementation of the education and student strategy and approval of strategy hub priorities. |
| City University London Executive Committee | 07/09/15, 05/09/15 | City’s Executive Committee (ExCo) advises the Vice-Chancellor on the strategic and operational leadership and management of the University, responsibilities delegated to him by Council. ExCo is not part of the formal governance structure of the University but the Vice-Chancellor reports ExCo discussions to Council. |
| Cass Periodic Review | 06/07/15 | The process is both an opportunity for retrospective analysis of the period of time since the last Periodic Review, and an opportunity to consider the medium-term, planned development of provision.  Periodic Review is considered to be an essential mechanism to support:   * Forward looking development (growth and/or refinement) of programmes; * Enhancement of the student experience; * Strategic fit of provision. |
| Islamic Faith Discussion Group | 28/09/15 | What was the purpose of your attendance and is there anything to report. |
| Academic Governance Committee | 30/09/15 | |  | | --- | | Academic Governance Committee provides advice to Senate following:  a) Detailed scrutiny of regulations;  b) Detailed scrutiny of assurance reports on academic quality processes; and  c) Active and informed oversight of governance arrangements for matters concerning academic quality and standards. | |
| Estates Monitoring Group | 4/08/15, 1/09/15, 03/11/15 |  |
| Access and Success Group | 28/09/15, |  |
| City University Students’ Union Executive Committee |  | The executive committee makes political decisions for the Students’ Union. All our campaigns and actions come through the exec committee, along with the AGM. Particular areas of discussion have been around assessment boycott and free Wednesday afternoons |
| Graduations | 13/07/15-15/07/15 |  |
| LGBT+ City Staff Network Event | 31/07/15 |  |
| Space Management Committee | 11/07/15, 14/08/15, 13/09/10 |  |
| Ramadan Working Group | 21/08/15 |  |
| Student Terms and Conditions Working Group | 25/08/15, 17/09/15 |  |
| Staff Development Day | 7/09/15 |  |
| Equality Meeting | 08/09/15 |  |
| Student as Governors | 10/09/15 |  |
| Induction Talks | 15/09/15, 21/09/15(x3), 22/09/15 (x2), 23/09/15 (x2) |  |
| Careers and Employability Sub Committee | 15/09/15 |  |
| Exec Committee Training | 16/09/15 |  |
| Safer Neighbourhood Board | 16/09/15 |  |
| Gender Equality Working Group | 28/09/15 |  |
| Trustee Board Meeting |  | The trustee meeting has oversight in the strategic development of the students’ union. Focuses have included hiring staff vacancies, restarting the membership and services review and how we can build a successful and competent trustee board. |
| City Community Working Group | 2/09/15 |  |
| Tate L1 Stakeholder Meeting | 12/10/15 |  |
| Friday Prayer Working Group | 14/10/15 |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Conference/Training** | **Date** | **Purpose and anything to report on** |
| Quality Matters | 8/09/15 |  |
| QAA Reviewer Training | 19/10/15-21/10/15 |  |
| HE Zone Conference | 27/10/15-29/10/15 |  |
| NUS Students’ Unions | 07/07/15-08/07/15 |  |

**Future Plans:**

Segmentation and Students’ Union Strategy

The segmentation project arose after it was identified that we currently have little understanding or informed research on who our students are; the basic data we have is their age, gender, sex, origin of birth and level of study. This often led to assumptions around the interests, attitudes and behaviours of our students, the support they need and the kinds of activities they were interested in.

Students’ unions around the country have used market segmentation with very strong results. The main goal for this project is to have a set number of categories that our students fit into based on their values and behaviours so we can get a much better understanding of who our students are, why they have come to City and what their needs are going to be to have a fulfilling student experience while they are at the University. We hope this will contribute to a number of positive changes in the opportunities and services we provide for students and therefore increase engagement and awareness of those.

This data would not only be very useful for the Students’ Union to develop an understanding of our students, but would also be a tool that many University departments may find useful. Additionally, the Students’ Union currently has no long-term strategy and this research will be a base for the development of our strategy. Basing a Students’ Union strategy and the branding strategy on a strong research evidence base that understands our students is core to creating a lasting, effective strategy which can get buy in from students, staff and the University.

City Life Off Campus

Unlike many universities we have a limited number of affordable student halls and the campus is based in a high priced area. This means that a significant percentage of students cannot afford to live locally (Angel, Old Street, Farringdon) so rent in more affordable areas such as East or South London. Having a halls experience is an expectation for many of our students that does not get realised, and some students live over an hour away from campus.

Once they leave campus these students have very little engagement with the University or Students’ Union. Some students may live with fellow students, work friends or with people they do not know. London can be a difficult place to meet people; students can often feel lonely, rarely knowing the people around them. Loneliness is one of Student Minds’ Ten Grand Challenges facing students.

In this project we are hoping to provide students with opportunities to meet other people who live geographically close to them. It is understood that most friendship groups are based around academic programmes, interest based e.g. societies, or halls communities. We want to offer students who don’t live in halls that third opportunity.

The drivers for engaging with this project include providing a safer way for students to travel to and from campus. This would offer us more opportunities to engage with students who we may not typically engage with in the Students’ Union. It would also lead to students feeling a part of the Students’ Union and the University when they are not physically here and potentially can lead to a closer experience to halls for the people living in private housing.

Toolkits and Resources

Students’ time and energy is pulled in a number of directions and it is difficult to identify the pressure points and the support needed at the different stages of their academic journey. Many of our students have part time jobs to cover the costs of living in London. In addition to this, students are working or interning in their chosen field to increase chances of employability after University. They are also engaging with extra-curricular activities and projects such as running a society or engaging in enterprise, again to make them more employable as well as to socialise and they are trying to experience everything London has to offer.

We are creating a central toolkit hub that will bring together guidance from different departments and external organisations with resources, tasks and tips to help success at University on a range of subjects both directly related to academic success and for personal and professional development. This could include money management, tips to use during an internship and housing advice. It is a place that should inspire, develop and hone skills.

This is designed to signpost to in-person services, showing students who may not think they need these services the benefits of attending. Our Disabled Students’ Officer is very keen to work with Learning Success to see how the service can be improved.

Building a Relationship with Islington Council

We depend on Islington Council for a number of our activities, namely our late night events, alcohol licence and use of Northampton Square. This year the Council decided to rescind our previously approved licences for two of our Welcome Week events. At the point of our licence being denied we had sold over 75% of our tickets and invested in both nights to ensure a successful and enjoyable programme of events for our new arrivals. Off the back of this decision it was made clear that the Students' Union needs to build a relationship with the Council based on an understanding of the benefits students bring to the local economy and community.

History of the Students’ Union

The idea behind our history project is to develop pride in the Students’ Union and University. Many students will not understand that they are part of a history that spans over 100 years, and we will use the historical aspects and context to develop a sense of pride of belonging to something bigger. We hope that the project will bring together alumni, past supporters and allies of the Union to collect stories and celebrate our collective history.

There must be a long series of projects, campaigns and events where the our Students’ Union has made a difference in students’ lives, stood up for the rights of students and ensured that students have had an enjoyable and memorable time whilst here.

Re-engaging with our alumni could potentially open up opportunities for our student opportunities team, many alumni who were members of active societies have an interest in contributing their time and energy into supporting the society. Alumni may have a stronger interest in taking part in events and talks, with the array of expertise in our alumni this could be a very exciting opportunity.

There is also strong evidence to suggest that students who are aware of the longevity and history of an organisation they are part of feel a stronger sense of pride for the organisation. I feel strongly that if students were made more aware of the bigger picture they are part of in the Students’ Union they would be more eager to get involved. Secondly we believe that students would be more interested in engaging with the Students’ Union if they felt their impact was being recorded and they will be known and celebrated even after they are gone.

We plan to collect stories, anecdotes and imagery, and then hold an event to celebrate the history of the Students’ Union, re-sparking the memories and connections for attendees. We’ll also develop a virtual and physical space where new students and visitors can find out about the Students’ Union’s history.

***Student Media***

CULSU have a number of media outlets organised and managed by students, these include a printed magazine, online blog, radio station and broadcast outlet. The media teams will be supported by our new member of staff (Media and Communications Coordinator) which foresee this haven’t a significant effect on the engagement and output of the media teams. This will go alongside a review of all the media outlets to ensure their appropriateness with the current cohort of students.