

Motion: To amend the Union Constitution to prevent ‘two-term’ Sabbaticals.

Proposer: Benjamin Harris, ICU DPEW

Seconders: Stephen Brown ICU RAG Chair

The Union notes:

1. That the Union constitution currently allows sabbaticals to hold office for two consecutive academic years
2. That this allowance has previously led to problems during a sabbaticals second term
3. That sabbaticals running for a second term of office have been elected despite a complete absence of campaigning on their part.
4. That in the recent Governance Review several groups were of the opinion that two year sabbaticals should be prevented but that the issue was deemed to contentious to be included in the main findings of the review
5. That during the Union’s Strategic Review staff commented that: ‘The post of President of the Union should only be for one year’
6. That continuity within the Union is provided by permanent staff and life members of the Court
7. That the post of Sabbatical Officer allows the holder to gain valuable experience in running a large organisation and acquire key management and leadership skills.
8. That time spent as a Sabbatical Office is completely different to that spent as a ‘ordinary’ student due to difference in work, time commitment and financial security

The Union Believes

1. That the current two-year Sabbatical arrangements has lead to unfair incumbent advantage in elections for Sabbatical Officers
2. That 2nd term Sabbaticals are in a position to exert undue influence within the Union due to their perceived superiority
3. That the holding of office for more than one year deprives other students of the opportunity to acquire the skills and experience that are gained through the post.
4. That after one term Sabbaticals may feel disconnected from the student body, preventing them from truly representing the needs of students
5. That a new influx of Sabbaticals each year reinvigorates the Union and creates an environment in which new ideas and initiatives flourish

The Union resolves:

To change the current Constitution clause 5.3
from:

No person shall hold sabbatical office in the Union for more than two full academic years. No person who held sabbatical office during an undergraduate course may hold sabbatical office until their entire course is completed to the satisfaction of Imperial College.

to:

No person shall hold sabbatical office within any part of the Union for more than one full academic year. This will normally include persons who were elected to sabbatical office during the year due to a position becoming vacant.