

Imperial College Union
Clubs, Societies & Projects Policy

A paper by:

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1. Background

1. The RAG and CAG Policy is up for renewal in June 2014
2. This policy simply reiterates Clubs & Societies Policy and it is no longer necessary to have separate policies. This dates from a time when RAG and CAG existed under the Representation and Welfare Board and their responsibility lay with the Deputy President (Welfare). RAG and CAG are now both stated in the Union Bye Laws as Management Groups.
3. The Clubs & Societies Policy itself is out of date and needs updating to reflect the changes to the Union's Constitution and Bye Laws.

2. Recommendations

1. To adopt a new Clubs, Societies & Projects Policy which brings together the Clubs & Societies Policy and the Raising & Giving and Community Action Group Policy.
2. To combine New Projects Committee with New Clubs Committee to create the one Committee for approving new Clubs, Societies & Projects, called New Activities Committee and to bring a paper to the next CSPB outlining its make-up.

CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND PROJECTS POLICY

A. General Introduction

1. The Clubs Societies and Projects Policy sets out the rights and responsibilities of the Union, Clubs, Societies, Projects, other relevant Union activity and individual members. It also sets out the method of administration of Clubs, Societies and Projects.
2. This policy binds the whole Union, but is aimed in particular at Clubs, Societies and Projects, their members and parts of the Union with responsibility for Clubs, Societies and Projects.

Statement of intent

3. The Union is committed under its Constitution: "To advance the education of its members" "To promote and encourage the interest by students in matters outside the College curriculum, especially cultural, social and sporting interests," and to "To provide or ensure a range of facilities which advance the interests of the students of Imperial College"
4. The Union believes that one of the best ways of fulfilling these obligations is by the provision of student-led Clubs, Societies and Projects which reflect the full range of interests and abilities of its members.

Definitions

5. The words "Club" and "Society" are interchangeable and do not refer to specific types of organisation. It refers to a group officially supported by the Union to support a specific set of extra-curricular interests.
6. The word "Project" refers to a group officially supported by the Union with extra-curricular objectives that are charitable, involve outreach work, or are activities that primarily benefit non-members.
7. The Union Club and Society Committee, or Constituent Union under which a Club, Society or Project is constituted is referred to as Management Group (MG) in this policy. The Constituent Unions and Management Groups that exist are contained in the Union Bye-Laws.
8. The senior officer of a Club, Society or Project will be referred to as the Chair in this policy, though other names (e.g. President or Club Captain) can be used in practice.

B. Duties of the Union and its Clubs, Societies & Projects

9. This part sets out the general duties of the Union and of the Clubs, Societies and Projects to each other.

Duties of Imperial College Union

10. The Union shall fulfil its objects and statement of intent (sections 3 and 4).

11. The Union shall provide a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination for all Union activity (according to the Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies).
12. The Union shall permit Club, Societies and Projects to be formed by groups of students with common aims, provided they do not reject the aims and objectives of the Union or its rules and policies, particularly the Equal Opportunities Policy, and no Club, Society or Project currently exists which caters to their needs.
13. Once formed, Clubs, Societies and Projects may not change their aims and objectives so that they clash with those of an established group, without the prior consent of the established Club, Society or Project, or through a resolution by the Clubs, Societies and Projects Board.
14. The Union shall provide a Freshers' Fair at the start of each academic year and will endeavour to ensure that all Clubs, Societies and Projects have a stall provided.
15. The Union shall provide advertising and publicity for Clubs, Societies and Projects to new students at the start of each academic year.
16. The Union shall provide a page for each Club, Society and Project on the Union website. This page can be altered by the club, society or project by using the club account details. This shall include a shop function to allow for sales online, though minimum price limits may apply.
17. The Union shall provide a page for memberships to be bought. These may be free but in all other cases a minimum membership of £2 shall apply
18. The Union shall provide a page for receiving required documentation, finance information and information on bookings.
19. The Union shall provide funding for Clubs, Societies and Projects according to budgetary constraints. The funding is allocated by the Clubs, Societies and Projects Board on which all Clubs, Societies and Projects have representation through their Management Group.
20. The Union shall provide banking facilities, including assistance with ordering, deposits and advice for Clubs, Societies and Projects at no charge to them.
21. The Union shall provide basic use of rooms within its premises to Clubs, Societies and Projects at no charge to them and shall endeavour to provide access to College spaces as per agreements with relevant departments and College policy
22. The Union shall provide resources, including computing, webspace, printing, photocopying, phone and fax services, though a charge may be made for these.

Duties of Clubs, Societies & Projects

23. Clubs, Societies and Projects are expected to comply with the Union Constitution and Bye-Laws and all Union Regulations, procedures and policies.
24. Clubs, Societies and Projects are required to conduct themselves in a fair and democratic manner. They owe a duty of care to their members for their health and safety and a responsibility not to discriminate among them or harass them.

25. Clubs, Societies and Projects owe a duty to their members to ensure equal provision of facilities within the limits imposed by necessity where experienced or qualified members are required.

26. The Union shall comply with significant financial and health and safety requirements prescribed by law, College and other bodies or agencies. Clubs, Societies and Projects will need to demonstrate to the Union that they are complying with these requirements.

27. Clubs, Societies and Projects represent the Union and the College when holding events, trips, or performing or competing. As such they are expected to behave responsibly as ambassadors for the Union and the College and not bring the Union or the College into disrepute.

C. Chain of responsibility

29. The Union operates a chain of responsibility for all matters relating to Clubs, Societies and Projects. This is as follows:

- i. The Union President,
- ii. The appropriate Deputy President,
- iii. The Chair or President of the Management Group,
- iv. The appropriate committee member for the Management Group,
- v. The Chair of the Club, Society or Project, and
- vi. the appropriate committee member for the Club, Society or Project

30. The appropriate Deputy President in section 23.ii) is:

- i. the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) for documentation and Health & Safety requirements, and all other issues not covered by the other Deputy Presidents,
- ii. the Deputy President (Finance & Services) for financial issues, and
- iii. the Deputy President (Welfare) for issues relating to equal opportunities.

31. The appropriate committee member in a Management Group, Club, Society or Project (section 23.iv) or vi)) depends upon the Management Group's, Club's, Society's or Project's constitution (though always the Treasurer for financial issues).

D. Constitutional matters

Status

33. All Clubs, Societies and Projects are formed under a Management Group, and are bound by their standing orders and decisions.

34. Management Groups are defined in the Union Bye-Laws. They have their own standing orders, officers and meetings, and are responsible providing for the co-ordination and development of student activity within their Clubs, Societies or Projects. They may also run their own events and activities.

35. Management Groups report in turn to the Clubs, Societies and Projects Board, which determines budgeting, advises on policy issues and deals with inter Management Group disputes.

36. Clubs, Societies and Projects are also bound by their own constitution as approved by 2/3 of their membership and a majority of their Management Group. The Management Group standing orders supersede the constitutions of individual clubs, societies and projects.

Status of Management Group Executives and others

37. The central activities of Management Groups and other constituent parts of the Union are treated as Clubs, Societies and Projects with respect to the duties, chain of responsibility, documentation and requirements (Parts B, C, F). They are not bound by the internal management provisions in Part E (except as those provisions may be incorporated into their own constitutions or standing orders) or the remainder of this Part, but are expected to run themselves democratically and properly.

Requirements for creation of a new Club, Society or Project

38. Any Full Member of the Union may sponsor the creation of a new club, society or project. The decision to accept or reject the new Club, Society or Project will be made in accordance with New Activities Committee Standing Orders. Appeals shall be made to the Clubs Societies and Projects Board whose decision shall be final.

39. The New Activities Committee shall allocate all new Clubs, Societies or Projects to whichever Management Group best matches the aims and objectives of the new Club, Society or Project.

40. A new Club, Society or Project must have aims and objectives that differ from all current clubs or societies that operate at the campus the new club or society would be based.

41. A new Club, Society or Project that differs only in its location and not in its aims and objectives may be refused if an existing group can expand its operations to include the same level of service the new club or society could offer to members at the new location.

Prohibition on types of Clubs, Societies & Projects

42. The Clubs, Societies & Projects Board or Executive Committee may direct that a Club, Society or Project with proscribed aims and objects, structure or sponsor may not be created. This measure should normally be used when Club, Society or Project purposes are expected to conflict either with the aims and objects of the Union or policy putting those into effect. Initial management of a new Club, Society or Project.

43. The initial committee of a Club, Society or Project shall be appointed by the Board creating it. This committee and its members act with the same authority as an elected committee, and holds office until the end of its first academic year or such earlier time as may be designated.

Transfers, mergers and splits of Clubs, Societies and Projects

44. A club, society or project whose aims and objectives fit more appropriately in another Management Group will transfer to that Management Group under the following conditions:

- i. A resolution of the club, society or project's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of the Management Group to which it would be transferred, or
- ii. A resolution of the Club, Society & Project Board

45. Club, Society or Project whose aims and objectives are nearly identical should normally merge, unless there are pressing reasons for them remaining separate (which include activities mostly in separate locations). Club, Society or Project's aims and objectives can be inferred from their activities as well as their constitution.

46. Clubs, Societies & Projects whose principal resources (apart from money) required to carry out their regular activity are the same should normally merge.

47. Two or more Clubs, Societies and Projects shall merge under one of the following conditions:

- i. Resolutions of each group's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of each Management Group governing them, or
- ii. A resolution of the Clubs Societies and Projects Board or Trustee Board.

48. Decisions concerning the appropriate Management Group for the merged club, Society or Project, and allocation of assets shall be taken by the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies). Appeal shall be to the Union President whose decision shall be final.

49. A Club, Society or Project which has two or more distinct spheres of activity may split into separate Clubs, Societies and Projects, by pursuing the same procedure as a new CSP application.

50. A split may occur under the following conditions:

- i. The approval of the New Activities Committee.
- ii. A resolution of the Club, Society & Project Board

51. A consensus should be obtained between the new clubs, societies and projects for the splitting of assets. Any dispute will be ruled on by the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) and appeal shall be to the Union President whose decision shall be final.

52. A club, society or project shall be dissolved and cease to exist under 1 or more of the following conditions:

- i. A resolution of the club, society or project's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of its Management Group
- ii. A disciplinary resolution of the Management Group under standing orders approved by the Club, Society & Project Board, or
- iii. Resolution of the Club, Society & Project Board.

53. A club, society or project may appeal its dissolution to the body of higher authority than the one that closed it, in the case that it was not dissolved as a result of a disciplinary measure.

i. In the case that the club or society is dissolved by its Management Group the appeal should be brought to the Clubs & Societies Board.

ii. In the case that the club or society is dissolved by the Club, Society & Project Committee, the appeal should be brought to the Trustee Board.

54. Dissolved clubs and societies' funds shall be absorbed into the Central Union reserve unless it was received for the purpose of donation to charity in which case the appropriate charitable organisation shall receive the funds due.

55. Property of the Club, Society or Project may either be reallocated to another Club, Society or Project (preferably within the same Management Group), or sold and the proceeds absorbed into the Central Union reserve. This decision will be taken by the President on the advice of the relevant Deputy Presidents.

Dormant Clubs, Societies and Projects

56. A Club, Society or Project may be classed as dormant if it has not elected its minimum committee, it has under twenty members for Clubs or Societies or 5 members for Projects or does not attend three consecutive MG General Meetings. The Management Group is responsible for categorising the club or society as dormant, and exceptions may be made with good reason. The Management Group may also create additional criteria for dormancy in accordance with standing orders passed by the Clubs Societies & Projects Board.

57. A Management Group may vote to make a Club, Society or Project dormant for one, two or three terms. Unless stated, it shall be understood that the dormancy stands for three terms, though a shorter time may be given to clubs which have circumstances which are either simple to resolve or in situations where it seems that a revival of a club is unlikely and beyond reasonable doubt.

58. Dormant Clubs, Societies and Projects have equal rights to spaces and funds as active ones. Dormant Clubs, Societies and Projects become active upon obtaining the appropriate committee or membership or attendance of a Management Group Meeting.

59. Dormant clubs must submit a monthly report to their Management Group Chair reporting what measures have been taken to address the reason for the club dormancy, which should include an analysis of the success of these measures. Failure to do so may result in the Management Group Executive taking a vote to shut down the club.

60. After the dormancy period, agreed by the Management Group, has lapsed, the Club, Society or Project shall be dissolved unless the Management Group should vote to withdraw the Club, Society or Project from dormancy or to extend the dormancy period.

Suspension of Clubs, Societies and Projects

61. A Club Society or Project may be suspended for disciplinary reasons. Suspension is temporary withdrawal of Union support for a Club, Society or Project and may result in frozen finances, inability

to book facilities, withdrawal or ICT support and prohibition to represent the Union or College in any public forum. Suspension may be implemented by:

- i. A resolution of the Management Group, Clubs, Societies and Projects Board or Executive Committee,
- ii. The Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) for incomplete documentation, a severe breach of the Health and Safety or Equal Opportunities policy or any other Union rule pending investigation
- iii. The Union President.

62. A suspension should be reviewed regularly and issued for good reason.

Use of Union grant

63. Union grant awarded to Clubs and Societies should usually not be spent on food or drink. Grant awarded to Projects may be spent on food or drink, though this should not be for student consumption.

64. Union grant may only be used on full members of Imperial College Union; as such subsidy may not be spent on Associate or Life members.

E. Internal management of Clubs, Societies and Projects

Management

65. All Clubs, Societies and Projects are managed by a committee. The members of the committee share a responsibility for its management, though its Chair holds ultimate responsibility to the Union for the club or society's activity, health & safety and finances.

66. A Club or Society committee requires as a minimum a chair, secretary and treasurer, all of whom are Full Members of the Union. Only Full Members of the Union are permitted to vote on or chair the committee. A Project requires only a Chair and Treasurer both of whom must be full members of the Union.

Membership

67. Only Full Members of the Union may become full, voting members of a Club, Society or Project

68. All Full Members of the Union are entitled to join any Club, Society or Project, unless a Club, Society or Project is registered with a government agency or national governing body which prohibits membership of affiliated clubs, societies and projects on certain grounds. Membership may only be restricted on unavoidable legal or insurance issues (e.g. firearms control). The minimum possible restriction of membership shall be implemented, and the Management Group and Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) shall be informed of any such restriction. The Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) may strike out any prohibition on membership.

- i. All full memberships shall be purchased online on the Union website. Exceptions may be granted with the permission of the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)

69. The minimum membership figure for a Club, Society will be 20 members.

70. The minimum membership figure for a project will be 5 members.

71. Life and Associate Members of the Union may become non-voting members of a club or society and may become non-voting members of a committee. They may not hold the posts prohibited for Life and Associated members.

72. The Club, Society or Project's committee may refuse membership of a Club, Society or Project to Life or Associate Members of the Union, though reasons for refusal must be given in writing to them within 10 working days.

73. Initiation ceremonies, or other compulsory (or effectively compulsory) degrading rituals, which affects the physical or mental well-being of members, are not permitted. Such behaviour may result in severe disciplinary action being taken against the Club, Society or Project, its committee and any others involved, and may result in the dissolution of the Club, Society or Project.

General Meetings and Elections

74. All Clubs, Societies and Projects shall hold general meetings upon a petition of 10 members to review the committee's actions and hold its officers to account. Matters for decision may be a review and repeal of decisions made by the committee. Notice of a general meeting shall be given to all members before a meeting on a timetable agreed in the Club, Society or Project constitution, passed by the Management Group.

75. All voting members of the committee for a Club, Society or Project, including its chair, secretary and treasurer shall be elected from and amongst all full members of the club or society at its annual general meeting (AGM).

76. A Club Society or Project may set qualifications for membership of the committee (for example: the chair may have had to sit on the committee previously, or a post may not be filled by a finalist) but these shall not be unduly onerous, and if they are, may be struck out by the Management Group, the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), Union President or the Trustee Board. These qualifications must be set out in the club, society or project constitution.

77. All elections for next year's committee should be completed before the end of the Spring term though exemptions may be granted at the discretion of the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies). Election procedures should adhere to the Bye Law G (Minor Elections), together with any directions of the club, society or project's Management Group.

78. Any bye-election for vacant positions on a Club, Society or Project committee must be conducted in accordance with Bye Law G (Minor Elections), together with any directions of the club, society or project's Management Group.

Removal of officers

79. Any motion to remove officers from elected positions must be conducted in accordance with the provisions in Bye Law E.

Removal of members

80. Any proposal to remove membership from an individual for a Club, Society or Project must be conducted in accordance with the provisions in Bye Law E.

81. Each Club, Society and Project shall be governed in accordance with a constitution approved by the membership and the Management Group. It should be obeyed and regularly reviewed by them. It should set out the management structure and procedures enacted in the Clubs, Societies and Projects Policy.

F. Documentation

General

82. Clubs, Societies and Projects need to inform the Union of their internal controls, provisions on Health and Safety and other matters so the Union can satisfy its legal duties.

Documentation required

83. Clubs, Societies and Projects shall provide to the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), or his or her nominee, the following items of documentation:

- i. Financial Responsibility – the Chair and Treasurer will sign a declaration that they will obey the Financial Regulations, adhere to the clubs and societies' duties (in Part B) and obey Union Policy and Procedures ; (yearly)
- ii. Committee contact list – containing vacation and term time addresses, vacation and term time phone numbers and e-mail address; (yearly)
- iii. Constitution – (as required)
- iv. Risk Assessment – analysing risk to members; (yearly)
- v. Instructor registration – for all clubs; (yearly)
- vi. Affiliation – for all clubs; (yearly)
- vii. Inventory – containing all items belonging to the Club, Society or Project valued over £100 in total;
- viii. Any other documents as considered appropriate by the Clubs, Societies and Projects Board

Time limits and formats in which this documentation may be submitted will be set yearly by the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) and widely publicised. However any updates to information already given should be provided as soon as possible and not only updated on an annual basis.

Exemptions on documentation

84. A Club, Society or Project's constitution does not have to be resubmitted if a satisfactory copy is held by the Union. The instructor registration, affiliation form and inventory may be submitted as null returns if appropriate.

Other Health & Safety documentation

85. Other documentation such as activity registration forms may be required for certain activities. Further approval by College bodies may be required for some activities. Where required documentation is not satisfactorily completed activities may not go ahead and disciplinary procedures will be invoked if the Union name is brought into disrepute as a result of incomplete documentation.

Sanctions for incomplete documentation

86. Documentation that is incomplete or invalid (for example: a code of conduct or constitution that has not been passed by the committee or derisorily or badly drafted) will be treated similarly as "incomplete documentation".

87. A Club, Society or Project with incomplete documentation shall:

- i. have its budget frozen
- ii. may not be permitted to use any Union facility (including booking all rooms under Union management)
- iii. may not be permitted to authorise any posters or other publicity
- iv. shall not be permitted to vote at any meeting where they are represented

88. Sanctions shall be authorised by the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies). A Club, Society or Project may appeal to the President.