Paper submitted to Governance Committee
On 21/07/2015
Paper considered on 22/07/2015

Internal Stakeholder Interactions Protocol

Proposer:	Seconder(s):	Contributors:
Alex Savell – Deputy President (Finance & Services)	N/A	Joe Cooper – Managing Director

Policies affected/related: Safe Space Policy, Felix Policy
Policies superseded: Staff Student Protocol

1. Introduction:

1.1. Imperial College Union (the Union or ICU) is a democratic organisation which works under the direction of its Board of Trustees, and under the political direction of students and student officers

1.2. Imperial College Union employs staff to support student officers and Trustees and provide professional advice, managerial expertise and continuity

1.3. Staff are also responsible for enacting the policies created by these democratic structures

1.4. In order to provide an excellent service to its members ICU is committed to being an excellent employer and strives to create a positive and productive working environment

2. Objectives:

2.1. This document seeks to outline broad principles and expectations on the relationships between various stakeholder groups as well as outlining avenues for the resolution of issues as they arrive

    2.1.1. In particular it looks at Officer Trustees and their relationship with staff as this situation is relatively unique to the Student Union sector and can be quite unclear

2.2. In addition, this document aims to give guidance on the relative influence and responsibility of stakeholders in sensitive areas; particularly the development of policy

2.3. Finally, the document seeks to ensure a framework under which the Union can be a positive and productive working environment. Seeking to ensure that:

    2.3.1. The Union complies with all relevant employment legislation as well as best practice

    2.3.2. Protections are in place such that all staff are protected from unfair treatment and confidentiality

    2.3.3. Members right to have their concerns heard is maintained and appropriate routes for complaint or criticism are in place

3. Definitions:

3.1. This document uses a number of terms that could be ambiguous or unclear, as such, for the avoidance of doubt this document uses the following definitions when referring to the terms below:

    3.1.1. _Stakeholder_ – While a stakeholder is anyone with a vested interest in the Union that is a very wide group. In the case of this document the term only to refer to internal stakeholders; members and those that have a role as part of the organisation

    3.1.2. _Member_ – For the purposes of this document a member is any full member of the Union. Associate and life members where referenced will be explicitly mentioned as Non-Full Members.

    3.1.3. _Student_ – A student is any full or part time student of the Imperial College

    3.1.4. _Elected Officer_ – All those holding an elected role within the Union including club officers, academic reps up to the Student Trustees and Officer Trustees

    3.1.5. _Staff_ – This document draws a difference between full time staff of the Union, part-time or causal staff and _Student Staff_. Where the term 'Staff' is used on its own it will refer to all non-student staff

    3.1.6. _Policy_ – The Union governs itself by setting policy, in this case the term is used to mean any document that has been ratified by a relevant decision making body of the Union. Some powers (such as staffing and HR decisions) are delegated through the Managing Director of the Union and the relevant Management Structures, such operational decisions as these are _excluded_ from this definition of policy. How policy is categorised will be covered in the relevant section

    3.1.7. _Officer Trustee_ – While Officer Trustee is a well-defined term, it is often unclear what position other students taking up sabbatical positions take up and where stipulations refer to them. In this document all references to Officer Trustees will refer to only these positions. The term _Elected Sabbatical Students_ will be used to include other, non-trustee, roles

    3.1.8. _Student Trustee_ – The term Student Trustee in this context will include any current student that is also a member of the Trustee Board but not an Officer Trustee. This would therefore include the Council Chair

4. The Role of Staff and Elected Officers:

Paper submitted to Governance Committee
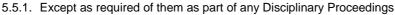On 21/07/2015
Paper considered on 22/07/2015

4.1. Officer Trustees and Elected Officers provide political leadership to the organisation through its various democratic structures

    4.1.1. They represent the members of the Union and work closely with staff to ensure that the operations of the Union, particularly those within an officer's portfolio, cater for, and are responsive to, the needs of the membership

4.2. Staff are responsible for the operation of the Union, including enacting of Policy that has been duly ratified

    4.2.1. Senior Managers in particular will take responsibility for ensuring that organisational direction is informed and influenced by the political agendas of Elected Officers and form working relationships with Officer Trustees

4.3. Both the Officer Trustees and Staff have a shared responsibility for the custodianship of the organisation on a day to day basis and in the longer term

    4.3.1. Staff members and Officer Trustees are expected to invest time and effort to ensure that productive working relationships are developed

    4.3.2. Officer Trustees will often work closely with Staff Members and both have a responsibility to be sympathetic to the situation of the other

        4.3.2.a. Officer Trustees will generally feel pressure to achieve change in a term limited environment

        4.3.2.b. Staff have a reasonable expectation of a similar day to day environment which can be changed quite significantly be the attitudes of an annually varying set of Elected Officers, particularly the Officer Trustees

4.4. Broadly, the work of staff is to be defined through the management structures

    4.4.1. Elected Officers' impact on the day-to-day work of staff should be limited to the development of political policy, discussions within the Board of Trustees, and discussions with senior managers

    4.4.2. Except where the officer trustees have specific operational remits, which the Union should seek to minimise, or where staff have a specific duty to support

4.5. Staff may also work closely with other Elected Officers or Stakeholders; in such cases both parties have a similar responsibility to work together respectfully

    4.5.1. Staff have a reasonable expectation of a pleasant working environment which should be respected

    4.5.2. Equally Stakeholders will have an expectation of being treated in a courteous and professional manner

4.6. In general, no framework or set of rules can substitute for a healthy working relationship

    4.6.1. Staff and Stakeholders are encouraged to form such relationships as best suit their joint working styles

    4.6.2. Issues between individuals are best resolved between said individuals prior to them growing or escalating

4.7. Staff and Elected Officers are expected to nurture effective working relationships, but new relationships of an intimate nature between staff and members of other Stakeholder groups should be avoided

    4.7.1. Should a relationship of this nature arise, it should be disclosed to the relevant Line Manager, Managing Director or Chair of the Board of Trustees to protect all involved from accusations or perceptions related to conflicts of interest

    4.7.2. Staff Members should be aware that they may have a duty of care to such a Stakeholder

5. Staff and Officer Performance:

5.1. The Union has a responsibility to ensure its staff have a fair and consistent working environment. As such, there are limits on the level of discussion that can take place of staff performance outside of the line management structure

5.2. These guidelines are particularly relevant for student media though apply to any public forum

5.3. Students should be encouraged to hold the Union to account and to apply scrutiny to its activities and decisions

    5.3.1. However, this should be done without reference to specific staff or staff teams/groups

5.4. Members should not comment on the performance or conduct of Individual staff or groups of staff in any public forum, except as required of them as part of Disciplinary Proceedings, to include:

    5.4.1. Union, college or external media

    5.4.2. Social media or Websites

    5.4.3. Formal or informal meetings of the Union

    5.4.4. Meetings with College or other External Stakeholders of the Union

5.5. Staff should also refrain from commenting in any of the public forums listed in 6.4 on the performance or conduct of Members, Elected Officers or Members of the Trustee Board

    5.5.1. Except as required of them as part of any Disciplinary Proceedings

Paper submitted to Governance Committee
On 21/07/2015
Paper considered on 22/07/2015

5.6. The Board of Trustees will be the only body containing elected officers empowered to discuss individual staff members and will be considered an exception to points 5.4 and 5.5

    5.6.1. The Board of Trustees and the Appointment and Remunerations Committees will be the only bodies that are empowered to discuss matters relating to recruitment, appointment, remuneration and terms and conditions of staff

    5.6.2. Such discussions will generally take place in closed session

6. Staff Interaction with Democratic Structures:

6.1. Staff may not participate in, or seek to influence, the democratic processes of the Union

    6.1.1. They therefore may not stand for Election to a Union Role

    6.1.2. Hold a Trustee Position

    6.1.3. Participate to the content of Democratic meetings except where invited by the chair of the meeting and with the consent (direct or delegated) of the Managing Director

    6.1.4. In order to ensure Officer and Student Trustees right to take an active role in the political aspect of any election process Staff may be appointed to Returning Officer or Assistant Returning officer roles under the guidelines laid out for Major Elections in the Constitution and By-laws

6.2. Staff who either are, or are in a position to become Members represent a conflict of interest

    6.2.1. The responsibilities and restrictions placed on staff members would interfere with their democratic rights

    6.2.2. As such, staff members who are or would become Members will be required to opt out of Union membership in order to be able to fulfil their employment obligations

    6.2.3. Student Staff as defined in 3.1.5 are an exception to this

        6.2.3.a. Casual staff may become student staff as a result of taking up a course but those on a part or full time contract cannot become student staff

6.3. Student Staff will have certain restrictions during time when they are on shift:

    6.3.1. They may not campaign on an issue or in an election

    6.3.2. They will count as Staff with regards to Section 5 and Section 8 and should refrain from holding the Union to account as in 5.3. except as it is relevant as part of their role

    6.3.3. They must abide by other reasonable stipulations as relevant to their role

7. Complaints:

7.1. As laid out in 4.6. it is expected that where possible issues will be resolved without the need to resort to formal complaints procedures, however, where attempts to resolve an issue personally are not possible or have failed the below procedures should be followed

    7.1.1. It is noted that certain complaints may fall under the remit of the Safe Space or Web Policy and where this is the case the procedures in those supersede these in the first instance

7.2. Any Member of the Union who has cause for complaint on a matter relating to any individual or group of staff should raise the matter through the Union's complaints procedures, or directly with an Officer Trustee (who will inform the Managing Director of the complaint), or directly with the Managing Director

    7.2.1. In the event that the complaint is about the Managing Director the Officer Trustee may take the complaint to the Union President and the Chair of the Board of Trustees

    7.2.2. if the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, then the matter should be raised with the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Union President

    7.2.3. If further action needs to be taken, the relevant Formal Disciplinary Procedures will be utilised

7.3. Staff members are encouraged to resolve issues regarding conduct and behaviour of Members (including Officer Trustees) in an informal manner. However, in extreme circumstances the following procedure should be followed

    7.3.1. The matter should be raised with the Managing Director and direct line manager who will try to resolve the matter

    7.3.2. If necessary the matter will then be discussed with the Board of Trustees

    7.3.3. The matter will be investigated and the staff member will be informed of the outcome of the discussions

7.4. Other Stakeholders that have complaints about either Staff or Officers should raise any complaints as in 7.2.

    7.4.1. In the case of staff complaints about other staff this will be dealt with through the appropriate staff procedures and is not covered by this policy

    7.4.2. Student staff should also use staff procedures for complaints associated with their on shift activities but may make use of clause 7.1. if they have reasonable belief that their complaint is in the broader interest of the Membership

8. Policy:

Paper submitted to Governance Committee
On 21/07/2015
Paper considered on 22/07/2015

8.1. As a student led organisation the Union considers it a core principle that our direction and policy is led by students, it is therefore very important to understand the amount of input into policy that is appropriate for various groups

8.2. The Union employs staff for their expertise and experience as well as to ensure the delivery of the Union's services and it is expected that staff should use this expertise in order to help inform relevant policy and ensure that such policies have the best chance of being positive and achievable

8.3. The level of input that staff will have on Policy will depend upon the type of Policy. It is important to the Union that decisions of the organisations principles remain strongly Student driven, but also that the wealth of experience and talent within the staff of the organisation is fully utilised when policies more operational in nature are created

8.4. Conflicts of Interest:

    8.4.1. It is inevitable that in certain circumstances there will be a conflict of interest; such as for a student-staff member

    8.4.2. Conflicts of interest should not prejudice a members democratic rights however, such conflicts should be noted and may make the member ineligible to vote on an issue even if they have brought the paper

    8.4.3. As the top decision making body of the Union the Trustee Board has an enhanced responsibility to ensure that conflicts of interest are not unduly influencing decisions, as such they may require enhanced stipulations on submission of policy

        8.4.3.a. The Student Trustees, Officer Trustees and Council chair are most likely to be in this position and may need to consider the level of input that is appropriate on a policy submitted to this board or its subcommittees and the stipulations in the Constitution and By-laws that may apply

8.5. Categories of Policy:

    8.5.1. Policy has been defined very broadly, and inherently different policies will need different levels of input. This document assigns three categories to policy here

    8.5.2. It is understood that most policies will be a mixture of these three categories and it is respected that a case-by-case approach must be taken to balancing the level of staff input based on the extent to which a Policy document may fall into each of the categories

    8.5.3. The three categories this document defines are:

        8.5.3.a. *'Political Policy'* – Policies with a political element are those that define an attitude, stance or principle(s) of the Union

            8.5.3.a.i. This may be referring to an external or college factor or an internal issue. Examples would include the Union's stance on Governmental Immigration Policy, our attitude towards the College's Accommodation Portfolio or a change to our Democratic Processes

        8.5.3.b. *'Procedural Policy'* – Procedural elements of policy are those that define our methods of service delivery and internal processes

            8.5.3.b.i. Procedural policy will generally have significant implications on staff time and effort needed to achieve service delivery. Examples would include Financial Procedures or the Health and Safety Policy

            8.5.3.b.ii. Procedural Policy will also often include such policies that are required for legal compliance or best practice

        8.5.3.c. *'Service Policy'* – Policies with a strong service element are those that define directly how our students interact with the services the Union offers

            8.5.3.c.i. The difference between Service policy and Procedural or Political Policy can be hard to define; often defining such a service will be a major decision affecting the principles of the union and so have a strong political element or will have significant bearing on staff and therefore have a Procedural element

            8.5.3.c.ii. Examples of primarily Service Policy would be the New Activities Committee Policy, Tours Policy

    8.5.4. Guidelines:

        8.5.4.a. If the major portion of the paper contains a principle that the Union should adhere to it is likely to be Political Policy

        8.5.4.b. If it primarily what students can interact with within the Union and the manner in which they interact with it, but does not change or provide a new interpretation of the Union's Principles it is likely to be Service Policy

            8.5.4.b.i. For example, rules or procedures that club volunteers or academic reps are asked to follow

        8.5.4.c. Unless, however, it has a significant effect on what staff will need to deliver when it will be primarily Procedural

        8.5.4.d. This will also be the case if the policy only refers to how the Union delivers a service rather than the service itself or is primarily related to legal compliance

        8.5.4.e. In general, Procedural issues will not have direct interaction with Members, but should have down-stream benefits, whereas Service Policy will directly impinge upon Volunteers or other members

8.6. Who can draft/contribute to Policy:

    8.6.1. Any Student or Member of the Trustee board may write policy and submit it to the relevant decision making board

Paper submitted to Governance Committee
On 21/07/2015
Paper considered on 22/07/2015

8.6.2. Any Member, appropriately seconded, may write and submit Policy to a relevant decision making board;

8.6.3. Dependent on the type of Policy staff will generally be involved in Policy generation to varying degrees

    8.6.3.a. *'Political Policy'* is the most sensitive

        8.6.3.a.i. Staff are encouraged to give the benefit of their experience and expertise to those developing such a policy

        8.6.3.a.ii. Such conversations should generally be in private or in a small group and involve an Officer Trustee

        8.6.3.a.iii. There should be no perception that staff are seeking to campaign for a particular outcome for any Political Policy and should not have any direct influence on the outcome of any vote

    8.6.3.b. *'Service Policy'* is less sensitive, but should still be member driven

        8.6.3.b.i. Staff are encouraged to have more input into such policies

        8.6.3.b.ii. Their understanding of demand for such services and how they are utilised is invaluable in such a situations as well as how decisions taken may have wider impact on the Union

        8.6.3.b.iii. This may well include bringing new ideas or proposals to relevant decision making committees or members there of either as part of a wider piece of work or a completely fresh idea

        8.6.3.b.iv. The contribution of staff to such policies should be credited appropriately within the policy

    8.6.3.c. *'Procedural Policy'* is the least sensitive

        8.6.3.c.i. There are a number of situations where Procedural Policy should be written primarily by the staff member with the most relevant experience

        8.6.3.c.ii. Examples of this would include anything with legal compliance

        8.6.3.c.iii. Appropriate staff should also always be included where policy may have a significant effect on a staff team
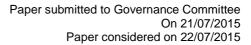
8.7. Oversight:

    8.7.1. Any Policy with significant effects on a staff team or teams should usually have an appropriate member of the Union Senior Management team as a noted contributor or co-author

        8.7.1.a. There may be exceptional circumstances where this is not the case, but such reasons should be clearly stated and carefully considered at Trustee Board or subcommittee level prior to adopting such a policy

    8.7.2. Where staff are drafting any Policy it is important to ensure that appropriate consultation with members has taken place.

    8.7.3. Any such Policy should therefore have an Officer Trustee as a noted contributor or co-author who will have the remit of ensuring that student viewpoints are represented

        8.7.3.a. In exceptional circumstances (such as conflict of interest) this stipulation may be bypassed but careful consideration of whether an alternative Student Trustee or other member should be consulted

8.8. Understanding mixed policies:

    8.8.1. As noted, many Policies will fall into several of the above categories; identifying the appropriate level of input and consultation from/with staff members can therefore be more complex

    8.8.2. Cases should be treated on an individual basis and be flexible to the identification of further implications of a Policy as it progresses

    8.8.3. All those involved in Policy creation are suggested to ensure that relevant viewpoints are aired and taken into account

    8.8.4. A good example may be the Freedom of Speech and Speaker Approval Policy

        8.8.4.a. Since this concerns the principles of the Union it has a strong political element

        8.8.4.b. It also has a strong Procedural portion since it affects service delivery and legal compliance

        8.8.4.c. Finally it has a Service Policy aspect since it will directly affect what students can expect to engage with when running events

        8.8.4.d. In this case, with such a need for legal compliance it is appropriate for a staff member to draft such a policy, however an Officer Trustee should oversee this to ensure that the Principles of the Union are not altered unduly and that student input informs and leads the portions of the policy that affect how students must run events

8.9. Long term projects may need increased staff leadership in order to progress

    8.9.1. Certain Policies and Projects may take a long time to draft

    8.9.2. Staff have an enhanced role in the continuity of the Union

    8.9.3. As such projects that run over more than one academic year should be considered on a case by case basis and may constitute significantly increased staff input exceeding the usual amount

8.10. Ultimately, all policies should be approved by the relevant democratic structure, reviewing the process by which the policy was created is part of the mandate of such a board though this should not be used as a reason to reject a Policy which, in the opinion of the board, is in the best interests of the Union

8.11. Staff comments on existing Policy

    8.11.1. Staff should not comment on the validity, quality or appropriateness of Union Policy in any Public Forum including to the media (whether Union, University or External), on social media, formal meetings with external or college groups or in meetings of the Union's democratic structures

        8.11.1.a. The one exception to this is if called on to do so by the Board of Trustees or it's subcommittees

Paper submitted to Governance Committee
On 21/07/2015
Paper considered on 22/07/2015

8.11.1.b. Staff may be called upon to enact policy, in such situations they should not be penalised for reasonable interpretation of Policy

    8.11.1.b.i. This might include lobbying to University Staff or External Political Figures or enforcing a service or procedural policy such as the Web Policy