

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
of the seventh ordinary meeting of  
the  
**Council**  
of the  
Imperial College Union  
in the 2007-08 Session

The meeting of Union Council was held in the Union Building on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 6.30pm in the Union Dining Hall.

**Present:**

Council Chair	Mark Mearing – Smith
President	Stephen Brown
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Alistair Cott
Deputy President (Education & Welfare)	Kirsty Patterson
Deputy President (Finance & Services)	Chris Larvin
ICSMSU President	Tim Wills
RCSU President	Jennifer Morgan
A&E Chair	Andy Mason
RCC Chair	Eugene Chang
Welfare Campaigns Officer	Hannah Theodorou
RCSU Welfare Officer	Inger Eriksson
CGCU Academic Affairs Officer (Taught)	Alexander Grisman
RCSU Academic Affairs Officer (Taught)	Andreas Esau
ICSMSU Education Rep (4 and PG)	Laura Thomas
CGCU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Owen Connick
CGCU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	John James
CGCU ordinary member (Postgraduate)	Ashley Brown
RCSU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Shray Amar
RCSU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Mark Saleme
RCSU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Jose Videria
RCSU ordinary member (Postgraduate)	Amar Joshi
ICSMSU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Mark Chamberlain
ICSMSU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Olivia Kenyon
ICSMSU ordinary member (Undergraduate)	Alexander Walls

**Permanent observers**

Union Manager	Peter Haldane
Governance and Administration Coordinator	Rebecca Coxhead

**Observers:** Andrew Somerville, Christian Carter, Rachel D'oliveiro, Edward Judge, Matthew Taylor, Leron Borsten.

**Apologies:** CGCU President Tristan Sherliker, GSA Chair Killian Frensch (proxy DFPS), ACC Chair Luke Taylor (proxy President), OSC Chair Marie-Louisa Awolaja, Media Group Chair Karl Bonney (proxy CGCU Postgraduate ordinary member), RSM President Danny Hill, SCC Chair Lily Topham (proxy RCC Chair), RAG Chair Karandeep Dhanoa, Equal Opportunities Officer Chiraush Patel, ICSMSU Welfare Officer Mo Khaki, ICSMSU Education Rep (123) Sukhpreet Dubb, WCUS President Leila Serrao, CGCU Academic Affairs Officer (Research) Eirini Spentza, CGCU ordinary member (Undergraduate) John O'Neil, RCSU ordinary member (Undergraduate) Ryan Dee

**Not present:**, CAG Chair Radha Gadhok, CGCU Welfare Officer Sam Piper, ICSMSU Education Rep (56) Hannah Dixon, CGCU ordinary member (Undergraduate) Rosie Smithells

## 1. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

NOTED:

- a) ICSMSU Ordinary member, Olivia Kenyon was deemed to have resigned after missing 2 consecutive meetings, as per the Union Constitution, Standing orders.
  - i. Council were asked if there were any objections to reinstate this member and there were no objections.

RESOLVED:

- 1) **To reinstate Olivia Kenyon as the ICSMSU Undergraduate ordinary member.**

## 2. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008

RESOLVED:

- 1) **To accept the minutes**

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

NOTED:

- a) In regards to the CGCU report which was not reported to last Council, a report has been submitted to this meeting.
  - i. The C & G CU President has sent his apologies to this meeting.
- b) It was reported that all actions in regards to the motion to support military forces recruit at Imperial College had been completed.
  - i. Mr Grisman clarified that the address for the naval unit is the same as for the army.
  - ii. The motion was accepted unanimously at ULU senate.

## 4. PRESIDENT REPORT

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) The building redevelopment working group will be meeting during the Easter break.
  - i. The President apologised to John James for inadvertently leaving him off the distribution list.

ACTION:

- 1. **The President to add John James to the distribution list for building redevelopment working group.**
- b) The result from the planning round meeting will be known next term.
- c) The President thanked Danny McGuinness for undertaking the role of Returning Officer and ensuring a smoothly run election.
  - i. The Union Officer elections and Faculty Union elections will be running concurrently in the new term.
  - ii. The President acknowledged and apologised for the inconvenience that the change to the election timetable has brought about
- d) The next meeting of the Trustee Board will now be taking place in May instead of April due to unforeseen travel circumstances of the Chair.
- e) The replacement NUS delegate was chosen at random from a selection of Union members who indicated that they were available to attend.
  - i. Last minute 'drop out' of delegates is common and this is reflected in the NUS Constitution.
- f) Council moved to a vote to accept the report and it was accepted unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1) **To accept the report.**

## **5. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (CLUBS & SOCIETIES) REPORT**

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)

NOTED:

- a) Council moved to a vote to accept the report and it was accepted unanimously.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To accept the report.**

## **6. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (EDUCATION & WELFARE) REPORT**

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Education & Welfare)

NOTED:

- a) The Student Advisor has recently incurred a serious ankle injury which will leave him incapacitated for an extended period of time.
  - i. All inquiries will be directed to the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) and Postgraduate and Faculty Union Coordinator.
- b) Thanks were given to Inger Eriksson for attending the NUS Woman's conference recently.
- c) Council moved to a vote to accept the report and it was accepted unanimously.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To accept the report.**

## **7. DEPUTY PRESIDENT (FINANCE & SERVICES) REPORT**

RECEIVED: The report was presented by the Deputy President (Finance & Services)

NOTED:

- a) The President was congratulated for doing great justice to the 3 year plan when he presented this to the College.
- b) The Deputy President (Finance & Services) apologised for there being no trading forum this term due to miscalculation on the length of this term by the Deputy President (Finance & Services).
- c) The RCSU Mailing list issue has now been resolved and it is anticipated that this should not occur again.
- d) It was questioned as to what the situation was with Cinema club.
  - i. The club is currently not running screenings but still incurring expenses and thus getting further and further in debt.
- e) Council moved to a vote to accept the report and it was accepted unanimously.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To accept the report.**

***The agenda was reordered to consider any other business, the C & G CU report as the next item of business.***

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **12.1 C & G CU REPORT**

RECEIVED: The report was read by Council.

NOTED:

- a) Representatives from the CGCU were asked if anyone wished to present the report in the absence of the C & G CU President.
  - i. No member present wished to present the report.
- b) It was pointed that the reason that the C & G CU President was not present was due to a clash of a meeting that he scheduled knowing the Council date.

- i. This was deemed unacceptable.
- c) The CGCU Academic Affairs Officer (taught) stated that the section on the Faculty Teaching Committee was misrepresentative of events.
  - i. The CGCU Academic Affairs Officer (taught) clarified that the C & G CU President spent approximately 1 hour with him in the meeting.
- d) Ed Judge clarified that he is currently seeking sponsorship for next year's Lord Mayor's Show.
- e) It was questioned if the financial problems had been resolved.
  - i. The Deputy President (Finance & Services) stated that through frustration, he 'gave up'.
  - ii. The Deputy President (Finance & Services) agreed with the C & G CU President that the new term would be a clean slate.
- f) The Council Chair informed Council that the C & G CU President is currently undergoing a motion of no confidence proposed by the C & G CU Executive Committee.
- g) It was question what provision the C & G CU Executive Committee made when the C & G CU President informed them of his illness.
  - i. The C & G CU Postgraduate representative stated that no one was informed of his illness and thus had not idea that emails were not being responded to.
- h) The Council Chair stated that a non submitted report is considered the same as a rejected report.
  - i. If the submitted report is rejected by this Council, the next step with an automatic motion of censure to be considered by Council.
  - ii. Council moved to a vote to accept the paper and results as follows.

FOR	1
AGAINST	13
ABSTAIN	15
Report rejected	

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To reject the report

***Extract from Imperial College Union Constitution, Regulation 7, Disciplinary complaints procedure***

**F. Censure and No Confidence Motions**

- 1. Upon receipt of the motion of censure or no confidence unless automatically generated by a twice rejected report, the relevant authority will take all reasonable steps to inform the defendant officer of the grounds of the complaint, the procedures laid out in this document and the date of the meeting.

***Council moved to consider a motion of censure on the C & G CU President***

- i) It was clarified what the definition of censure is and what the implications are on the C & G CU President.
- j) John James stated that the C & G CU President's attendance to Central Union meetings is appalling.
- k) Council moved to vote and vote were cast by secret ballot.

FOR	24
AGAINST	1
ABSTAIN	2
SPOILT BALLOT	1

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To censure the C & G CU President

**ACTION:**

- 1. The Chair to inform the C & G CU President on the above outcome.

**8. SUPPORTING IRANIAN STUDENTS**

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the Deputy President (Education & Welfare)

NOTED:

- a) The paper was presented by the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) on behalf of Representation and Welfare Board.
- b) It was pointed that in regards to resolves 14, the Union has no control over admission policy.
  - i. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) stated that her position sits on some admission committees.
  - ii. The CGCU Postgraduate representative suggested to include the phrase 'to lobby College' to the beginning of resolves 14. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) accepted this suggestion

RESOLVED:

**2) Resolves 14 to read**

**14. Prevent any discrimination against current and new Iranian students, admitting any students from Iran or Iranian students who meet the usual admission criteria.**

- c) In regards to resolves 15, it was questioned exactly what the Union planned to do to raise the awareness of the campaign.
  - i. The march has been publicised through the various Union publications.
- d) It was suggested that union notes 7 should be removed as it infers that Imperial College Union is supporting the cause just because other Universities are.
  - i. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) offered to insert a sentence into Union notes 7 to explain that the Union considered the motions passed by other universities to be ultra vires. There were no objections to this.

RESOLVED:

**2) Union notes 7 to read 'The following universities have passed a motion opposing an attack on Iran, which the Union considers ultra vires: Sussex, SOAS, Cranfield, Leeds, Essex, Middlesex and UWE. Other motions have also been passed across other countries, United States of America, in particular.'**

- e) Leron Borsten suggested that it has not been confirmed if the paper is actually ultra vires.
- f) The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) suggested moving Union notes 7 to Union believes as this is a subjective comment.
  - i. There were no objections and union notes 7 was moved to Union believes 12.
- g) Council moved to accept the paper and there were no objections.

RESOLVED:

**2) to accept the following as Union policy:**

Supporting Iranian Students Policy

Imperial College Union Notes:

1. There are 49 members of the Iranian Society at Imperial College Union,
2. Financial supporters of research at Imperial College have stakes and investments in Iran.
3. There are indications that a military attack or sanctions against Iran have been planned.
4. Military attacks will not only be against military establishments but also other economic and civilian infrastructures.
5. The US National Intelligence Estimate, (NIE), has reported that Iran halted its nuclear programme in 2003 and has not activated it since.
6. The International Atomic Energy Agency has found no evidence of a weaponisation programme in Iran and the US Intelligence Agency, the NIE, has estimated that Iran would be at least 10 years away from obtaining a nuclear weapon should it decide to follow this path. However, the US, supported by the UK and France, are persisting that Iran cease Uranium enrichment together with the know-how, or face more sanctions, with the military option kept ominously open.

Imperial College Union Believes:

7. Access to learning, freedom of academia both in terms of knowledge, people and the ability of students to attend university within and outside Iran is a right that should be protected.
8. People who are an asset to Imperial College London both financially and academically, could face a cease of funds, and thus be faced to withdraw from their studies.
9. Funding income from companies and individuals that have investments in Iran could suffer from cuts that are a direct result of military action against Iran
10. Sanctions, destabilisation programmes and any military intervention or its threat could be greatly harmful to the cause of human rights, democratic rights and the civil society organisation in Iran.
11. Imperial College Union can support freedom of academia and rights for our Iranian students without taking a political stance on the War in Iran.
12. The following universities have passed a motion opposing an attack on Iran, that the Union consider ultra vires: Sussex, SOAS, Cranfield, Leeds, Essex, Middlesex and UWE. Other motions have also been passed across other countries, United States of America, in particular.

Imperial College Union Resolves:

13. To publicly oppose any actions against Iran which will be detrimental to Iranian Students at Imperial and financial investors of Imperial.
14. Prevent any discrimination against current and new Iranian students, admitting any students from Iran or Iranian students who meet the usual admission criteria.
15. To raise awareness amongst students about the issues surrounding action against Iran.
16. To contact other Student Unions to inform them about our policy and how to support Iranian students and academics without taking a political stance on issues in Iran.

**9. HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING POLICY**

RECEIVED: The report was presented by Deputy President (Education & Welfare)

NOTED:

- a) The President stated that as the original author of point 54, that he was happy to remove this point.

RESOLVED:

- 2) **To remove point 54 from the section Bursaries, Loans and Student Support, Imperial College Union Believes.**

***NB: The numbering has been reordered to reflected removal of point 54, however when referred to in the meeting, the original number was kept.***

- b) John James stated that under believes 14, the target of 50% is incorrect.
  - i. The President suggested to change the belief to include the term arbitrary and remove the term 'unnecessary' and replace with 'increased' strain.
  - ii. Council moved to a vote and the results are as follows:

FOR	25
AGAINST	2
ABSTAIN	1
Passed	

RESOLVED:

- 3) **The purpose of higher education, Imperial College Union believes, targets and quotas, point 14 to read as the following.**
  14. ***That arbitrary Government targets such as to get 50% of School Leavers into Higher Education are reducing the value of degrees and high achieving graduates by making qualifications easier to achieve and a more regular commodity. They may produce an increased strain on***

*limited resources and have a detrimental affect for students who are encouraged to continue their education when they are not best suited to it.*

- c) In regards to point 10. under 'The purpose of higher education, Imperial College Union believes, the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) questioned if the sentence 'defer starting a career' should be removed.
- i. It was suggested that this sentence make the point more positive if removed and actually pre-empts peoples' reasoning.
  - ii. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) stated that this was brought up in the survey and that respondents did indeed feel this was a reason.
  - iii. It was suggested that the first sentence of point 10 should have the term, 'but not restricted to' attached to it.
  - iv. Council were asked to accept the removal of the sentence 'defer starting a career' and include the sentence 'but not restricted to' in belief 10. There were no objections.

**RESOLVED:**

- 4) **The purpose of higher education, Imperial College Union believes, point 9 to read as the following:**

10. *That students enter Higher Education for a number of reasons including, but not restricted to:*

- *The pursuit of knowledge, academia and research;*
- *The requirement of a degree to follow certain careers or to gain a head start in terms of promotion or salary;*
- *To use their skills and knowledge to better themselves or to help others;*
- *To meet expectations and pressures from others, which can include family, peers, schools or the Government;*
- *To experience the student lifestyle.*

- d) The A&E Chair stated that points 21 and 27 are inconsistent and questioned who ultimately pays for education.
- i. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) stated that the points are not inconsistent; they are suggesting status quo.
  - ii. The A&E Chair offered to proof the final document for grammatical and typographical errors and this was greatly received.

**ACTION:**

1. **The A&E Chair to proof the final Higher Education Funding policy.**

- e) In regards to the cost of higher education, Union believes, point 27, Representation and Welfare Board felt strongly opposed to a graduate tax scheme.
- i. It was suggested that the word 'unfair' be removed and 'undesirable' replace this. There were no objections.

**RESOLVED:**

- 5) **The cost of higher education, Imperial College Union believes, tuition fees, point 27 to read as the following:**

27. *Graduate Tax is undesirable as students who have succeeded at University and added value to their qualifications are likely to be earning the highest amounts. Putting extra tax burdens on the most successful graduates will mean that some Imperial Graduates will be paying more for their education.*

- f) It was pointed by the RCSU President that in regards to point 52, Imperial College has actually done quite well in giving out bursaries.
- i. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) stated that there is always room for improvements even if the college is doing well.
  - ii. The RCC Chair suggested that the phrase 'without seeking out further sources of income'. This was accepted by Council.

- iii. The RCSU President suggested that the phrase ‘token effort’ was too chatty and suggested the term ‘insignificant gesture’ instead. This was agreed by Council.

**RESOLVED:**

**6) Bursaries Loans and Student Support, Imperial College Union believes, point 52 to read as the following:**

**52. *Larger bursaries and scholarships should be allocated to ensure that they are not merely insignificant gestures but actually worthwhile (e.g. facilitates financial access for students who otherwise could not afford the costs of a course). Where possible bursaries should be allocated which allow students to afford basic necessities of studying such as tuition fees, accommodation, field work and text books without seeking out further sources of income.***

- g) In regards to point 47, it was suggested by the President to insert ‘in real terms’ after interest free.
  - i. This is a separate policy issue that should be addressed at another forum.
  - ii. The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) stated that the reason for keeping the point unchanged is to keep it open to interpretation.
  - iii. Council moved to vote on inserting ‘in real terms’ into point 47.

FOR	25
AGAINST	2
ABSTAIN	1
Passes	

**RESOLVED:**

**7) Bursaries Loans and Student Support, Imperial College Union believes, point 47, to read as the following:**

**47. *Student loans should be interest free in real terms, and only increase in line with inflation so that a student who needs to pay off their loan over a greater number of years does not pay more for their education than someone who is able to pay it off immediately.***

- h) In regards to point 55, the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) suggested an alternative for the term ‘marketisation’ which was ‘differential tuition fees’.
  - i. The President opposed this suggestion in that the term is widely accepted and it is there for reasons of clarity.
  - ii. Council moved to vote to leave in the term ‘marketisation’ in point 55.

FOR	2
AGAINST	10
ABSTAIN	10
Falls	

**RESOLVED:**

**8) To remove the term ‘marketisation’ from point 55 and replace with ‘differential tuition fees’, point 55 to read as the following:**

**55. *To support Top-Up fees, capped at a maximum of £3,000, which should be re-paid after graduation. To oppose alternative models that see the cap lifted, differential tuition fees or a Graduate Tax.***

- i) It was pointed out by the A&E Chair that all instances of ‘cap lifted’ should be replaced with ‘cap raised’. There were no objections.

**RESOLVED:**

**9) To replace all references to the term ‘cap lifted’ to ‘cap raised’**

- j) In regards to point 57, Council moved to vote to insert the ‘office of fair access’ in regards to the agencies that should be worked in conjunction with. There were no objections.

**RESOLVED:**

**10) Bursaries Loans and Student Support, Imperial College Union believes, point 57 to read as the following:**



57. *To defend Universities right to determine their own bursary packages and to work with the NUS and Office of Fair Access to ensure that Universities failing to meet their commitments share and learn best practice to improve their performance in the future.*

- k) Council moved to vote on accepting the amended policy and it was unanimously accepted.

**RESOLVED:**

**11) To accept the following as policy of the Union**

**Imperial College Union Higher Education Funding Policy**

**Imperial College Union Notes:**

That October 2006 heralded the introduction of Top-Up fees of up to £3000 in the UK and that all courses at Imperial College are currently charged at the maximum rate.

1. That the cap of £3000 pounds will remain in line with inflation until the 2009 academic year when Top-Up fees will be reviewed in the House of Commons.
2. That the current undergraduate entry is entitled to a revised system of financial support from the Government in the way of means tested loans and non-repayable grants.
3. That the current undergraduate entry is entitled to a revised system of financial support from the Government in the way of means tested loans and non-repayable grants.
4. Leading up to this review there will be many opportunities to debate the pros and cons of the current system within the NUS and with Parliament.
5. That this policy is based on the results of the Imperial College Union Higher Education Funding Survey which was filled in online by 508 Imperial College Students during the period of 4<sup>th</sup> February until the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008.
6. That the results and analysis of the Survey are attached as Appendix 1 of this paper.
7. That Imperial College has submitted two amendments to motions at NUS Annual Conference 2008 which are a direct result of the Survey and a pre-emptive of this policy.
8. That the delegates elected to NUS Annual Conference will be mandated to vote with this policy on all motions that discuss Higher Education.

The Purpose of Higher Education

**Imperial College Union Believes:**

9. Higher Education is a privilege that provides students with opportunities and benefits unique to those who do not enter Higher Education.
10. That students enter Higher Education for a number of reasons including, but not restricted to:
  - The pursuit of knowledge, academia and research;
  - The requirement of a degree to follow certain careers or to gain a head start in terms of promotion or salary;
  - To use their skills and knowledge to better themselves or to help others;
  - To meet expectations and pressures from others, which can include family, peers, schools or the Government;
  - To experience the student lifestyle.
11. That Higher Education is not appropriate for everyone. A number of key stakeholders benefit from Higher Education:
  - Graduating Students who have increased their chance of finding a job and have invested in the development of their own skills and knowledge;
  - Industry employing Graduate Students who have gained the skills, knowledge and developed their methodologies and thought processes throughout their academic career;
  - Society through greater social mobility; the products and services offered by a highly skilled workforce and the advancement of knowledge.
12. That University places should be allocated to Students with the interest and ability to continue in academia at an Undergraduate level and that this should be regardless of ability to pay.
13. That all students have the right to apply to University

Targets and Quotas

14. That arbitrary Government targets such as to get 50% of School Leavers into Higher Education is reducing the value of degrees and high achieving graduates by making

qualifications easier to achieve and a more regular commodity. They may produce an increased strain on limited resources and have a detrimental affect for students who are encouraged to continue their education when they are not best suited to it.

15. That attempts to introduce admission quotas on students from low socio-economic backgrounds are counter-productive and prioritise meeting targets over producing good quality graduates. Students should be awarded places on their enthusiasm and academic merit, not their background.

#### Vocational Training

16. That vocational training is best learnt 'on the job' through industrial placements, sandwich courses, internships, medical 'firms' and apprenticeships.
17. A surplus in Graduates means that some companies can now demand a degree where before A Levels, GCSEs or other qualifications would have sufficed.
18. Apprenticeship opportunities should be given a greater priority for school leavers and the scheme should be expanded to cater for the trades and industries that do not necessarily require a degree to pursue a successful career (e.g. plumbing, carpentry).
19. University based teaching should be reserved for fundamental aspects of academic courses, including theoretical and practical laboratory skills. These should cover the first principals in a wide range of elements in any academic course to provide graduates with the greatest choice in career progressions in their chosen field.
20. It should be recognised that for some careers it is necessary to have vocational training at a Higher Education Level (e.g. Medicine, Dentistry) alongside theoretical based teaching. This should be delivered in the most relevant practical environments.

#### The Cost of Higher Education

##### **Imperial College Union Believes:**

#### Free Education

21. That Education is not free. If Higher Education were to be fully funded by the Government then this would result in higher levels of tax for all tax payers regardless of the level of education they received.
22. That Higher Education is a privilege that is not utilised by all and therefore students should be expected to make a contribution to the cost of their education.
23. If students did not contribute to the cost of their education it would be easy to take it for granted. This would lead to increasing drop out rates, low enthusiasm for courses and inefficient investment of time and money in students who will not benefit from a University Education.

#### Tuition Fees

24. That the Top-Up Fee cap should not rise above £3000 to ensure that University is accessible for all.
25. The current model, where tuition fees are paid back after graduation according to your income level, is the fairest and strives to put all graduates on a level playing field.
26. Differential Prices within Higher Education would discourage students with poor socio-economic backgrounds from applying to the best Universities due to the high risk associated with taking on the increasing levels of debt needed to complete a degree.
27. Graduate Tax is undesirable as students who have succeeded at University and added value to their qualifications are likely to be earning the highest amounts. Putting extra tax burdens on the most successful graduates will mean that some Imperial Graduates will be paying more for their education.
28. That the level of debt currently incurred by undergraduates is liable to affect their future career choices; specifically in careers such as academia and teaching which offer lower salaries than positions in industry and the City.
29. Not all Imperial Graduates continue into high paying jobs. Many choose to stay in academia, research or public sector services (e.g. Teaching, NHS). The decision of Graduates to use their knowledge and skill to benefit society in this way should be recognised by lowering payments of Top-Up fees or through tax deductions after graduation.
30. Quality of teaching should not be reflected in the price of education because there is no accurate way to measure 'quality' of teaching. Also, having received a place at a more highly ranked University through fierce competition, students should not pay more for the standard of tuition.
31. Tuition Fees paid by students should go directly to the institution at which they are studying.
32. Universities should not be allowed to make a profit from tuition fees by charging the full £3,000 if this is more than the cost of the course.

33. Universities should not charge the full cost of the course as this will lead to students deciding to follow a course because it is what they can afford rather than what they have the most aptitude for. Also vital professions such as Medicine and Engineering will suffer from a shortage of graduates because students will be priced out of the market.

#### Government Funding

34. The Government should make a contribution towards the education of Students continuing into Higher Education.
35. Government Contributions should be made directly to institutions and to individual students via a series of variable grants and loans allowing differentiation to be made between students.
36. Students from low income backgrounds should receive more financial help from the Government. Ideally all students should have an equal opportunity under the current system but in reality students from poorer backgrounds leave university with much greater levels of debt than their more fortunate peers. The current system where non-repayable grants are given to students from low income families should be maintained but much greater support is needed for middle income families who currently fall above the threshold for non-repayable grants but struggle to finance a University Education.
37. There should be fewer, better funded university places. Degrees should represent the core academic subjects of Science, Engineering, Maths, English, Humanities, Languages and the Arts. Courses with little or no academic content, limited benefit to society or questionable economic sustainability should not be funded by the tax payer.
38. University Funding should be allocated according to the cost of running the course. This should have a strong bias towards courses such as medicine which require large amounts of resources and time and courses which are heavily reliant on laboratory work and equipment. This should make these departments more competitive by maintaining the level of teaching and student satisfaction while preventing expensive science and engineering departments being closed in favour of cheaper humanities.
39. Not all students are supported by their parents. Means testing should take into account that some students receive little or no support from their parents after they turn 18, even if their parents can afford it. There also needs to be a system developed that will take into account the number of other dependants there are in a family when calculating the amount of support a family should be able to afford.

#### Industrial Investment

40. Involvement and funding from the private sector is a positive addition to Higher Education Funding and should be encouraged.
41. Industry is a direct benefactor of the skills and knowledge generated through Higher Education and should be expected to contribute in some way towards this.
42. Industry should be able to target funding independently of the Government with the ability to differentiate between students as they see fit.
43. Industry will strategically target funding in the way that will be of the most benefit to them. This will encourage high quality students into areas of academia that will be of more benefit to industry and the economy as a whole.
44. Industry should be encouraged to target funding towards students with the most potential in their sector, including:
  - Those studying courses where there is a low ratio of graduates to jobs to prevent a shortage in skills and expertise;
  - Those courses which are the most relevant to the industry so that there is a good market for high quality graduates;
  - Those students studying at the highest ranking Universities and Departments including, but not limited to, the Russell Group Institutions.

#### Bursaries, Loans and Student Support

##### **Imperial College Union Believes:**

45. Financial support for students in Higher Education is vital to enable students to succeed regardless of ability to pay.
46. Financial support should include, but not be limited to:
  - Government grants and loans which are repayable after graduation. These should be means tested at a national level but take into account regional variations in living costs.
  - Study Support Bursaries from institutions to help finance students from poor socio-economic backgrounds and ensure fair access for all.

- Further scholarships, bursaries and sponsorship from alumni, benefactors and industry that target students for other specialist reasons which should not be governed nationally.
47. Student loans should be interest free in real terms, and only increase in line with inflation so that a student who needs to pay off their loan over a greater number of years does not pay more for their education than someone who is able to pay it off immediately.
  48. Institutions should decide on and allocate a budget for bursary schemes within that institution.
  49. There should be a national minimum standard for the amount of money institutions put into bursary schemes but how this is allocated should remain the decision of the university.
  50. Institutions should share methods of best practise in effective allocation of Student Support Bursaries and other funding schemes to ensure that improvements in spending can be made nationally.
  51. Institutional autonomy over student bursaries works at a diverse range of Universities where student support packages are more responsive to student needs because they are decided locally.
  52. Larger bursaries and scholarships should be allocated to ensure that they are not merely insignificant gestures but actually worthwhile (e.g. facilitates financial access for students who otherwise could not afford the costs of a course). Where possible bursaries should be allocated which allow students to afford basic necessities of studying such as tuition fees, accommodation, field work and text books without seeking out further sources of income.
  53. Hardship funds should still be allocated, regardless of amount needed or family background, to any student that is struggling financially.

#### **Imperial College Union Resolves:**

54. To oppose targets set by the Government to increase the number of students entering Higher Education to the detriment of students, the Education System and the Country as a whole.
55. To support Top-Up fees, capped at a maximum of £3,000, which should be re-paid after graduation. To oppose alternative models that see the cap raised; differential tuition fees of Higher Education or a Graduate Tax.
56. To support initiatives aimed at establishing a credible alternative funding model for Higher Education Institutions based on the cost of teaching and value of the degree course to society and the economy.
57. To defend Universities right to determine their own bursary packages and to work with the NUS and Office of Fair Access to ensure that Universities failing to meet their commitments share and learn best practice to improve their performance in the future.

#### **Imperial College Union Further Resolves:**

58. This policy shall be the responsibility of the Deputy President (Education and Welfare) and will be used to inform the DPEW and the President of the opinions of Imperial Students when representing them externally.
59. To mandate the DPEW and President to write to relevant Government Ministers, shadow ministers and local MPs, at an appropriate time, setting out our position and attaching this policy.
60. To revoke all previous Union Policy on HE Funding and replace it with this policy.

## **10. NUS DELEGATE INSTRUCTIONS**

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by the President

NOTED:

- a) The President attended the final compositing the day before this meeting of Council.
- b) The traffic light system is as follows:
 

RED	Delegate must vote the way mandated by Council
ORANGE	Preferably that delegate vote the way mandated by Council
GREEN	Free vote

- c) The President announced that the blank cells would be free votes.
- d) The President clarified that 512 is amber and 814 is red.
  - i. The papers were printed in black and white and thus colours were not clear on the printed papers.
- e) Due to the timing, Council will not see the composited documents.
- f) Council moved to a vote to accept the paper and there were no objections.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To instruct our NUS delegates to vote at NUS Conference in line with the mandates given in Appendix 1.**

**11. STUDENT MEDIA REGULATIONS CHANGES**

RECEIVED: The motion was presented by Andrew Somerville

NOTED:

- a) The purpose of the paper is for clarification and it was explained that the added text is that which is underlined.
- b) The Deputy President (Finance & Services) stated that any reporting during elections period, be it good or bad, can be influential.
- c) Andrew Somerville stated that the authors of the paper are looking at a similar Code of Practice to that of the Press Association in that this will allow the student media to publish accurate news bound by the public interest, not bound by timing restrictions.
- d) The CGCU Postgraduate representative stated that if the event is newsworthy, it is right to then affect the election result.
- e) The President reiterated that the Elections Act states that elections needs to be run fairly and asked that Felix acknowledge that they have a responsibility in making sure the elections are fair to all.
- f) It was suggested that the Returning Officer proof the media pertaining to the elections, be it candidate or event, and then approve or reject if they feel this justified.
  - i. This suggestion was unequivocally rejected with the CGCU Postgraduate representative stating that integrity of the publications needs to be upheld as independent press.
  - ii. Andrew Somerville clarified that this contradicts Felix Policy; 'Editor is responsible for what is published'.
  - iii. The President stated that the Union do not read Felix before going to print unlike other universities and is not intending to do so in the future.
- g) The Deputy President (Education & Welfare) stated that what the paper is asking for is that student media are in line with press complaints procedure.
- h) It was reminded that campaigning on the record is allowed and that there is a forum to hold candidates to account.
  - i. Andrew Somerville stated that it is only fair then that Felix is allowed to campaign on the record.
  - ii. The CGCU Postgraduate representative stated that there is a clear definition of what 'public interest' is and that in itself is a protection.
  - iii. It was also reminded that Court are there as a protection.
- i) In regards to point 12 of the resolves, this formalises what has already been advised by College; to comment on departments and not individuals.
  - i. It was pointed that the Union has departments of 1 or 2 individuals and that it then is quite obvious whom the comments are about.
- j) It was decided that Council vote on the paper in parts.
- k) Council moved to vote on accepting point 12.

FOR	25
AGAINST	0
ABSTAIN	4
Passes	

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To insert the following in to the Imperial College Union Code of Practice, Staff Student Protocol**

**12. The maintenance of the integrity of the Union as an employer precludes any staff matters, either related to work or personal matters, from being discussed in any open forum of the Union. This does not include the discussion of departments or the performance of a department as a whole save where a department has only one staff member.**

l) Council moved to vote on accepting inserting the word individual in to point 14.

FOR	3
AGAINST	12
ABSTAIN	12
Falls	

m) Council moved to vote on accepting point 2 in its entirety.

FOR	11
AGAINST	15
ABSTAIN	3
Falls	

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **NOTED:**

- a) The price for the Summer Ball tickets will be raised on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2008.
- b) Executive Committee have passed a paper for a minibus strategy.
  - i. 3 new buses will be purchased in September which will be compliant to the Low Emission Zone.

### **Meeting closed 8.40pm**

Approved as a correct record at a meeting of Union Council

on \_\_\_\_\_ 2007/08

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of the Meeting