

Imperial College Union  
**Life and Associate Memberships – An Amendment**  
*A paper by the Deputy President (Finance & Services)*

## Background

Current policy on Life Memberships lays out a number of criteria defining who is eligible to subscribe. One of these criteria states that to buy Life Membership, a person would have to have been 'a Full or Associate Member of the Union for at least one academic year'.

Similarly, there are different criteria for becoming an Associate Member. One of these is that students of any Further or Higher Education Institution can purchase Associate Membership for £4 per month. College staff can also purchase Associate Membership at the same rate, and permanent members of Union staff are awarded it automatically.

## Issues

There are some students on courses that do not fit neatly into the academic year. For instance, if a postgraduate were to start a one-year degree in November, by the time they finish the course, they would not have been a student for a full 'academic' year, rendering them ineligible to purchase Life Membership.

Furthermore, according to the policy, if an Associate Member of the Union should no longer be eligible for membership (for example, if they are no longer a student), they are unable to continue purchasing their monthly subscription. If the individual has not been an Associate Member for one academic year, they are then ineligible to purchase Life Membership, even if they wished to maintain their involvement with Imperial College Union.

The first issue would be resolved by changing the wording to 'for at least one academic or calendar year.' This change would then help resolve the second issue: if individuals leaving their position were allowed to continue to buy Associate Membership until they had accrued a full calendar year, they would then be eligible to buy Life Membership.

It is probably pertinent to specify that this would not allow individuals to start buying Associate Membership after they have left, but rather allow those who had been subscribing whilst in post to continue to do so, should they wish.

## Proposals

- To change the first eligibility criterion, which currently reads as 'A Full or Associate Member of the Union for at least one academic year', to 'A Full or Associate Member of the Union for at least one academic or calendar year'.
- To allow Associate Members of the Union to continue purchasing subscription until they have accrued one calendar year's worth, even if they cease to be eligible before that year.

## **Appendix**

### **Life and Associate Membership**

This paper is intended to clarify in one place the arrangements which are in operation regarding Life and Associate Membership of the Union. Certain aspects are the gift of the Executive Committee, as are setting of the various charges which are made for these memberships.

#### **Associate Membership**

Requirements for Associate Membership are defined in the constitution:

*“The Executive Committee may grant Associate Membership to College or Union staff, or to any Further or Higher Education student over the age of eighteen under such conditions as it may establish, entitling them to use the facilities of the Union.”*

The working practice for granting associate membership is as follows:

- College staff are able to become Associate Members upon payment of a fee of £4/month. College staff are taken to be those individuals supplied on a regular electronic feed to the Union by ICT. College staff who are also registered as students are taken to be Full Members of the Union.
- Permanent staff of the Union are automatically made Associate Members for the duration of their employment.
- College staff on long term secondment to the Union are automatically made Associate Members for the duration of their secondment.
- Students of the Royal College of Music and Royal College of Art are able to become Associate Members upon payment of a fee of £5 per academic year or part thereof<sup>1</sup>.
- Students of any of Further or Higher Education Institution are able to become Associate Members upon payment of a fee of £4/month

If an Associate Member leaves their post or ceases to be a student, they would normally be ineligible to continue to purchase Associate Membership. However, if they have not yet accrued a full calendar year's worth, they may continue to subscribe until that point. This will then qualify them for Life Membership.

#### **Life Membership**

Requirements for Life Membership are also defined in the constitution:

*A person shall be entitled to become a Life Member of the Union upon payment of subscription if they have been:*

- a. A Full or Associate Member of the Union for at least one academic or calendar year,*
- b. A Research or Teaching Assistant for at least two academic years,*
- c. A member of the full time Union staff for at least two years, or*
- d. A member of the Imperial College staff for at least two years.*

Life Membership is charged at £50 (one off charge for life) in all but two instances, which are also defined in the constitution:

- 3. Life Membership shall be bestowed upon Lay Trustees, the Union Honorary Senior Treasurer and other Honorary Senior Treasurers without payment during their tenure.*
- 4. Honorary Life Membership may be awarded without payment of subscription by the Council.*

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<sup>1</sup> Agreed by the Executive Committee 14/01/10