

London Transport Announces Student Discount

Ali Campbell

A major breakthrough has been made which will benefit many London-based students, as London Transport announces substantial student discounts on tube and bus services.

The new Student Photocard, which was officially launched on 21 September, allows full-time students between the ages of 18 and 24 attending any London school or college a 30 percent discount on period Bus Passes and LT Travelcards valid for one month or more.

This announcement comes after years of lobbying by the NUS (National Union of Students), ULU (University of London Union) and other College unions across the capital, and follows a trial of the 'card at Queen Mary and Westfield

College in 1996. Matt Hyde, President of ULU, commented: "We're pretty pleased... it's obviously a major breakthrough."

before adding: "It's a bit of a coup to have a student campaign bear fruit."

According to Mr. Hyde, London Transport had proved reluctant to proceed with the new discount after the pilot scheme, and there followed consultations with many individuals and

organisations, including candidates for the post of Mayor of London. He explained that attempts had been made

as far back as the early 1980s to negotiate a deal of this nature, describing the bureaucratic process as "... like changing the direction of a big ship." He also voiced his disappointment that the deal has not

mature students' side."

The provision of this card is also welcome news for ULU itself, as some have felt that the services provided to its members do not justify the £91 000 per year membership fee. The ULU President, when presented with this question, suggested that ULU's success in this matter should be interpreted as an indication of good things to come. David Hellard, President of ICU, confessed that "...it shows what can be achieved if ULU is fully exploited." He also outlined his concern about the age restrictions imposed by London Transport, drawing attention to a "potential massive loss", but hopes that the agreement might be re-evaluated in the future.

In the meantime, application forms are available for the new card in the Imperial College Union Office.



The new card, and ULU President Matt Hyde, who helped negotiate the deal with London Transport

been made available to mature students: "I am vociferously opposed to the 18-24 age limit... there is still work to do on the

The Summer of Discontent?

Imperial is a tough college

Resignations over the summer holidays have caused difficulties for student organisations throughout Imperial, leaving ICU, two Constituent College Unions (CCUs) and RAG without vital committee members.

Adam Cherrington, who was elected as Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) last Spring, has been forced to resign after failing his Biology second year exams. The news was announced early in the summer, leaving ICU without a key sabbatical officer during freshers' week for the second year running.

Meanwhile both Katy Nolan (RCSU President) and Hamish Common (C&GU President) have also stepped down for academic reasons. Miss Nolan made the decision after changing from a four year to a three year course, while Mr Common failed his second year earlier this month. In a worrying development for

RAG, which organises several events during the Autumn term, Rob Park (RAG Chair) has left Imperial, and is believed to have started a new course at QMW. Dave Wharton, who stepped down as Deputy President (Finance & Services) Elect last term, has also been forced to leave the college, and is now studying at University College.

Thus once again the first term will be taken up with a round of elections. Students interested in standing for either CCU Presidency should contact the CCU office concerned. Dave Hellard, ICU President, has set the timetable for electing a new DP(C&S): Nomination papers will go up on Monday 12 October, hustings will take place between Monday 2 and Wednesday 4 November, with voting in all departments on Monday 9 and

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Fifth Sabbatical for ICU

ICU is to have a fifth sabbatical officer, starting in the academic year 1999 - 2000. The new officer's self-explanatory title will be Deputy President (Education & Welfare). The decision brings ICU in line with other London colleges, many of whom already have sabbatical officers concerned with welfare.

The decision was announced by Imperial's Governing Body after a meeting in July. ICU has been trying for some time to get approval for the fifth sabbatical: Dave Hellard, ICU President, explained that it "took a lot of justification... but was vital". He was quick to praise his predecessor, Andy Heeps, who was responsible for much of the negotiation on college committees; "we take our hats off to Andy". Elections for the post will be held along with the other sabbatical elections in the Spring term.

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