

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES POLICY

A. General Introduction

1. The Clubs and Societies 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 and societies.

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 the best way of fulfilling these obligations is by the provision of student-led clubs, 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. 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 charitable or outreach extra-curricular objectives and is bound by both this policy and that referring explicitly to Projects.

7. The Union Club and Society Committee, Faculty Union or President's Committee under which a club, society or project is constituted is referred to as Management Group (MG) in this policy.

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 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.

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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.

14. 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.

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

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 the club 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 and Societies Board on which all clubs, societies and projects have direct or indirect representation.

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, printing, photocopying, phone and fax services, though a charge may be made for these.

Duties of Clubs and Societies

23. Clubs, societies and projects are expected to comply with the Union Constitution and its regulations 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.

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27. In particular, clubs, societies and projects are expected to comply with the Financial Regulations, Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Room Bookings, Publicity and Web Policies, as well as this policy.

28. 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 or Honorary Junior Treasurer for financial issues).

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

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 Constitution and Regulation 5 Part C. 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 and societies or projects or central activities.

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

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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.

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 supercede 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 Clubs Committee or New Projects Committee Standing Orders. Appeals shall be made to the Clubs and Societies Board whose decision shall be final.

39. The New Clubs Committee and New Projects 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.

Prohibition on types of clubs and societies

40. The Clubs and Societies 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 new clubs and societies' 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 or society

41. 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

42. 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 Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee.

43. Clubs, societies and projects 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). Clubs, societies and project's aims and objectives can be inferred from their activities as well as their constitution.

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44. Clubs and societies whose principal resources (apart from money) required to carry out their regular activity are the same should normally merge.

45. 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 Management Group governing them, or

ii. A resolution of the Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee.

46. Decisions concerning the appropriate Management Group for the merged club or society, 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.

47. 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 club or project application.

48. A split may occur under the following conditions:

i. The approval of the New Clubs Committee.

ii. A resolution of the Clubs and Societies Board or Executive Committee.

49. 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.

50. A club, society or project shall be dissolved and cease to exist under 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 Clubs and Societies Board, or

iii. A special resolution of the Management Group under standing orders approved by the Clubs and Societies Board, or

iv. Resolution of the Executive Committee or Clubs and Societies Board.

51. 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 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.

52. 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.

53. 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 club and societies

54. A club or society may be classed as dormant if it has not elected its minimum committee, it has under twenty members 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 and Societies Board.

55. A Management Group 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.

56. Dormant clubs and societies have equal rights to spaces and funds as active ones. Dormant clubs and societies become active upon obtaining the appropriate committee or membership or attendance of a Management Group Meeting.

57. 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.

58. Once a club or society has been classed as dormant for twelve months it may be dissolved by its Management Group or the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies).

Suspension of club and societies

59. A club or society 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 and Societies 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.

60. 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

61. Union grant awarded to clubs and societies may 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.

62. 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, societies and projects

Management

63. 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.

64. 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

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

66. 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)

67. 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.

68. 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.

69. 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

70. 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 and a general meeting shall have jurisdiction to censure and dismiss any officer. . 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.

71. 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.

72. 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 Management Group, the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), Union President or Court. These qualifications must be set out in the club, society or project constitution.

73. 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 Election Regulations in the constitution and any directions of the club, society or project's Management Group.

Removal of officers

74. 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 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 Management Group or a Sabbatical Officer).

Removal of members

75. Clubs, societies and projects 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, society or project and its members' interest for a person to continue membership of that club, society or project.

76. 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.

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

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

Constitution

79. 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 Policy.

F. Documentation

General

80. 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

81. 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 ; (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. **Code of Conduct** – (as required)
- v. **Risk Assessment** – analysing risk to members; (yearly)
- viii. **Instructor registration** – for all clubs; (yearly)
- ix. **Affiliation** – for all clubs; (yearly)
- x. **Inventory** – containing all items belonging to the club, society or project valued over £200 in total;
- xi. Any other documents as considered appropriate by the Clubs and Societies 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.

Exemptions on documentation

82. A club, society or project's constitution and code of conduct do not have to be resubmitted if a satisfactory copy is held by the Union. 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. The instructor registration, affiliation form and inventory may be submitted as null returns if appropriate.

Other Health & Safety documentation

83. Other documentation such as trip 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

84. 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". Documentation only becomes "incomplete" after the deadline.

85. A club, society or project with incomplete documentation shall:

- i. have its budget frozen

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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

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