

Imperial College Union

**PHASE I CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES: UNION AMENDMENTS**

*A note by John Collins, IC Union President*

Changing documents like the ICU Constitution and Regulations is a complex task and it is common that proposed changes need to be revised and amended between two ICU Council readings.

Since the last ICU Council meeting, several suggestions have been made to the proposed new ICU Constitution and Regulations. The College have also inspected the proposed Constitution and have made further suggestions, which are outlined in the following paper. It is believed that these amendments, which are largely minor and subtle, will improve the clarity of the new Constitution and Regulations and acknowledge some concerns that were raised by Council members at the previous meeting.

The proposed amendments (not including typing, spelling, grammar and reference errors) are as follows:

**ICU Regulation One**

1.xxxiii *Councillors* the phrasing should be improved:

***"...shall review the allocation of Councillors annually..."***

24.v CAG Chair – reference should say "Executive Committee" not "Executive":

***"24.v ...time to time, be laid down by the Council or the Executive Committee."***

25.iii & iv. Council Chair - it could be clearer that the Council Chair should be independent as well as impartial - this makes it more obvious that they are not supposed to be a pawn of senior officers. Furthermore, the Executive Committee should be removed as one of those bodies which should explicitly be able to boss around the Council Chair:

***"25.iii. Be independent and impartial in all proceedings and duties as Council Chair, and  
iv. Carry out such duties and responsibilities as may, from time to time, be laid down by the Council."***

**ICU Regulation Two**

101. Should also mention referendum results:

***"...set aside the result of a completed election or referendum"***

### **ICU Regulation Three – Committees**

#### B.1.3 CSC Chairs on Executive

Several Council members felt that the Clubs & Societies Board and the Representation & Welfare Board should have a say in who represents them to the ICU Executive, hence the following amendment is suggested:

1. ***"The Executive Committee shall consist of:***
  1. ***the Sabbatical Officers,***
  2. ***the Presidents of the Faculty Unions,***
  3. ***two Clubs and Societies Committee Chairs, elected by the Council as ordinary members on the recommendation of the Clubs and Societies Board,***
  4. ***two members of the Representation and Welfare Board, elected by the Council as ordinary members on the recommendation of the Representation and Welfare Board.***

E.41 CSC Chairs and FU Presidents should be able to make preliminary interpretations of their governing documents (the word "preliminary" clarifies that higher ICU bodies could re-interpret these documents):

***"... shall make preliminary interpretations of their..."***

H.74 & H.79 Ditto:

***"... shall make preliminary interpretations of the..."***

#### F Academic Affairs Committee

Having agreed to establish a Representation & Welfare Board to consider academic issues, the Academic Affairs Committee can be removed from this regulation (this amendment should have been included in the first reading).

### **ICU Regulation Four - Standing orders for meetings**

17. Changing agenda items - one of the procedural de-regulations was to eliminate the requirement for a two thirds majority to approve the amendment of agenda items - indeed for the Council it's now just the Council Chair. Regulation 4.17 is now inconsistent with that - but it should have the flexibility to let the constituent part of the Union decide how its runs these things. Hence I suggest the following insertion:

***"17. The meeting or, if approved, its chair may move, add to or delete items from the agenda during the course of the meeting."***

33. Elections at meetings - it is arguably not clear who is the "electorate" at a meeting if the meeting is the electorate: particular examples are joint posts

and proxies. Recent history may assist in dealing with these problems, but should proxies be allowed if the hustings are done straight before the election (which they normally are)? I suggest the following amendment that defaults to: joint posts have one vote, proxies permitted, but allows changes. This can be justified as being in Reg 4 not Reg 2 as it merely deals with "who the committee is" for an election rather than the election rules itself. I have also amended cross-references.

**"33. In an election where the meeting forms the electorate, proxies (subject to a maximum of one proxy per voter) are permitted and joint posts have one vote between them, though the meeting's standing orders may make alternate provision. Sections 20 – 32 (voting procedure) do not apply to voting in an election held at a meeting. In any conflict of rules on election and meeting procedures, election procedures have priority. "**

42. Observer status – It is not apparent if Life and Associate members of the Union may speak at meetings, as well as attend them. For clarity, I suggest the following amendment:

**"Any Full Member of the Union shall have the right to observe and speak at any open meeting of the Union. Permanent observers may attend and speak at their meetings. Life and Associate Members may attend and speak at meetings with the Chair's permission."**

### **ICU Regulation Five - Discipline**

21.4 This is not clear what the "two thirds majority" is supposed to be doing: being present, or voting in favour? Therefore I suggest:

**"a necessity for approval of the motion by at least a two-thirds of members present and voting, and"**

### **ICU Regulation Seven - Court**

61. Penal orders - against whom can they be made.

There are exceptions for various parts of the Union for "penal orders", which currently includes **"President's Committees (except Rag)"**. It has been suggested that the exemption for President's Committees should be removed because they either meet once per year (Colours), provide advice and act as a discussion forum (H&S, Academic Affairs) and therefore don't do the sorts of things that attract Court interest and therefore the possibility of these orders. Alternatively as RAG/CAG they should be covered properly. I therefore suggest that this exemption should be removed because penal orders are either not realistic and not a worry, or very necessary in principle.