

**Alumni Ball 2013 Report**  
*A note written by Steve Tran, Incoming ICSMSU President*

**This report was written to be as factual as possible. I was only involved with the situation from 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013 onwards so I am only able to recount events via the emails exchanged.**

**Introduction**

The ICSM Alumni Ball 2013 was an event planned to be for Alumni and students to raise funds towards the renovation of the Reynolds Bar as well as rekindle our connections with our Alumni. Unfortunately due to unprecedented ticket sales, the event was cancelled and the contract with the Brewery has been now reassigned to Shrove Tuesday Final Year Dinner, which will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2013. We have previously had the same event at this venue in March 2010.

**Background**

At the end of academic year 2012-13, the idea of running an alumni ball was established with ICSM Alumni Association, ICSM Students' Union and the Faculty of Medicine. The aim of the event would be to provide some funding towards the renovation of the Reynolds Bar, and provide the first of was planned to become an annual 5 year reunion event in the Alumni Calendar.

- **27<sup>th</sup> September 2012:** During the ICSM Alumni Meeting, it was confirmed to go ahead with the ball - the format was established as a sit down meal and speeches, followed by after-dinner guests joining the after-party. At this stage the number that was proposed was 250 dinner guests. This figure was decided based on the positive feedback from Alumni both on the committee and via facebook.
- **October – December 2012:** After consultations with the venue (The Brewery) and several members of the Alumni Committee, a contract was drawn up for 300 dinner guests (£22,500 excluding VAT). This allowed the organisers the ability to choose a dinner and drinks package. The AV was also organised by a familiar company to us, Sound2Light, and on their recommendation £4000 was budgeted for AV costs.
- **16<sup>th</sup> December 2012** and then again on **7<sup>th</sup> January 2013:** The budget was sent to Stefan Nubert, ICU Deputy President (Finance & Services), and Henry Whittaker, Deputy President (Clubs & Societies).
- **10<sup>th</sup> January 2013:** Stefan emailed with concerns about the attendance being "80%+". A response dated on the 11<sup>th</sup> January stated that there was positive feedback from both the Alumni committee and via the Alumni's facebook network. This was before any advertisement had begun. Optimism was also fuelled by the fact that the Faculty of Medicine's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner (combined with our annual Summer Ball) had over 1000+ guests in attendance.
- **January 2013:** The contract was signed and the initial 25% deposit (£5,625 excluding VAT) was paid to the venue on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2013.
- **February 2013:** Dinner tickets went online at a price of £99. An advertisement went out through the ICSM Alumni newsletter.
- **March – May 2013:** Advertisement carried on throughout the following months. Methods used were: a thunderclap on facebook, facebook events, posters, ICSM Gazette Articles, and ICSM Alumni Emails. An email by the IC Alumni department was also sent out to 7000+ Alumni.
- **20 May 2013:** The organising committee had a meeting with regards to the upcoming remaining 75% payment (£16,875 excluding VAT). At this point only 22 tickets had been sold. Plans were drawn up to
  - *Appendix 1* has the cancellation clause from the Terms & Conditions. Cancellation in May would have incurred a 100% cancellation fee. 120 working days would have been the week prior to the 8<sup>th</sup> February; in addition the payment in January was within 180 working days before the event.

- **8<sup>th</sup> June 2013:** The ICSM Alumni Committee met up and decided due to the poor ticket sales (43 on this date) that the event was too risky to proceed with, as it was not guaranteed that the breakeven number of dinner tickets would be met.
- **June 2013:** The only alternative, due to the venue's unwillingness to move the event outside of the calendar year, was to go ahead and move the contract to Shrove Tuesday Final Year Dinner in November 2013. This event has a guaranteed attendance of more than 300 every year for dinner, and a large after-party contingent, thus ensuring the event will break even or make profit.

### Conclusion

The ICSM Alumni Ball Committee would like to thank the STFYD committee for being so helpful and taking on the venue chosen by us, they have made a decision that will save the alumni association a large amount of money and thus help to allow increased financial support from the alumni committee to students in the future.

Currently discussions are being taken between ICSM Alumni Committee and STFYD committee to confirm any financial support from the Alumni to ensure the event does not make a loss.

### *Appendix 1: The cancellation clause from the Terms & Conditions of the Brewery*

#### **21. Cancellation**

- 21.1 If you wish to terminate the Contract or cancel the Event, such cancellation must be made in writing to us and we may, subject to clause 21.3 below charge a Cancellation Fee as detailed in clause 21.2 below.
- 21.2 The Cancellation Fee will be payable as set out in the Contract and any other sums due under clause 4.2 and will be an amount calculated by reference to a percentage of the Event Fees dependant on how much notice of cancellation is given before the Event Period. In particular:

Notice of cancellation before the Event Period	Cancellation Fee
180 Working Days or more:	50%
121 to 179 Working Days inclusive:	75%
120 Working Days or less:	100%

- 21.3 If after you have given us notice to terminate the Contract or cancel the Event we are able to hire the Room(s) for the Event Period to another customer, your Cancellation Fee will be reduced by any sums we receive from such other customer.
- 21.4 We may retain all or part of any money already paid by you in whole or partial satisfaction of the Cancellation Fee.
- 21.5 The Cancellation Fee and any other sums due to us under this clause 21 shall be paid to us without any deduction or withholding of any nature within ten (10) days of our demand.