

## Board of Trustees Council Chair Report

### Changes to Council

This year, changes have been made to the running of Council to improve its efficiency and increase engagement.

- **Training:** training has been offered to all Council members. This training has been based on topics identified in the Council co-design workshops last academic year. The training on 23 October has been modified based on the feedback given from the training on 9 October. We will then look at developing optional training sessions for Council members who would like to hone their skills and knowledge further.
- **Seating plan:** we are currently trialling a seating plan at Council. We hope that this will improve efficiency of meetings and remove barriers for engagement of Representatives to Council (previously Ordinary Members) in particular. This will be reviewed after the first two meetings.
- **Audio recording:** we are currently trialling audio recording of meetings. This is to help with minute taking and ensuring we have an accurate meeting record.
- **Question submissions:** we are encouraging members to submit questions in advance of the meeting, with the aim of providing a better answer and to improve the efficiency of the meeting.
- **Discussion Items:** the Officer Trustees have brought discussion items forward as part of their Council reports. This allows Council to have a greater hand in shaping the future work of the Union and so far, has seemed positive.
- **Communication:** Council now features on the Union's social media channels and in the newsletter. We are working to engage the wider student body with Council and ensure it has an appropriate presence in Union comms.

### Upcoming Changes

There are further changes we are hoping to make this year.

- **Video recording:** we would like to start video recording our meetings to provide students with multiple ways of engaging with meetings. Ideally, we would live stream meetings to allow students in any location to engage.
- **Regular feedback:** we are looking to increase the opportunity for Council members to give us feedback. We are aiming to ask for feedback at the end of term one (in order to implement changes in term two) and again at the end of the year.
- **Board discussions:** where appropriate, I would like to encourage Board and its subcommittees to seek Council's opinion. Governance Committee have already discussed when it would be useful to have Council feedback on certain topics and these will be incorporated into the agendas for the relevant meetings. I would also like to build up a forward agenda for council so that people can see when 'recurring' papers will come (ie changes to Officer Trustee roles, ratification of Union Awards).

## Upcoming Discussions

The last Council meeting was mainly comprised of training and reports from the Officer Trustees. There is a Council meeting on 23 October with several papers/discussions coming through that Board should be aware of.

- **PG representation:** this is an ongoing discussion from last year and something that the Union is looking at with regards to the GSU. It is an ongoing challenge as are engagement with postgraduate students isn't very strong and so it is hard to determine the best options regarding PG representation.
- **Union penalties for sexual misconduct:** this was a heavily debated paper last year and has come with some minor amendments. This paper proposes that anyone found guilty by the Union of certain misconduct should be barred from holding an elected role or certain volunteer positions.
- **Newspapers in Shop Extra:** it has been flagged that Shop Extra currently stocks some tabloids that do not align with the Union's values and that these should be removed.

I will provide a verbal update on the outcome of these discussions at the Board meeting on Wednesday 24 October. A full list of the papers will be uploaded online [here](#).

If you have any questions on Council or anything in my report, please contact me on [chair@ic.ac.uk](mailto:chair@ic.ac.uk).