

Paying for Union adverts in Felix from the year 2009/2010
A paper by Kadhim Shubber

Background

The Union has, for a long time, made use of advertising space in Felix through a largely informal arrangement. The Union receives one free page in Felix each week and then pays the standard Clubs and Societies (student) rate for any additional pages. No contracts are signed, but rather it is understood, due to our close relationship with the Union, that the account will be totaled up and settled at the end of each year.

In the year 2009/2010, when Daniel Wan was Felix Editor, the Union had a total of 63 full-page adverts in Felix throughout the year. Removing the 29 free pages that the Union was entitled to, at the end of the year a total of 34 adverts had been informally purchased by the Union. This comes to £5610.

At the end of that year, Dan Wan did not take the necessary steps to settle this bill with the Union. In the year 2010/2011 when I (Kadhim Shubber) was Felix Editor, I became aware that the bill had not been settled – I believe this was around Christmas time but I cannot be 100% accurate. Since then I have been liaising with the Union to try and settle this bill; my efforts only really gained strength in June 2011 as the end of my editorship approached and I was settling my own year's bills. Although this paper is coming to Exec in November 2011, Felix and the Union have been discussing this issue for between nine months to a year.

At the end of Dan Wan's year, Felix was approximately £6,000 in debt. The reason for this debt was that the money from the Union adverts (which Dan had budgeted for) had not been transferred into Felix's accounts (for the reasons outlined above). During Dan Wan's year, because of financial problems, Felix was unable to print I,Science as normal and was forced to stop printing Phoenix as a separate magazine.

Felix receives around £2,000 per year in CSB funding each year. The Union gives it a space in the West Basement and the Editor's wages are paid by the Union/the College.

In July 2010, Exec approved the writing off of £75,000 of debt that Wye Clubs and Societies had built up. It also wrote off other significant debts related to administrative errors on the Union's part.

Notes

1. It has been, and continues to be, standard procedure for the Union to pay for extra pages for at least four years (the length of time I've been working at Felix).
2. It is the responsibility of Felix to invoice advertisers in a timely fashion.
3. £5610 is just over 1/6th of Felix's annual printing budget and is therefore an extremely important sum of money and Union advertising in Felix helps the newspaper remain sustainable.
4. Although the writing off of debt at exec in July 2010 was related to Union errors, the precedent of Exec acting in the moral interest, rather the technical interest was set.

Resolves

1. To transfer £5610 to Felix to pay for the adverts the Union bought in 2009/2010.