

Imperial College Union
Tankard Engraving
A report by ICU President – Scott Heath

Background

1. As stated in my report, the Union is currently undergoing the process of budget preparation with presentations from each division of the Union. This is a difficult process, especially in light of no commitment to increase support available from the College.
2. In order to reduce costs, the Union will have to make some difficult decisions in relation to what it can and can't do for the next year – this was exemplified with the 10% reduction in cash subsidy for Clubs and Societies earlier in the year.
3. In the budget for Membership Services we have to account for the costs of engraving the pewter tankards which reside behind the bar. This will cost an estimated £3,000.

Considerations

4. The use and display of tankards in the Union Bar is a traditional aspect of the Union that we do not wish to lose. Many alumni return to the Bar and request their tankards throughout the year.
5. A break in the engraving of the tankards, even for one year, can quickly become a permanent break in the engraving; thus jeopardising this tradition.
6. Not all societies have a tankard; whilst the Faculty Unions and some sporting societies possess over 20.
7. We have tankards for groups which are no longer affiliated with the Union, such as links, which may require/use the engraving service.
8. Not all tankards are used frequently.
9. There is a waiting list to get a tankard and limited space behind the bar.

Moving Forward

We have a multiple set of options moving forward:

10. *Status Quo*: We continue to engrave tankards and absorb the staffing and engraving costs.
 - a. *Positives*: It is the easiest of all solutions;
Negatives: We have to justify spending £3,000 of public money on engraving tankards; there is unequal benefit to societies with more tankards than others;
11. *Direct Charging*: We charge each society for the engraving they receive.
 - a. *Positives*: The system is fairer; we will not be paying for the engraving of tankards belonging to societies that fall into point 6.; the Union will free up some funding for other areas; it may encourage societies to 'archive' unused tankards;

- b. *Negatives*: Systematic considerations (Will societies automatically get charged? Will societies be able to say no to engraving? How will this be processed?); Potentially increased staffing costs;

- 12. *Partial Contribution*: We fund a set number of tankards per society, and they pay for the rest.
 - a. *Positives*: The costs to societies will be lower;
 - b. *Negatives*: The cost to the Union will not decrease significantly and the societies without tankards will be disadvantaged;

- 13. *Fixed-Cost Increase*: We increase the price of a tankard to include the cost of engraving for the next 30 years.
 - a. *Positives*: It would be administratively easier; Societies would be aware of the long-term cost of owning a tankard;
 - b. *Negatives*: The engraving charges of the Union wont decrease as this would only affect new tankards; the cost of a tankard would be significantly higher and may deter people getting a new one;

Action

- 14. The Executive Committee must decide whether to adopt or adapt one of these models so that we can amend the Membership Services budget accordingly.