

Pugalaenthi Murugan

1<sup>st</sup> year Mechanical Engineering

Running for: Welfare Officer

Proposer: Golden Goh Xiao Xuan (2<sup>nd</sup> year Chemical Engineering)

Seconder: Joanne Siow Xing Jie (2<sup>nd</sup> year Civil and Environmental Engineering)

### Why Welfare?

When I first thought about moving to the UK to study at Imperial, I felt a profound sense of loneliness. None of my close friends were coming with me, and I didn't know anyone at Imperial nor the UK—no family, no acquaintances, no seniors. The thought of being alone in an unfamiliar place was overwhelming. However, the freshers' camp was a turning point for me. It helped me build meaningful connections, make new friends, and bond with seniors, easing my transition and making me feel at home at Imperial. This experience inspired me to create the same sense of community and support for others. As Welfare Officer, I want to ensure that every Malaysian at Imperial, whether a fresher or a senior, feels welcomed, supported, and truly at home, through initiatives that foster connection and a sense of belonging.

### What plans do you have?

1. **Have a break, Have a KitKat!** (Tentative date: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025)
  - End-of-Spring-Term social to **help everyone unwind and relax** before the stress of final exams kicks in.
  - **A final chance to relive Dikir Barat**, especially for those who may have not seen each other since MNight. **Beginner-friendly**, welcoming newcomers, and seniors who may need a refresher.
  - Take turns hitting the kompong, performing Dikir, or simply just enjoy the **snacks and drinks** provided and play **board/card games** with good company.
  - **Customisable Exam Care Packages** (within allocated budget) for those who sign up
  - Planned contents for care packages (suggestions for additional items are welcome):
    - 2 sachets of 3-in-1 instant coffee
    - 1 KitKat finger bar (2-finger)
    - Mints
    - Encouragement notes (from ICUMS and on behalf of friends, if they wish)
  - **Estimated Total Cost: £300** (Assuming 300 sign ups and £1 per person for care packages)

2. **iCUMS Housing Guide 2025** (End of March/Early April)
  - **Targeted for current first-years** (upcoming second years)
  - Provide housing assistance for freshers, as many may still need help with finding accommodation
  - Ensure no one feels left behind in the housing search and **provide updated and relevant information**
  - **Action Plan:**
    - i) **Survey Seniors**
      - Conduct a survey among seniors to understand their experience in finding accommodation, including any challenges they faced.
      - Identify common areas where students rent properties, along with the estimated average monthly/weekly rental for various areas.
      - Gather information on most used/preferred websites or property agents to search for properties and explain the application timeline
      - Organise a session with final-year seniors who are about to finish their rental contracts and connect them with freshers who are still looking for accommodation.
    - ii) **Create a comprehensive PDF guide:**
      - Compile the information gathered from seniors and other sources into a clear step-by-step housing guide
      - Provide a Google Form for freshers to submit any additional housing-related queries, which will be also addressed in the guide
  
3. **Imperial Offer-Holders '25 WhatsApp Group** (To be created in May)
  - Provide a platform where offer holders can **ask questions and receive timely information** in preparation for their upcoming transition to Imperial.
  - **Key features:**
    - **Open Communication**  
Offer-holders can ask questions anytime in the group. For those who feel uncomfortable asking in a big group, a Google Form will be provided to submit their questions anonymously. Questions will be gathered and **answered daily**.
    - **FAQ compilation**  
Frequently asked questions will be compiled, shared as a PDF, and pinned in the group for easy access, ensuring clarity on common concerns.
    - **Student Accommodation Insights** (End of May)  
Provide a PDF guide or conduct a short online meeting (after A-Level exams) to allow offer-holders to hear firsthand from current freshers about their experience and the **pros and cons of different university accommodation**. Particularly useful as invitations for accommodation applications are typically sent out in early June and this session will **provide clarity to offer-holders** before they submit their application form.  
*\*Attendance is not compulsory for committee members if an online meeting is preferred, due to exam season. However, those who wish to participate can share their experiences*
  - Share a "**Malaysia to Imperial Packing Guide**" in mid-June to help them start preparing what to bring or buy early.

#### 4. **Freshers' Camp** (Tentative dates: from 5 to 7 September 2025)

- Day 1: Sunway (Free)  
Days 2 & 3: Venue TBC (Maximum RM 200 per person – heavily subsidised)
- For freshers to get to know our sponsors, bond between themselves and seniors, and get a taster of ICUMS' Flagship Event: MNight, especially our signature Dikir Barat to ensure they feel welcomed by seniors.
- Aim to **reduce the cost of Days 2 & 3 by 10% per person** compared to past years by finding resorts that offer good team building facilities yet for a discounted price, negotiate group/student discounts, and optimize transport expenses. By making the camp more accessible, more freshers will be introduced to MNight early on which might help increase the participation.
- **Estimated total subsidy needed: £800-1000**  
***\*Compulsory to be attended by all committee members***

#### 5. **Cohort Dinner** (Tentative date: 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Freshers' Camp)

- Opportunity for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years from the same course to dine together, with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years welcomed to join if they wish to.
- For those missing Days 2 & 3 of the Freshers' Camp, it ensures they at least meet their future course mates and seniors before coming to Imperial; and encourages them to attend Freshers' Camp, even if none of their friends from their previous school are following them to Imperial.
- **Makes freshers more comfortable seeking academic help** later at Imperial as they would've already known them quite well.
- If no seniors from a particular course are available, freshers can dine with their friends, previous school seniors or be grouped with other freshers who they might live near with them to ensure they can have meaningful connections.  
***\*Committee attendance is compulsory; 2<sup>nd</sup> year seniors are strongly encouraged to join***

#### 6. **Inclusive MNight Practices**

- Suggestions:
  - i) **Ice-breaking session** (First practice)
    - Creates opportunities for participants to learn more about each other and start building relationships. Helps them connect on a personal level, improving the communication with each other and **builds team spirit** in the long run. Also ensures participants will **feel comfortable helping out/learning from their peers** and not only depending on the choreographers.
  - ii) **More snacks**
    - Provide enough **snacks for all divisions**, so no group feels left out or undervalued. This ensures everyone feels included in MNight. This promotes unity and reinforces that all divisions are equally important in the practice environment.
    - **Estimated additional cost: £500**

## 7. **Buddy Family** (2025/26 Academic Year)

- **Slowly fades off after 1<sup>st</sup> term** as many freshers would already have their own friend group and might no longer feel the need to participate in buddy family events, especially if they are staying far from each other.
- **Keep existing initiatives** like the Amazing Race and Potluck
- Suggestions for improvements:
  - i) **Option to choose buddy family groupings**
    - During sign-ups let freshers and seniors indicate if they wish to be grouped with specific friends or seniors
    - Allow them to feel more comfortable in the group, and make them feel they want to hang out more with their buddy family
  - ii) **Define specific themes for buddy families**
    - Allows people to choose activities that a buddy family does that appeals to them rather than grouping just based on MBTI and hobbies
    - Example categories may include:
      - a) Chill and Social – Casual meetups, movie and game nights
      - b) Adventurous – Exploring London, daytrips
      - c) Foodie – Cooking sessions, eating out
      - d) Fitness Freak – Gym sessions, sports days
    - If a particular theme gets a lot of attraction create another family with the same interest
  - iii) **Transparent and clear point system**
    - A guide will be given for each buddy family activity so that the families can know how much points they can earn clearly.
    - Teams with highest points will be awarded appealing prizes such as trips/dinner treats at the end of the academic year
    - Families that carry out initiatives on their own and update ICUMS on their activity will earn bonus points based on number of participants. If bonus points are awarded it will be updated publicly so everyone knows the activities other buddy families are doing.
    - Leaderboard to be shared out every month publicly on social media to give motivation for seniors to take own initiatives
  - iv) **Inter-buddy family activities**
    - Organise games (physical and online) by working with the sports officer
    - Organise non-sports activities as well such as Malaysian Trivia Night to bring up the Malaysian spirit and improve bonding
    - Ensures families can mix around with other families, compete and have fun together
  - v) **Mid-year Feedback**
    - Things may go wrong, and some families might not feel as fun/well bonded compared to others, hence a feedback form will be sent out to check if any adjustments/improvements are needed
- **Estimated total cost: £1000-1200**