



ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE UNION

RCSU

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Mascotry

A New Policy for Constituent Unions

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Why Is a New Policy Needed?

The current rules that exist for Mascotry are very old, not having been updated since 1999, and refer to things which are no longer true or no longer exist, such as Union cards. Additionally, these rules are only signed by the RCSU and CGCU, and it could be argued that they do not apply to ICSMU and RSMU. Allowing Mascotry to take place without a formal set of rules is dangerous, as altercations over mascots can, and have, become physically violent after disagreement over the rules of Mascotry. This paper discusses examples of good and bad practice in Mascotry and proposes a set of regulations to ensure that it remains a positive experience for students.

Examples of Bad Practice

At Freshers' Fair this year, two attempted thefts of mascots took place. One of these was an attempted theft of the Davy Lamp by RCSU and CGCU, who outnumbered RSMU 6 to 1 and demanded it be handed over. This was not done however, and RSM rugby players were called in as backup, which proceeded to start a brawl over the lamp in which various students were rugby tackled. This is clearly an example of bad practice in mascot theft.

Also at Freshers' Fair, CGCU lost both Spanner and Bolt to RSMU. The demands put on the return of these mascots had both financial and reputational costs to the CGCU and required the CGCU take actions which they believed went against what they stood for as a Constituent Union. During this time, CGCU did not have their mascots available for several important events which were prime opportunities for members to experience some of the history of the CGC. CGCU had to wait until early December to get Union Council to mandate the immediate return of the mascots, and even after that the mascots were not returned until late January after threats of financial penalties were levied. In total, CGCU went 4 months without their mascots. This is clearly an example of bad practice in Mascotry.

Example of Good Practice

On Tuesday, January 24th following great carelessness by the RCSU President, Theta was stolen from the RCSU Office by DoCSoc. Theta was held for two days, and was brought out at a DoCSoc bar night having been covered with pictures of past and present RCSU Presidents, the current Union President, and a former DPFS. It was then returned unharmed. This was good fun for the DoCSoc Committee and DoC students, and no harm was done to the RCSU Committee or students, and is an example of good practice in Mascotry.

Modernising the Mascotry Rules

Proposed by Lloyd James – RCSU President
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ICU Notes:

1. ICU, CGCU, RSMU, RCSU, and ICSMU have different mascots with historical value.
2. Traditionally the Constituent Unions have engaged in stealing the violate mascots from each other and placing conditions on their return.
3. The current mascotry rules are very old (updated 1999), refer to things which are no longer true, and do not bind all Constituent Unions.
4. ICU's Safe Space Policy establishes a principle of zero-tolerance for all acts of physical intimidation or aggression.

ICU Believes:

1. Following outdated and largely unknown rules is not ideal and leaves opportunity for disagreements over rules to lead to bad practice.
2. Mascots provide historical value to the College, and a community feeling to students. If well regulated, the sport of Mascotry could strengthen these benefits.
3. Currently mascots are rarely seen on campus and at Constituent Union events due to the fear of them being stolen.
4. A financial penalty in a ransom demand is a senseless waste of money for Constituent Unions and reduces their ability to offer valued events and services to members.
5. Reputational penalties in ransom demands (such as downing a yard or writing an apology article in Felix) are traditions that do not represent the current image and student body of the Constituent Unions of Imperial College and can lead to the appearance of a lack of inclusivity.

ICU Resolves:

1. To replace the old Mascotry rules with the new set proposed in Appendix A.

Appendix A - Mascotry Rules

1. Introduction

- a. Mascotry shall be defined as the competitive game of stealing the mascots of other Constituent Unions in return for a ransom.
- b. Only Constituent Unions may take part in Mascotry, and only if they themselves have a violate mascot.
- c. No person who is a member of a tie club may take part in Mascotry if on tie club business.
- d. A stolen mascot, once securely stored, becomes the responsibility of the President of the Constituent Union responsible for the theft. The CU President will have final say over the fate of the mascot within the framework of these rules.
- e. All disputes regarding these rules and Mascotry shall be heard and rules upon by the ICU President, whose decision in final.

2. Mascots

- a. Every Constituent Union may have at least one mascot if they so wish. The Union shall have no obligation to provide one.
- b. All mascots shall be valued on a reasonable interval for insurance purposes, on the advice of the Deputy President (Finance & Services) or the Finance Department.
- c. Inviolable mascots may also be held, which shall not be subject to the rest of these rules, and may not be stolen in Mascotry.
- d. Mascots can be declared violate or inviolable by informing the ICU President and the other Constituent Union Presidents. This maybe be for a time period set in advance, or indefinitely.
- e. A violate mascot must be on show at two or more Constituent Union events per term for a Constituent Union to take part in Mascotry.
- f. At no point in Mascotry should any lasting damage be done to a mascot. If this occurs the damaging party would be liable to pay for repairs and could be ejected from Mascotry at the discretion of the ICU President.

3. What Constitutes a Theft

- a. A theft shall:
 - i. Be a clean theft, i.e. members of a Constituent Union clearly take another CU's mascot and place it into secure storage.
 - ii. Be a theft by virtue of outnumbering the opposing mascot protectors by a ratio of 5:1.

- iii. Be supervised by at least one member of a Constituent Union's committee or the Principal Officer of one of a CU's associated Departmental Societies or Motor Club.
- b. A theft shall be invalid if:
 - i. Any physical violence or intimidation takes place in the seizing of a mascot.
 - ii. Any person on any side is injured as part of the theft.
 - iii. Any College or Union property is damaged as part of the theft. In this event, any responsible parties may be required to pay to repair any damage.

4. Ransom Demands

- a. A theft must be brought to the attention of the President of the Constituent Union whose mascot was stolen as soon as is reasonably possible.
- b. All stolen mascots, regardless of whether ransom demands are issued or are met, must be returned within 2 calendar weeks.
- c. If a Constituent Union wishes to have a mascot returned sooner, the thieving CU is obliged to do so but may issue ransom demands as a condition of doing so.
- d. Any such ransom demands must be issued within 2 calendar days of the request being formally issued to the CU President in possession of the mascot, or the theft shall be invalidated and the mascot returned.
- e. Demands may not impose a financial cost (e.g. by requiring a donation or payment be made to any organisation) or reputational cost (e.g. by requiring members of the CU to publicly denigrate or embarrass themselves or their CU).
- f. Demands must be legal and must not contravene Union policy.
- g. Mascots must be returned within 2 calendar days upon completion of the demands (unless another timetable is agreed between the two parties).

5. Punishments

- a. The ICU President may eject any Constituent Union from the game of Mascotry for contravention of these rules, or any ICU policy including and in particular the Safe Space Policy.
- b. Any reported violation of the ICU Safe Space Policy in the course of Mascotry must be investigated by ICU and the usual disciplinary procedure must be applied to any student found have violated the policy.
- c. If a mascot is lost by the thieving party in the course of Mascotry, the thieving Constituent Union is financially liable for the value of the mascot and is to be excluded from Mascotry for the remainder of the academic year.