

Mission

Student Life Support

Purpose

Our mission as the Students' Union is to provide **representation**, encourage **participation** and offer **personal development** opportunities to our members throughout their student life.

Principles

KCLSU is a student-led, student-focussed organisation with the principles of representation, democracy and informed campaigning at its very heart. Every student at King's is a member of KCLSU. We actively listen to our members and their contribution guides and shapes our policies. (STUDENTS)

KCLSU works closely with the college to fulfil the needs of our students by providing numerous opportunities for personal development, and participation in activities, services and information. (PARTNERSHIP)

We are a key partner with the College in providing support to increase satisfaction to maximise student success. KCLSU acts as an agent of change to ensure services in the college are relevant and appropriate to students through representation. (POSITIVE CHANGE)

KCLSU encourages and supports citizenship in our community. We celebrate our rich diversity and foster an inclusive environment protecting equality for all. (SUSTAINABILITY)

All our activities and services are conducted with the highest ethical integrity. We are accountable and endeavour to be transparent, open and honest about our activities and responsible to all stakeholders. KCLSU is aware of its environmental impact and works to all legal and good practice standards. (ACCOUNTABILITY)

KCLSU strives to deliver quality in all of its services, activities and opportunities by ensuring they are user and customer focussed, professional, safe, viable, and offer value for money. (QUALITY)

KCLSU recognises the dynamic nature of its community and our flexibility and adaptability allow us to meet the changing needs and demands of our membership. (ADAPTABILITY)

KCLSU is an informed organisation that embraces the learning and sharing of knowledge for the benefit of our membership. We value our people as an asset worthy of investment and KCLSU supports their professional and personal development. (LEARNING)

KCLSU is proud of being a responsible employer and the provider of a safe, secure and enjoyable working environment. (PEOPLE)

KCLSU is honest and inclusive and is fun to be involved with. It has a strong team spirit that is fostered in an environment of trust between students, staff, officers, the college, alumni, the wider community and our customers. KCLSU is an organisation to be proud of. (COMMUNITY)

Future Opportunities and Challenges for KCLSU

The next few years will offer a number of opportunities and challenges for KCLSU and the services and activities that it operates. It is useful to identify the likely themes and the impact that these could have on KCLSU.

Students

It is important to be aware of the changing nature of students studying at King's College London and their number, type, courses, and modes of study. What impact will the cap being lifted on fees have on the student population and their needs of the College and KCLSU. We need to recognise that our student population is as broad as the general population and to chase this market commercially rather than a perceived 'student' market. We need to be providing membership services that serve the students needs. These needs could differ from current students and could change swiftly.

The College

Our relationship with the College is vital. Their expectations of us will probably increase, demanding more to student feedback and evidence of delivering our commitments. We need to ensure that the College recognises and rewards our good practice and achievements. The College needs to recognise KCLSU as the experts in student feedback – almost the College's MORI. It is essential that KCLSU is perceived by the College as an important and vital part of student lives and that the strategic direction of KCLSU is in line with the College's strategy and the Principal's vision for the future of King's College London. It is likely that there will be more interest in KCLSU from the College with greater demands and scrutiny. This should lead to a closer working relationship and benefits for students, but there is a danger that the College will wish to offer services to students that have traditionally been the domain of students' unions such as sport or commercial services.

Representation

Representation is our core business and students should think of KCLSU first if they have a complaint or need representation. KCLSU must be excellent at representation whether it is through representing individual students, lobbying the College on issues that affect large numbers of students, supporting course representation, working with our regional and national colleagues to instigate change or facilitating students with their own campaigning areas. Campaigning is one of the tools that KCLSU will use to lead to positive change for students.

Technology

Technology should be used and maximised to enable us to work more effectively. It should help us achieve the aims of the new governance systems, to gather student feedback, to give information internally and externally, and to ensure that we work as effectively as possible and providing excellent services across all of the sites of the College. It is essential that we work alongside the College and have integrated systems. Whilst KCLSU will embrace technology it recognises that technology will never replace the need for face-to-face contact.

Financial Sustainability and Stewardship

It is essential that KCLSU has solid financial sustainability and sound stewardship. Our financial systems need to be robust enough to be able to provide managers with accurate and timely information on which to base their decisions. KCLSU has to maintain its sound financial position but this could be difficult with expanding services and rising costs. There should be an improved honesty with the College about the cost of funding our services and the use of commercial surpluses in funding core business. KCLSU must also proactively seek out funding additional to the block grant in the form of specific project funding from external sources.

Effective Decision Making

KCLSU needs to improve its ability to make decisions and plan more effectively for the short, medium and long term. These decisions need to be informed by student feedback, input from the College and external statistics. The decisions that KCLSU takes will be under greater scrutiny and will therefore need to be more transparent. To ensure good decision-making we need informed trustees and trained and accountable managers. We need to ensure that there is better knowledge transfer and continuity in our elected officers and also our paid employees.

People

The staff who work for KCLSU are one of its key assets. Staff will leave the organisation and recruiting the right people. It is important that we ensure that all of our staff receive adequate development, support and training to be able to perform their roles well and achieve the high standards that are expected of them. The College's Job Evaluations could impact upon KCLSU and future performance management systems could affect the cost of employing staff. There will be increased accountability of staff through the new governance systems and there might need to be an increase in the number of staff employed in certain areas to support the new system. KCLSU is becoming more professional as it matures and this is likely to impact on the type of people recruited. It is important to retain the culture of the organisation and the values that make it special.

Student Activity

It is essential that KCLSU promotes the importance of the whole student experience as opposed to simply the academic experience. We need to seek feedback on the impact that the change in fees will have on their desire to be involved in extra curricular activity. We need to be working with the College on the introduction of student Personal Development Plans. We also need to increase our work with the local community. The democratic systems of support and decision making for student activity will change with the new governance system and the area needs a clear future direction. A clear steer is required on whether we promote excellence or participation in sport. We also need to be clear on the priority given to being student led or student run and the impact on value for money and resources. We need to offer a wide-ranging set of activities to students that are of high quality and are good value. KCLSU needs to work closely with other organisations that are involved with student activity and ensure that we influence the decisions that will affect our activities.

Legal

KCLSU needs to keep up to date and aware of current legislation particularly the future Charities Act. We will need specialist help and advice to ensure that we are working within the law and this will probably lead to a long term and expensive relationship with legal advisers. Our new legal status will require us to have additional areas of expertise. We need to be aware of the increasing legislative culture and proactively introduce systems to mitigate against this risk.

Space

Students frequently define KCLSU by the space that it inhabits. It is important that we use the space that we have well. We have struggled historically to be able to plan the use of our space adequately because the College rather than KCLSU has control over it. We should be part of the College's space planning and are aware the plans for the Strand redevelopment, only then can we have our own space strategy. We need to understand the impact of the College's desire to introduce social and cultural hubs on our services and spaces. KCLSU needs to strive for consistency across all of our sites and to continue to fight for increased appropriate space for publicity and information and space for student activity. The College should be engaged in a discussion over space charges.

KCLSU Strategic Aims for the next 2-4 years.

1. To increase and enhance **student participation** in all areas of KCLSU
2. To improve our **knowledge of students** in terms of their needs, wants and the local and national trends.
3. To create **strong relationships and to manage these relationships well**. These relationships will include the College, other Students' Unions, the NHS, NUS, ULU, , and other charities and not for profit organisations. KCLSU aims to be a big London player and be one of the leaders in the movement.
4. To have **quality** and consistency in everything that what do. To go from excellent to outstanding and to have best practice, and recognised standards of work e.g. Investors in People, Investing in Volunteers etc.
5. To ensure that there is **good systems of governance** at KCLSU and to support the implementation of the new system and the associated changes in practice and culture.
6. To ensure that we have adequate systems of **business planning, financial management and financial sustainability**. Without good financial systems we cannot provide the quality, range or number of services and activities.
7. To take a strategic and proactive approach to improving internal and external **communication**.
8. To maintain a proactive approach to **ethical and environmental** issues acting directly where possible and lobbying partners and external bodies to produce positive change.