

RESERVED POLICY
Imperial College Union

FELIX POLICY

Passed by Union Council on 11th June 2007

Introduction

1. Council should note that what follows is a proposal for the minimum which the Union should require of Felix – we would expect our student newspaper to provide far more. The Editor should be charged with fulfilling these requirements, whilst maintaining Editorial freedom (as explained below), in the best way that he or she sees fit. In particular, please note the importance of point 10.
2. As Felix holds a unique position in the Union, balancing its role as a student service with the needs of a student-led society, its aims, needs and requirements fall into two distinct categories, which are tackled independently below.

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As a service

3. Felix should be a news driven publication, published on a weekly basis and distributed to every major teaching site. Coverage of news relevant to students at the College should be the primary focus – in other words, the cover or front page should be news based, and Editorial priority should always be given to news, ahead of all other material. However, this should in no way be interpreted as an attempt to block the publication of any other content.
4. All Union clubs and societies should be given the ability to publicise and report on their activities. To this end, all parts of the Union should receive preferential advertising rates, to be set at a level no higher than twice the marginal cost of printing the advert itself. Space should also be set aside each week for articles from clubs and societies who wish to report on recent events (although this does not give clubs the right to demand publication, as the Editor should maintain the right to rule out articles on the grounds of literary style, excessive length or irrelevance). Deadlines to be set by the Editor, for both adverts and articles should be set at the beginning of the year and circulated widely, and the Editor should be free to reject any material which fails to meet these deadlines.
5. The successes and failures of the Union's sports clubs should be covered on a weekly basis, through match reports etc. However, the precise nature of this coverage (in particular the option to choose between accounts written by players and independent reports) shall rest with the Editor.

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6. The Union should be given the opportunity to report on its activities and concerns, through Presidential columns and reports from other sabbaticals and representatives. However, Felix must remain editorially independent of the Union, and therefore all Union articles must be clearly marked as such, and subjected to exactly the same editorial controls as any other column or feature.
7. Space must be provided for feedback from the student body concerning both Felix itself and the issues raised within its pages (particularly those concerning the actions of the Union and College management). Naturally, the Editor should maintain the right to edit letters as he or she sees fit (and sensibly limit the total number of letters printed), but this right should not be used to bias open debate or counteract criticism of the newspaper itself.
8. The Editor should strive to promote student involvement in Union activity wherever possible – in particular, key meetings (Union Council, Court, EGMs etc) should be clearly advertised, and attention drawn to them where necessary. Note that this requirement does not mean that the Editor should promote the decisions or actions of these meetings, only the fact that students have a right to attend them. The Editor shall also ensure that sabbatical elections are given extensive coverage, which shall include advertising the opening of nominations, hustings and the elections themselves, and the publication of manifestos for all candidates, including New Election.
9. Welfare issues of importance to the student community should be given due coverage, and the Editor should liaise with campus support services (Accommodation Office, Health Centre, College Councillors, Union Advisor etc) to ensure that all students are both aware of the services available and fully briefed on key topics.
10. In the pursuance of all the points above, Felix shall be editorially free to operate and report on events as the Editor sees fit, as long as he or she is not acting against the wider student interest (which may or may not coincide with the interests of the Union).

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As a club

11. As a club, run by the Editor in the interests of its members (defined for the purposes of this document as regular writers, photographers, editorial staff etc), Felix shall have the right to publish anything and everything (within the constraints of civil and criminal law).
12. Students must be given the right to reply to any article published, in accordance with Section 2 of the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice. In the case of controversial Felix articles, the Editor should attempt, wherever possible, to present the views of opposing sides in the initial article.

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13. All students from all campuses must be given the opportunity to write for Felix, and the Editor should strive to print all material which is of an acceptable standard.

Control and Responsibility

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14. The Editor shall oversee and manage all aspects of the running, production and dissemination of Felix – he or she alone shall be responsible to the Union for every article and picture printed, and for the financial integrity of the newspaper. Under no account shall any Union officer (including the Union President) have the right to insist on the inclusion of any material (although they may appeal to Council if they feel that the material should be included as part of the "service" provision above).

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15. The Editor shall present a written report to every meeting of Union Council, and shall be present at every meeting to answer questions from the floor.

16. The Editor should strive to hold regular (preferably fortnightly) meetings of the Editorial Board (as defined in the Felix Constitution), at which all members should be given the chance to hold the Editor to account.

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17. Felix, as are other Union publications, is required to comply with the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice, which in the Union is adjudicated upon by the Union Court.

18. The Editor is responsible in his or her role as a Union employee to the President, without prejudice to the Editor's operational and editorial independence, and with the President acting under the constraints set out in this policy and elsewhere.