

## *Paper to Amend the Union Awards Policy*

Proposer – Michael Edwards, RCSU President

Seconder – Lloyd James, FoNS Postgraduate Student, and Alex ‘Chippy’ Compton, ICU President

### **The Union Notes**

1. That the Union Awards Policy (or ‘the Policy’) was renewed following the last meeting of Union Council in the 2015-16 Academic Session.
2. That concerns were raised by several members of last years’ Council and other Officers of the Union regarding some aspects of the award nomination process, including allegations of cronyism and nepotism because of accepting nominations from the floor of the meeting.
3. That, at the time of the Union Awards meeting in May last year, and indeed at the time of writing (Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017) the most accessible version of the Policy was the 2013 (expired) version, and the 2016 (current) version was a) only accessible on the relevant Council meeting page, and b) not sent around to members of the Union Awards panel in advance of the awards panel meeting. Evidence of this is provided in the Appendix.
4. That the 2013 version of the Policy states, in Point 6, that “nominations received after the close of nominations shall not be accepted” for any award, and this was removed from the current policy.
5. That the Officer Trustees last year were given a very short turnaround in organising awarding panels for all aspects of the Union Awards.
6. That the main recognition for the higher awards of the Union are tankards and ties, which do not reflect the interests of the majority of the student body or volunteer community at Imperial College Union, or our values as an organisation.
7. That amendments to the Policy require a simple majority vote of a quorate Council.

### **The Union Believes**

1. The lack of wording prohibiting nominations ‘from the floor’ or after the close of nominations, and the removal of explicit Council ratification, does not offer transparency in the process.
2. The awarding process for the 2016-2017 Union Awards was carried out in full accordance with the current Policy. As such, no member recognised in the 2016-17 Academic Session should have their award removed.
3. That, although members of awarding panels may know nominated individuals and groups, outright cronyism and nepotism has no place in a forum for recognising volunteers.
4. That having an expired policy as the most accessible form of a policy is unacceptable and using an inaccessible policy to govern such an important process contravenes the Union’s dedication to transparency in operation. Policies should be updated on the website when officially renewed by the relevant body.
5. That the previous Officer Trustees hold no blame for the short-term nature of the task that was set to them, but mistakes were made in terms of communicating correct practice to the panel members.

6. That we need to amend our forms of recognition for higher Union Awards to reflect the changing interests of the student community at Imperial College Union. Providing new options for volunteer recognition will be a significant step towards improving inclusivity in the organisation.
7. That despite these issues, some aspects of good practice were introduced during the awarding process last year, such as the awarding of shortlistees for the Academic Representative of the Year Award being considered for Colours if they hadn't already been nominated. Also, conventional working practice, such as the use of the Chatham House Rule or the 'four wall' principle that has been used in previous years should be reintroduced. These aspects should be incorporated in any amended Policy.

### The Union Resolves

1. To take one of the following courses of action to address the outstanding issues.
  - a. Vote to accept the following amendments, effective immediately, to the Policy as proposed and seconded by the above and as contained as Appendix 1.
    - i. Amend Point 6 in the current Policy, "Any member of the Union, unless explicitly stated elsewhere in this policy, may be nominated by any Member of the Union for any of the awards described in this policy, save the President's awards", to include the following; **"Nominations are to be accepted during an official nominations period laid down by the Union President or their proxy, outside of which no other nominations can be accepted."**
    - ii. Amend Point 9 in the current Policy, "For any other categories of award, the panels shall be drawn from the membership and who is most appropriate to make the decision" to include the following; **"At the discretion of the panels, shortlistees for these awards, where possible, can be put forward for considerations for Colours or other awards if no other nomination has been submitted for them for these awards."**
    - iii. Amend Point 10 in the current Policy, "The nominations, with the exception of those for the President's Awards will be considered and decided upon by the Awards Committee, which shall report the result of its deliberations to the final scheduled Council of the academic year" to include the following; **"for official ratification"**. In accordance with the Council Standing Orders, this vote can be undertaken by an email vote if deemed appropriate by the Council Chair in order to guarantee timely Council ratification.
    - iv. Add in a point outlining the working practice of the panel to include the Chatham House Rule: **"To ensure discussion is as open as possible, the Chatham House Rule shall be enforced at all meetings discussing the nominations for awards unless there are exceptional circumstances"**.
    - v. Amend point 13 to include – "Each individual will also be allowed to purchase a tie, **appropriate garment or item in recognition of their achievement."**
    - vi. Amend points 13.3, 13.4 and 15 to include - "Each individual, so awarded, will be granted Honorary Lifetime Associate Membership of the Union **and have the option to receive either a pewter tankard with the year engraved or a glass award."**
  - b. Mandate the Council Chair, or a Council-appointed alternative, to organise a Working Group to discuss amendments to the Policy and present an alternative proposal to the December meeting of Union Council. This Working Group will draw membership from Council members, including at least one of the Officer Trustees.

NB – whilst these substantive changes were made to the policy, a number of cosmetic and condensing changes were made that have no effect other than the numbering of the provisions of the policy. To outline the changes:

Each of the awards (points 14 – 17 in the existing policy) were made subsections of the new Point 14 which outlines the Awards. The remaining provisions are shifted to address this change, and corrected where the numbering in the original policy was found to be wrong.

**NB - The Chatham House Rule** - The principle according to which information disclosed during a meeting may be reported by those present, but the source of that information may not be explicitly or implicitly identified.

## **UNION AWARDS POLICY – 2017 - 2020**

**Proposed by Michael Edwards, RCSU President, 2017-18 and Lloyd James, RCSU President, 2016-17**

**Seconded by Alex 'Chippy' Compton, ICU President 2017-18**

### **A. Jurisdiction**

1. This policy shall have two areas of jurisdiction:
  - 1.1. The recognition by the Union of service, contribution and dedication by members of the Union with the sole exceptions of all holders of Sabbatical Office, over the course of the year to Imperial College Union.
  - 1.2. The recognition by the President of the Union of service, contribution and dedication by an individual or group over the course of the year to Imperial College Union.
2. This policy does not rule out the opportunity to have other categories of awards.
3. The Student Academic Choice Awards shall be delegated to the Deputy President (Education) to oversee and manage.
4. The policy in no way rules out the recognition by the Union of an individual or group's contribution to the Union over some period of time in a manner not prescribed in this policy.
5. The policy does not cover Awards awarded by Management Groups or Constituent Unions to their members for service to that Management Group or Union. Management Group and Constituent Union Awards shall be decided along a timetable and within a framework defined by each particular Management Group and Constituent Union. Where possible, the Management Group/Constituent Union Awards should occur before close of Union Award nominations so that those awarded can be nominated for Union Awards.

### **B. Eligibility**

6. Any member of the Union, unless explicitly stated elsewhere in this policy, may be nominated by any Member of the Union for any of the awards described in this policy, save the President's awards. Nominations are to be accepted during an official nominations period laid down by the Union President or their proxy, outside of which no other nominations can be accepted.
  - 6.1. Members may not nominate themselves for any of the Union Awards.

### **C. Consideration and confirmation**

7. The Union Awards Committee shall consider the nominations for Union Colours, Outstanding Service, Fellowship and Fellowship with Distinction. The Committee shall meet to fulfil the duties set out below, and shall be comprised of the President (who shall normally chair the committee), the Deputy Presidents, and six other members drawn from Union Council.
8. For any other categories of award, the panels shall be drawn from the membership and who is most appropriate to make the decision. At the discretion of the panels, shortlistees for these awards, where possible, can be put forward for considerations for Colours or other awards if no other nomination has been submitted for them for these awards.
9. The nominations, with the exception of those for the President's Awards will be considered and decided upon by the Awards Committee, which shall report the result of its deliberations to the final scheduled Council of the academic year for official ratification.

10. The Awards Committee will consider each nomination on its individual merits. Consideration should not be given to target numbers for each category of award. If no nominations fulfil the criteria of a particular award, then there should be no necessity to present the award in that year.
11. To ensure discussion is as open as possible, the Chatham House Rule shall be enforced at all meetings discussing award nominations unless there are exceptional circumstances.
12. Nominations for a particular award should not be considered simply on the basis that the individual gained, in previous years, a 'lower' award for similar good work. Any individual may be awarded with any of the categories of award any number of times, unless otherwise stipulated elsewhere in this policy.

#### D. The Union Awards

13. The Awards of the Union shall be the Union Colour, Outstanding Service Award, and the Imperial College Union Fellowship. Each individual presented with an award shall receive a certificate, stating the appropriate details, and such other items or privileges as are detailed elsewhere in this policy. Each individual will also be allowed to purchase a tie, appropriate garment or item in recognition of their achievement.
  - 13.1. **Union Colour:** The Union Colour should be awarded to those individuals who have given significant and repeated outstanding contributions to the student experience at Imperial and the life of the Union throughout the year.
  - 13.2. **Outstanding Service Award:** The Outstanding Service Award should be awarded to those individuals who have, in addition to the requirements for a Union Colour, gone above and beyond their role, repeatedly, to enhance the student experience and life of the Union across a broad spectrum of areas during the year.
  - 13.3. **Imperial College Union Fellowship:** The Imperial College Union Fellowship shall only be awarded to those individuals who have continuously served the Union and/or enhanced the student experience in an exceptional manner, usually over a number of years. Each individual, so awarded, will be granted Honorary Lifetime Associate Membership of the Union and have the option to receive either a pewter tankard with the year engraved or a glass award.
  - 13.4. **Imperial College Union Fellowship with Distinction:** The Imperial College Union Fellowship with Distinction shall only be awarded to those individuals who have exceeded the criteria of the Union Fellowship of longevity and excellence of service to the Union. They should additionally achieve being a significant party in making an innovative development to the work of the Union such as to leave a positive legacy that will make a lasting impression for future members. Each individual, so awarded will be granted Honorary Lifetime Associate Membership of the Union, have the option to receive either a pewter tankard with the year engraved or a glass award.

#### E. The President's Awards

14. The President shall have the option of presenting, not normally more than, five awards to individuals who he or she personally feels have made a significant contribution to the affairs and fortune of the Union over the course of the academic year.
15. The exact terms of reference of the President's Award shall be at the discretion of the President. Only in truly exceptional circumstances, is it envisaged that the President will award the President's Award to a Sabbatical Officer. In any case the President will not award himself or herself with the President's Award. Each individual, so awarded, will be granted Honorary Lifetime Associate Membership of the Union and have the option to receive either a pewter tankard with the year engraved or a glass award.
16. The President shall present as a verbal report, the details of the President's Awards, to the final scheduled Council of the year as the last scheduled item of business. The President, if he or she so chooses, may also present the individuals with their award at this time.

**F. Management Group and Constituent Union Awards**

17. Each Management Group and Constituent Union may give awards each year to those students who have made an exceptional contribution to the Group or Constituent Union.
18. Management Group and Constituent Union Awards Committees should be encouraged to nominate by referral any student who has been nominated for their Awards to be considered for Union Awards.
  - 18.1. Therefore the Management Group and Constituent Union Awards Committee should sit before the close of Union Awards nominations.

**G. Sabbaticals**

19. The Union President, Union Deputy Presidents, Felix Editor and ICSMSU President, as sabbatical officers shall not normally be considered for any of the awards.
20. The Council shall, after awarding Awards, consider and vote separately on conferring Honorary Lifetime Associate Membership upon holders of all Sabbatical Offices in the Union that year. The Sabbatical Officers shall not normally be present during the consideration of their own Honorary Lifetime Associate Membership.

**H. Amendments**

21. This Policy may only be amended by a simple majority resolution of the Council.

*Definitions*

Chatham House Rule - a rule or principle according to which **information disclosed during a meeting may be reported by those present**, but the **source of that information may not be explicitly or implicitly identified**.

In effect - anything said as part of the Union Awards panel is to remain anonymous.