

Representation Policy

A. Introduction

1. The Representation Policy sets out the rights and responsibilities of the Union, student representatives, relevant Union activity and individual members. It also sets out the method of administration of student representatives.
2. This policy binds the whole Union, but is aimed in particular at representatives, their constituencies and parts of the Union with responsibility for representatives.

B. Statement of Intent

1. The Union is committed under its Constitution to:
 - a. Advance the education of its members and promote, without prejudice, their welfare at all times.
 - b. Represent the needs and interests of its members to Imperial College and external bodies.
2. The Union furthers these aims with the provision of a network of academic and welfare representatives drawn from the Members of the Union, administrated, trained and supported by the Union.
3. These obligations extend to the representation of all registered students of Imperial College, regardless of their membership of the Union.

C. Definitions

1. A '*representative*' is an individual, nominated from a larger group, who is responsible for conveying the views and experience of members of the group to a third party, and conveying information from a third party to members of the group.
 - a. The use of the word *representative* throughout this document refers to both academic representatives and welfare/wellbeing representatives.
 - b. The words *representative* and *rep* are interchangeable and carry the same meaning.
2. The word '*academic*' denotes a focus on the learning or research interests of a student, including wherever such interests may have an effect on the student's welfare.
3. The word '*welfare*' or '*wellbeing*' denotes a focus on the pastoral interests of a student, including wherever such interests may have an effect on the student's education.

4. The word '*student*' denotes a currently registered student of Imperial College, regardless of membership of the Union or additional occupations.
5. The word '*constituency*' denotes that group of students that a representative is bound to represent.

D. General Principles of Representation

1. The Union is committed to ensuring that all students have equal and effective access to representation, from as soon as possible after their enrolment until they cease to be registered.
2. A representative shall strive to represent the views and experiences of their constituency as accurately and fairly as possible.
3. A representative should consider both the views and experiences of the majority and of the minority of their constituency. When required, they should express the full range of views.
4. A representative may express their personal view on a matter but must not present their personal views as the views of their constituency.
5. A representative must maintain a constant dialogue between themselves and their constituency.
6. A representative must always maintain transparency in their activities .

E. Duties of Imperial College Union

1. The Union shall provide a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination, for all students to express their views on academic and welfare matters.
2. The Union shall strive to maintain a representation structure that suitably and dynamically reflects the structure of faculties, departments, programmes and research sections/groups at Imperial College (i.e. all UG/PGT/PGR/part-time students), and is acceptable to representatives, other students and academic staff.
3. The Union shall strive to fully populate the representation structure every academic year and following a position being vacated.
4. The Union shall provide basic use of rooms within its premises for representative activities at no charge to them.
5. The Union shall provide resources, including computing, printing, photocopying, phone and fax services, though a charge may be made for these.

F. Duties of Representatives

1. Representatives are expected to comply with the Union Constitution and its Bye-Laws and policies.
2. Representatives are required to conduct themselves in a fair and democratic manner. They hold a responsibility not to discriminate among members of their constituency or unreasonably interfere with their learning.
3. Representatives are ambassadors for the Union and the College, and must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, and not bring the Union or the College into disrepute.
4. No monetary charge shall be sought from students for representation. No representatives may solicit or receive financial or material gain in return for their activities, other than by the resolution of Council.

G. Roles

1. An exhaustive list of positions is maintained on the Union website, which may be amended by the Deputy President (Education) or the Deputy President (Welfare).
2. There are five categories of academic representative. These are as follows:
 - a. The President
 - b. The Deputy President (Education)
 - c. The Postgraduate Representation Chairs
 - d. The Faculty Academic Reps/Officers
 - e. The Departmental Reps (or equivalent – e.g. in Faculty of Medicine (FoM), Business School)
 - f. The Year, Course, Section, and Group Reps
3. There are six categories of welfare/wellbeing representative. These are as follows:
 - a. The President
 - b. The Deputy President (Welfare)
 - c. The Postgraduate Representation Chairs
 - d. The Faculty Welfare Reps/Officers
 - e. The Liberation and Community Officers
 - f. The Departmental Reps (or equivalent, *as above*)
 - g. The Year, Course, Section and Group Reps

H. Role Descriptions

1. The duties of the President, Deputy President (Education) and Deputy President (Welfare), Postgraduate Representation Chairs,

Faculty Academic Reps/Officers and Faculty Welfare Reps/Officers are as detailed in the Union Bye-Laws.

2. All representatives are subject to Section H of the Union Bye-Laws, and are liable for the implementation of disciplinary and complaints procedures therein following misconduct under the regulations in this policy or otherwise.
3. The **Departmental Representatives** shall:
 - a. Be the representative to the Union and the College for the students in their respective Department (or equivalent)
 - b. Co-ordinate the activities of the other representatives in their Department (or equivalent).
 - c. Faithfully represent the views and experiences of the students in their Department (or equivalent) to the following and any other committees, institutions and associations:
 - i. Their Faculty (or School's) Academic Affairs Committee
 - ii. The Staff-Student Committee (or equivalent) of their department
 - d. Feed back all relevant decisions and information to students in their Department (or equivalent).
 - e. Hold meetings of a committee known (usually) as the Departmental Representative's Committee at least twice per term with the Year, Course, Section or Group Representatives for that Department (or equivalent).
 - f. Promote the activities of their departmental society as requested by the Chair.
 - g. Act as returning officer in the election of Year, Course, Section and Group Representatives as requested by the Deputy President (Education).
 - h. Submit termly reports detailing all activity in their capacity as a representative to the Faculty (or School's) Academic (Affairs) Committee.
 - i. Submit documentation as required by the Documents and Submissions Section of this policy.
4. The **Year, Course, Section and Group Representatives** shall:
 - a. Be the representative to the Union and the College for the students in their respective constituency.
 - b. Co-operate with the other reps in their constituency.
 - c. Faithfully represent the views and experiences of the students in their constituency to the following and any other equivalent committees, institutions and associations:
 - i. Their Departmental Representative's Committee
 - ii. The Staff-Student Committee of their department
 - d. Feed back all relevant decisions and information to students in their constituency.

- e. Promote the activities of their departmental society as requested by the Chair.
 - f. Act as returning officer in the election of Year, Course, Section and Group Representatives as requested by the Deputy President (Education).
5. The **Liberation and Community Officers**: role descriptions are detailed in the additional *Liberation and Community Policy (as of 2020)*.

I. Structure

1. The Union operates a chain of responsibility for all matters relating to academic representation. This is as follows:
 - a. The President,
 - b. the Deputy President (Education),
 - c. the Postgraduate Representation Chair (for PG representation only)
 - d. the Faculty Academic Rep/Officer,
 - e. the Departmental Rep (or equivalent),
 - f. the Year Rep in the case of undergraduates, the Course Rep in the case of taught postgraduates, or the Research Group or Section Rep in the case of research postgraduates.
2. The Union operates a similar chain of responsibility for all matters relating to welfare/wellbeing representation. This is as follows:
 - a. The President,
 - b. the Deputy President (Welfare),
 - c. the Postgraduate Representation Chair (for PG representation only)
 - d. the Faculty Welfare Rep/Officer,
 - e. the Departmental Rep (or equivalent),
 - f. the Year Rep in the case of undergraduates, the Course Rep in the case of taught postgraduates, or the Research Group or Section Rep in the case of research postgraduates.
3. Individuals in the above sections are responsible to those above them in the list for the representation of students. Faculty Academic Reps/Officers and Welfare Reps/Officers are additionally responsible to their Constituent Union President.
4. Departmental Representatives and Year, Course, Section and Group Representatives shall attend all Staff-Student Committee meetings (or equivalent) held by their department (or equivalent).
5. Representatives-elect shall shadow the incumbent holder of the position at all remaining meetings that relate to the position, having gained permission from the chair of each committee.

6. The final meeting of the Departmental Representative's Committee, the Faculty (or School's) Academic Affairs Committee and the Education & Representation or Communities & Welfare Board shall be used by incumbent representatives to give a thorough briefing to representatives-elect concerning the events and developments of the past year.
7. Where representatives are unable to attend a meeting, they should send apologies to the chair of the committee as soon as this is known, and instead submit a brief written report.

J. Training and Forums for Academic Representatives

1. The Deputy President (Education), assisted by the Membership Services Team, shall hold training sessions for all academic representatives. Attendance is compulsory for all reps, regardless of their previous experience.
2. There shall be appropriate training sessions (e.g. either in person or online) at the beginning of the year for UG reps and PG reps.
3. The Deputy President (Education) shall publicise the training sessions appropriately and provide resources such as handbooks for reference throughout the year.
4. There shall be at least two **Education & Representation Board** meetings held both in Term 1 and Term 2, and at least one in Term 3. These meetings are attended by the Deputy President (Education) (chair) and one undergraduate and one postgraduate Faculty Rep from each faculty
5. There shall be at least one **Taught Academic Representation Forum** each term. These meetings are attended by the Deputy President (Education) (chair), the Postgraduate Taught Representation Chair, undergraduate and postgraduate taught departmental reps (or equivalent) and Faculty Reps/Officers
6. There shall be at least one **Research Academic Representation Forum** each term. These meetings are attended by the Deputy President (Education), the Postgraduate Research Representation Chair (chair), postgraduate research departmental reps (or equivalent) and Faculty Reps/Officers
7. There shall be at least two Postgraduate Representation Committee meetings held both in Term 1 and Term 2, and at least one in Term 3. These meetings are attended by the Postgraduate Representation Chairs (co-chairs), the Deputy President (Education), the Deputy President (Welfare), and the Postgraduate Academic and Welfare Officers.

8. The chair of each committee is responsible for organising the meetings, and shall publicise them to all members at least four weeks before the date of the event.
9. The agenda for these meetings shall be set by the committee chair, with assistance from the Union's Advice & Representation Team. The agenda should promote discussion on topical issues relevant to learning, teaching, and research, etc.

K. Training for Wellbeing Representatives

1. The Deputy President (Welfare), assisted by the Membership Services Team, shall hold training sessions for all wellbeing representatives. Attendance is compulsory for all representatives, regardless of their previous experience.
2. The Constituent Unions are responsible for supporting the efforts of Faculty Academic Reps/Officers and Faculty Welfare Reps/Officers in their representative endeavours

L. Recruitment

1. All academic representatives should normally be elected according to Minor Election Bye-Laws of the Constitution. Those in the constituency who are also Members of the Union may stand. All members of the constituency may vote.
2. The Deputy President (Education) is ultimately responsible for the population of the academic representative structure.
3. The Deputy President (Welfare) is ultimately responsible for the population of the wellbeing representative structure.
4. Subject to any other regulations, representatives may indefinitely stand for re-election.
5. The position of Departmental Representative may be held by up to two people, particularly for large constituencies. The Returning Officer should consult the outgoing holders of the position and departmental staff to determine if the election of two representatives is appropriate.
6. Any other representative position may be held by up to three people, particularly for large constituencies. The Returning Officer should consult the outgoing holders of the position and departmental staff to determine the appropriate number of representatives to elect.
7. Elections for all representatives are held when the Deputy President (Education), Deputy President (Welfare) and President decide when it is most appropriate.
8. Year representative positions and taught postgraduate course representative positions (and, in some cases, research

postgraduate representative positions) must be filled as soon as possible after the start of the new academic year.

9. Representatives shall be elected per academic year. Their term of office shall last for up to one year, and normally cease on 31 July.
10. The Deputy President (Education) and Deputy President (Welfare) may delegate the recruitment of undergraduate Year Representatives to the undergraduate Departmental Representatives (or equivalent), who shall run elections appropriately and report the results to the Deputy President (Education) and Deputy President (Welfare) (and appropriate Union rep staff) for central administration.
11. The Deputy President (Education) and Deputy President (Welfare) may delegate the recruitment of postgraduate Course Representatives and Research Section or Group Representatives to the postgraduate Department and/or Faculty Reps/Officers, who must negotiate with Directors of Postgraduate Studies to ensure that all positions are filled. The results shall then be reported to the Deputy President (Education) and Deputy President (Welfare) (and appropriate Union rep staff) for central administration.

M. Documentation, Submissions, and Presentations

1. Departmental Representatives shall provide the following information to the Deputy President (Education) in a timely manner:
2. Undergraduates: A completed New Year Representatives form, specifying the personal details of the Year Representatives and the names of the personnel involved in chairing and clerking Staff-Student Committee (or equivalent) meetings;
3. Postgraduates: A completed New Postgraduate Representatives form, specifying the personal details of the taught Course Representatives, all research Group or Section Representatives, and the names of the personnel involved in chairing and clerking Staff-Student Committee (or equivalent) meetings;
4. The papers of all Staff-Student Committee (or equivalent) meetings that have taken place in their department;
5. Brief details of any other communication between representatives and College staff.
6. The Deputy President (Education) shall store, electronically or otherwise, the details of all representatives for the year, assisted by other representatives or Union staff where necessary, and distribute them appropriately.
7. The Deputy President (Education) shall annually compile documents summarising the procedure and outcomes of Staff-Student Committee (or equivalent) meetings that have taken

place. They shall submit the document as a report to both the Education & Representation Board and College's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) annually.

8. The Deputy President (Education) shall coordinate and display a presentation to College's Strategic Education Committee annually, as an opportunity to highlight serious concerns.
9. The Postgraduate Representation Chairs shall submit regular reports of representative activity to meetings of the committees of the Graduate School as requested by the Directors of the Graduate School.
10. Undergraduate Academic Reps/Officers shall submit an annual report to the Faculty Teaching Committee for their faculty on their representative activity, when requested by the chair of the Committee.