

AGM Report For International Students' Officer

Name:

Yu Hong Goh

Role:

International Students' Officer (ISO)

Progress on Manifesto Pledges:

This year has been extremely unpredictable and many things have happened. My manifesto points were written with the most idealistic view and not the most complete picture of the whole situation. However, although there are some setbacks along the way, I have achieved success in what I have done this year. The following are some successes that I have achieved during the year.

Social Media, Email Consultation and Creating a Forum

On my manifesto point on being the listening ear, I established a social media presence as well as being proactive in replying to queries sent to the ISO mailbox. As during this pandemic time, face-to-face meetings are not able to happen, being available and accessible online helps students to reach me to ask for help. Furthermore, as many international students are not able or chose not to come back to Lancaster in the academic year, online consultation and information helps these students to not be left out and still have a channel to reach us.

To fulfil my promise on creating a channel where international students can have a sense of belonging, I rewrote and changed the by-laws for the International Students' Committee and transformed it into the International Students' Forum (ISF). Just like the forums for the other Liberation and Campaign groups, the space and community is for students to reach out and to socialise with one another. It is also a place where international students can come together and create events or campaigns.

Though there are successes, I should also admit that there are some setbacks along the way. The following are the pitfalls I have had during the year.

Collaboration with other student bodies and low engagement

As the base of ISF as well as the connection of the role was not established when I entered office, I was not able to run events in collaboration with other student bodies such as the cultural & countries' societies. This means I have failed to come up with and collaborate with others on events that engage more international students.

Furthermore, as restrictions and lockdowns happened during the year, events are held online and with the forum at its infancy state, it is hard to get students to be willing to engage as most are too tired to do on another Teams call after a week of attending online classes.

Additionally, with time zone differences, timing for events might not be suitable for some to attend.

However, all is not lost, through collaborations with the Mature Students and Postgraduate Forum, I was able to hold 2 cooking sessions teaching how to make Asian Dishes. These sessions did fulfil my manifesto point on sharing culture, though to a small audience, I believe is something that can be carried on.

Other Projects I Have Been Working On:

This past year many other issues has crop up and the Officer team as well as the Liberation and Campaign Officer (LCO) Team has reacted and sounded out to these issues.

The first statement that the LCO has put up ever since I took office was to talk about the transparency of the President By-election against RON. Since then there were a few more statement to call for action such as supporting of the Rent Strike.

Together with the Full Time Officer team, we have also put out other statements such as the call for the Pharmacy on campus to continue to operate as well as condemning racist statement against officer.

Personally, I have also issued statement against Asian Hate after the horrific incident in the United States.

Other than statements calling out for actions. The LCO team has also done other projects. One notable project is the takeover to LUSU's Instagram page. On my takeover day, I shared some tips and tricks on surviving life at the university as an international student.

I have also worked on connecting with other ISO around the country. Although not much has come from it, I learnt more about the struggles from other officers and was able to seek advice when it comes to issue that all international student face. For example, my conversation with the ISO from University of Nottingham, I learnt that many issues faced by our students are similar and that during this pandemic times, many events struggle to gain traction. Other than learning from other officers, these are connections that can be passed on to my successor who might be able to do something with the connections.

Priorities for the remainder of the year:

One project that I will be running in the month of May with help from the Asian Representative from ISF is an online "travel" campaign called "Travel with May". The main objective of this campaign is to allow students to "travel virtually" by learning more about other countries and their cultures. This ties in with my manifesto point of coming up with events that share knowledge with the student body on the different cultures.

Officer Budget Expenditure:

As of the writing of this report, the budget is untouched as all campaign and projects are ran online.