

Council
15th February 2009
Clubs and Societies Board
27th November 2009

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES POLICY

Passed by Clubs and Societies Board 16th June 2008

A. General Introduction

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1. The Clubs and Societies Policy sets out the rights and responsibilities of the Union, Clubs, Societies, other relevant Union activity and individual members. It also sets out the method of administration of clubs and societies.

2. This policy binds the whole Union, but is aimed in particular at clubs, societies, their members and parts of the Union with responsibility for clubs and societies.

Statement of intent

3. The Union is committed under its Constitution ~~(among other things)~~: "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 the best way of fulfilling these obligations is by the provision of student-led clubs ~~and~~ societies and projects reflecting 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.

6. The Union Club and Society Committee or Faculty Union under which a club is constituted is referred to as CSC or Faculty Union in this policy.

7. The senior officer of a club or society will be referred to as the Chair in this policy, though other names (e.g. President or Captain) can be used in practise.

B. Duties of the Union and its Clubs and Societies

8. This part sets out the general duties of the Union and of the clubs and societies to each other.

Duties of Imperial College Union

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

10. 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).

11. The Union shall permit club and societies to be formed freely by groups of students with common aims, provided they do not reject the aims and objects of the Union or its rules and policies, particularly the Equal Opportunities Policy, and no club or society currently exists which caters to their needs. Clubs and societies, once formed, should avoid changing their aims and objectives so that they do not clash with those of an established club or society, without the prior consent of this established club or society.

12. The Union shall provide a Freshers' Fair at the start of each academic year and will endeavour to ensure that all clubs and societies have a stall provided. No charge will be made to the club or society for the stall.

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13. The Union shall provide space in the Freshers' Handbook at the start of each academic year for each club and society to have an entry and contact details.

14. The Union shall provide a page for each club or society on the Union website. This page can be altered by the club using the club account details. This shall include the club shop function to allow for sales online, of value greater than £5. Other functions on this page which cannot be altered by the club include the club membership price and the club finance pages.

14. The Union shall provide funding for clubs and societies, according to budgetary constraints. The funding is allocated by the Clubs and Societies Board on which all clubs and societies have direct or indirect representation. The Union shall provide banking facilities, including assistance with ordering, deposits and advice for clubs and societies at no charge to them.

15. The Union shall provide basic use of rooms within its premises to clubs and societies at no charge to them.

16. The Union shall provide resources, including computing, printing, photocopying, phone and fax services, though a charge may be made for these.

Duties of Clubs and Societies

17. Clubs and Societies are expected to comply with the Union Constitution and its regulations and policies.

18. Clubs and Societies are required to conduct themselves in a fair and democratic manner. They owe a duty of care to for the health and safety of their members and a responsibility not to discriminate among them or harass them.

19. Clubs and Societies owe a duty to their members to ensure equal provision of facilities

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

21. In particular, Clubs and Societies are expected to comply with the Financial Regulations, Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies, as well as this policy.

22. Clubs and Societies represent the Union and the College when holding events or 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

23. The Union operates a chain of responsibility for all matters relating to club and societies. This is as follows:

- i. The Union President,
- ii. the appropriate Deputy President,
- iii. The Chair or President of the CSC or Faculty Union,
- iv. the appropriate committee member for the CSC or Faculty Union,
- v. The Chair of the club or society, and

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vi. the appropriate committee member for the club or society.

24. 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 (~~Education &~~ Welfare) for issues relating to equal opportunities.

25. The appropriate committee member in a CSC or Faculty Union, club or society (section 23.iv) or v)) depends upon the CSC's or Faculty Union's, club's or society's rules (though always the Treasurer or Honorary Junior Treasurer for financial issues).

26. Individuals in section 23 are responsible to those above them in the list for the activities of the clubs and societies.

D. Constitutional matters **Status**

27. All clubs and societies are formed under a "Club and Society Committee" or Faculty Union, and are bound by their standing orders and decisions.

28. Club and Society Committees and Faculty Unions (CSC and Faculty Unions) are defined in the Union Constitution and Regulation 5 Part C. They have their own constitutions or standing orders, officers and meetings, and are responsible providing for the co-ordination and development of student activity within their clubs and societies or central activities.

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29. CSC and Faculty Unions report in turn to the Clubs and Societies Board, which determines budgeting, advises on policy issues and deals with inter CSC or Faculty Union disputes. The Clubs and Societies Board reports in turn to the Executive Committee for administration matters and to the Union Council for policy matters. The Executive Committee and Union Council both report to the Trustee Board.

Status of CSC and Faculty Union Executives, ~~Rag, Community Action group~~ and others

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30. The central activities of CSCs, Faculty Unions, Rag, Community Action Group and other constituent part of the Union are treated as clubs and societies 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 or society

31. A Full Member of the Union may sponsor the creation of a new club or society.

32. Prior to the approval of a new society under sections 36 to 38 the sponsor of a new club or society shall obtain the names, departments, years and signatures of twenty prospective members (all of whom are Full Members of the Union).

33. The New Clubs and Societies Committee may authorise additional measures to ensure the new club or society has a firm foundation; this can include the requirement for small deposits from new members, the requirement for some of the signed up members to turn up to the meeting at which the club or society is approved. Any such measure should balance the need for new clubs and societies to have a firm foundation against ensuring students aren't unnecessarily prevented from associating and participating as a new club or society.

34. A new club or society must have aims and objectives that differ from all current clubs or societies. However, it should not be so specific as to differ only in the precise details of subject matter or activity. The aims of the applying group should cover the entirety of the subject or activity, but may go into detail about how they would achieve this.

35. A new club or society's constitution must not conflict with any Union rule, particularly the Equal Opportunities and Health & Safety Policies. A constitution, whether or not of a new club or society, and whether or not it predates a Union rule, is void to the extent of the conflict with that rule. In the event of a dispute, the President shall rule on which parts of a constitution are void.

Procedure for creation of a new club or society

36. A new club or society is created by the approval of its constitution, aims, objectives and activities by the New Clubs and Societies Committee. A club or society may be created without a constitution (~~though its aims should be approved~~) but one should be submitted and approved by relevant body, their allocated CSC or Faculty Union by the end of the term in which it was created, at the next possible General Meeting.

37. Before the New Clubs and Societies Committee has considered the new club or society, its Chair shall inform the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), who shall ascertain if it fits the conditions in sections 31 to 35 and inform the CSC or Faculty Union of his or her opinion.

38. The New Clubs and Societies Committee shall allocate all new clubs or societies to whichever CSC or Faculty Union best matches the aims and objectives of the new club or society.

39. The New Clubs Committee has the power to merge applying clubs with clubs that already exist. This does not extend to merging existing clubs or societies. Consultation of the relevant CSC/FU chair should be sought before the merge to ensure its benefit for all parties.

39. Any Full Member of the Union (regardless of whether he or she is connected with the new club or society) may appeal the decision of the New Clubs and Societies Committee to approve or disapprove the new club or society to the Clubs and Societies Board. Its decision on approving the new club or society shall be final.

Prohibition on types of clubs and societies

40. The Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee may direct that a club or society with proscribed aims and objects, structure or sponsor may not be created. This measure should normally be used when new clubs and societies' purposes are expected to conflict either with the aims and objects of the Union or policy putting those into effect.

41. New club applications should not normally be approved by the New Clubs and Societies Committee if the group is seeking to be an extension of an external organization which imposes its own regulations, terms or conditions. Depending on the aims of the organization it may be possible for the group to be set up as a project of the Community Action Group or RAG.

Initial management of a new club or society

41. The initial committee of a club or society shall be appointed by the New Clubs and Societies Committee or its nominee. This committee and its members act with the same authority as an

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elected committee, and holds office until the end of its first academic year or such earlier time as may be designated.

Departmental Societies

42. The above policies shall apply to the formation of departmental societies with the exception that all matters relating to their creation, and any requisite additional measures, shall be considered by the relevant Faculty Union in the place of the New Clubs and Societies Committee.

Transfer of clubs and societies between CSCs and FUs

43. A club or society whose aims and object fit more appropriately in another CSC or Faculty Union will transfer to that CSC or Faculty Union under the following conditions:

- i. A resolution of the club or society's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of the CSC or Faculty Union to which it would be transferred, or
- ii. A resolution of the Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee.

Mergers of clubs and societies

44. Clubs and societies whose aims and objects are nearly identical should normally merge, unless there are pressing reasons for them remaining separate (which include activities mostly in separate locations). Clubs and societies' aims and objects can be inferred from their activities as well as their constitution. [This is to consolidate clubs of a broadly similar subject area into one place to protect potential members of either club.](#)

[45. Clubs and societies whose principal resources \(apart from money\) required to carry out their regular activity should normally merge.](#)

~~466.~~ Two or more clubs and societies shall merge under one of the following conditions:

- i. Resolutions of each club and society's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of each CSC or Faculty Union governing them, or
- ii. A resolution of the Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee.

~~4647.~~ For mergers between a Faculty Union club or society and an equivalent CSC club or society, section 45.ii) (imposing a merger without consent) shall be replaced with "a resolution of the Executive Committee or the Trustee Board".

~~4748.~~ Decisions concerning the appropriate CSC or Faculty Union for the merged club or society, and allocation of assets shall be taken by the President on the advice of the relevant Deputy Presidents.

Splitting of clubs and societies

48. A club or society which has two or more distinct spheres of activity may split into separate clubs and societies, ~~without the usual requirement of new clubs and societies by pursuing the same procedure as a new club application detailed in points 36 – 39.~~

49. A split may occur under the following conditions:

- i. ~~A resolution of the club or society's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of its CSC or Faculty Union. The approval of the New Clubs Committee.~~
- ii. A resolution of the Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee, ~~or.~~

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~~iii. A petition of twenty full members of the club or society with their names, years, departments and signatures with the approval of either its CSC or Faculty Union, the Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee.~~

50. A consensus should be obtained between the new clubs and societies for the splitting of assets. Any dispute will be ruled on by the President on the advice of the relevant Deputy Presidents.

Dissolution of club and societies

51. A club or society shall be dissolved and cease to exist under the following conditions:

- i. A resolution of the club or society's committee (or general meeting if required) and the consent of its CSC or Faculty Union,
- ii. A disciplinary resolution of the CSC or Faculty Union under standing orders approved by the Executive Committee, or
- iii. A resolution of the Executive Committee.

51. A club or society may appeal its dissolution to the body of higher authority than the one that closed, 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 CSC/FU the appeal should be brought to the Clubs & Societies Board.
- ii. In the case that the club or society is dissolved by the Clubs & Societies Board, the appeal should be brought to the Executive Committee.
- iii. In the case that the club or society is dissolved by the Executive Committee, the appeal should be brought to the Trustee Board.

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52. Dissolved clubs and societies' ~~property and~~ funds shall be ~~allocated by the President on the advice of the relevant Deputy Presidents, absorbed into the Central Union reserve. Property of the club may either be reallocated to another club (preferably within the same CSC/FU), 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 club and societies

53. A club or society may be classed as dormant if it has not elected its minimum committee (see section 58) ~~or~~ it has under twenty members or does not attend three consecutive CSC/ FU General Meetings. The CSC or Faculty Union is responsible for categorising the club or society as dormant, and exceptions may be made with good reason.

54. A CSC/FU may vote to make a club or society 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.

54. Dormant clubs and societies have equal rights to facilities and funds as active ones. Dormant clubs and societies become active upon obtaining the appropriate committee or membership or attendance of a CSC/FU meeting.

54. Dormant clubs must submit a monthly report to their CSC/FU 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.

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55. Once a club or society has been classed as dormant for twelve months it may be dissolved by its CSC, Faculty Union or the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies).

Suspension of club and societies

56. A club or society may be suspended for disciplinary reasons, in the following manner:

- i. A resolution of the CSC or Faculty Union, Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee,
- ii. By the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) for incomplete documentation (see section 86) or for a severe breach of the Health and Safety policy,
- iii. By the Union President.

57. The extent of the suspension for incomplete documentation (in 56.ii)) is set out under Part F. The extent of the suspension in 56 *i*) and *iii*) will be determined by that authority and may include any or all of the restrictions for incomplete documentation.

58. A suspension should be reviewed regularly and issued for good reason. It may be appealed: for 56 *i*) in the order the committees are listed; for *ii*) to the President; for *iii*) to the Union Court.

E. Use of Union grant

59. Union grant awarded to clubs may not be spent on food or drink.

60. Union grant may only be used on full members of Imperial College Union, so no subsidy may be spent on Associate or Life members.

E. Internal management of clubs and societies

Management

57. All clubs and societies 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.

58. 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.

Membership

59. Only Full Members of the Union may become full, voting members of a club or society.

60. All Full Members of the Union are entitled to join any club or society, unless a club or society is registered with a government agency or national governing body which prohibits membership of affiliated clubs and societies on certain grounds. Membership may only be restricted on unavoidable legal or insurance issues (e.g. firearms control). Clubs and societies shall exercise the minimum possible restriction of membership, and inform the CSC or Faculty Union and Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) of any such restriction. The Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) may strike out any prohibition on membership.

[i. All club memberships should normally be purchased online on the Union website. Permission may be sought from the club's CSC/FU chair to use paper forms. This permission should only be granted when the club shows that they have made every effort to sell as many as possible online or have good reason.](#)

61. Life and Associate Members of the Union may become non-voting members of a club or society.

62. The club or society's committee may refuse membership of a club or society to Life or Associate Members of the Union, though reasons for refusal must be given in writing to them.

63. 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 or society, its committee and any others involved, and may result in the dissolution of the club or society.

General Meetings and Elections

64. All clubs and societies shall require the holding of general meetings upon a petition of its members to review the committee's actions and hold its officers to account.

65. All voting members of the committee for a club or society, 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.

66. A club or society 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 CSC, Faculty Union, the Union President or Court. These qualifications must be set out in the club or society constitution.

67. All elections for next year's committee should be completed before the end of the Spring term. Election procedures should adhere to the Election Regulations and any directions of the club or society's CSC or Faculty Union.

Removal of officers

68. All clubs and societies shall have a mechanism for removing members of its committee from office. This is normally done through a motion at a general meeting of the club or society. If not otherwise provided for, a general meeting shall have jurisdiction, subject to section 69, to censure and dismiss any officer.

69. Any procedure must be laid out in the constitution or standing orders and in accordance with Part G (censure and no confidence motions) and the principles of natural justice as set out in Part I of Regulation Seven of the Union Constitution:

- i. a necessity for a petition with a proposer and at least ten seconders,
- ii. at least one week's notice to be given of a motion,
- iii. a necessity for at least a two thirds majority of members present and voting, and
- iv. a course of appeal to a higher body (e.g. the CSC, Faculty Union or a Sabbatical Officer).

Removal of members

70. Clubs and societies may provide for the removal of members (whether full, associate or any other category). Any such removal is to be treated as a last resort when it is clear that it is not in the club or society's and its members' interest for a person to continue membership of that club or society.

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71. The committee or general meeting shall be sole authority for expulsion or suspension of members. Once any internal appeals have been exhausted there shall be an appeal to the Union Court.

72. The Trustee Board, Executive Committee, Union Court and Disciplinary committee can expel a person from membership of any club or society.

73. A person removed from membership of a club or society may not rejoin without the sanction of its committee or the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies).

Constitution

74. Each club and society's constitution should be obeyed and regularly reviewed by them. It should set out the management structure and procedures enacted in this Part.

F. Documentation

General

75. Clubs and societies 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

76. Clubs and societies 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 the poster rules ;
- ii. **Committee contact list** – containing vacation and term time addresses, vacation and term time phone numbers and e-mail address;
- iii. **Constitution** – internal management as per Part E;
- iv. **Code of Conduct** – expected behaviour on health & safety issues with regard to their risk assessment;
- v. **Risk Assessment** – analysing risk to members;
- vi. **Membership forms** – a form for each member of the club. This is not required for members who join online;
- vii. **Data Protection Act** – information in electronic or paper storage that is about, or can be linked to, living individuals;
- viii. **Instructor registration** – [for all clubs, if appropriate](#)
- ix. **Affiliation** – for all clubs;
- x. **Inventory** – containing all items belonging to the club or society valued over £200;
- xi. Any other documents as considered appropriate by the Clubs and Societies Board

Exemptions on documentation

77. A club or society's constitution, code of conduct, risk assessment and inventory do not have to be resubmitted if a satisfactory copy is held by the Union.

78. The Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) may exempt a club or society whose activities constitute only an incidental risk to their members from submitting a risk assessment form.

79. The instructor registration, affiliation form and inventory may be submitted as null returns if appropriate.

Time limits

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Time limits for submission of documents shall be set by the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies).

Other Health & Safety documentation

80. Other documentation such as trip registration forms may be required for certain activities.

Sanctions for incomplete documentation

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

82. A club or society with incomplete documentation shall:

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

83. Sanctions shall be authorised by the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies). A club or society may appeal to the President and then to the Union Court.