

Modifications to the Deputy President (Finance & Services) Role

Proposer: Fifi Henry – Deputy President (Finance & Services)

Secunder: Abhijay Sood – Union President

ICU Notes:

1. The Deputy President (Finance & Services) role has been a source of tension for several years. The nature of its responsibilities and the overlap between these responsibilities and those of other staff has caused friction in the past, with calls for a review of the role having been raised for several years.
2. A considerable amount of the DPFS' time is spent completing administrative work and financial processes, *e.g.* reviewing sponsorship contracts. The DPFS is often the single point of failure for the completion of such work, and time spent working on these tasks prejudices their ability to work on wider strategic pieces of work or towards their manifesto commitments.
3. Additional responsibilities have been added to the DPFS role this year. Most notably, two new committees are being chaired by the DPFS, and the DPFS has taken on key Health and Safety responsibilities in the absence of a full-time Union Managing Director.

ICU Believes:

1. The DPFS role is valuable to the Union. It helps strengthen democratic/student oversight of the Union's operations and provides a useful point of contact over several key areas.
 - a) The role may offer further value as we work to strengthen partnership with and representation within College Campus Services, key College Finance staff and similar.
2. Officer Trustees should primarily be focussed on strategic objectives¹ and their manifesto aims, rather than the day-to-day running of the Union, which should rest with the permanent staff team.
3. In its current form, the role is liable to be misunderstood, leading to manifesto commitments which are often unrealistic and outside the scope of the role.
4. A comprehensive review of the DPFS role is undesirable and impractical due to the COVID-19 crisis. Though broad consultation would be possible, social distancing measures and their consequences mean that much of the DPFS' day-to-day responsibilities will change in the short-term and will change again as things return to normal, undermining the usefulness of such work. A full review may be appropriate once the spectre of COVID passes.
5. In the absence of a comprehensive review, some immediate changes to the role can be made. While these may not fundamentally alter the role, they would help make the postholder more effective.

ICU Resolves:

1. To amend the Bye-Laws in accordance with Appendix A to reflect changes to the DPFS role.
2. To mandate the Union President to ensure the changes described in Appendix B take place.

¹ i.e. "big picture stuff" – setting the direction of the organisation, overseeing large projects etc.

We need to have clear answers to where stuff is going if its not being done by the DPFS.

By the date of the next Council meeting, the contents of the below proposals will have been consulted on with:

- The Services & Sustainability Board
- The incoming DPFS
- The Union's Leadership Team (current OTs + Union senior managers)

Appendix A – Amendments to the [Bye-Laws](#)

- Change clause 12.7 to read: “Be responsible for Union services (commercial and otherwise) that the Union provides at all campuses, including, but not limited to conferencing, retails and licensed trade services.”
- Amend clause 12.8 to read “ultimately responsible” rather than just “responsible”
- Add a clause 12.9: Be ultimately responsible for the training, support and recognition of all student staff, in conjunction with the relevant Union committees and staff.

Appendix B – Practical ramifications

- To move the majority of eActivities approvals from the DPFS and DPCS role to the Student Opportunities & Development Team.
 - Exceptions to this would include:
 - The approval of Event Budgets and Tour Budgets
 - The approval of flagged External Speakers
 - The approval of new membership prices
- To move responsibility for overseeing club email accounts to the Student Opportunities & Development Team.
- To move the approval of Sponsorship contracts from the DPFS role to the Student Opportunities & Development Team.
 - The parameters for this will be set by the current and incoming DPFSs, including involvement in setting expectations for contracts and potential sponsors before the start of the new financial year. This will give the DPFS accountability, but not operational responsibility, for such contracts.
 - These expectations will be developed in collaboration with the Student Opportunities & Development Team and the Sales & Sponsorship Manager.
 - The Services & Sustainability Board (SSB) will review the parameters at the end of each academic year and make recommendations
 - DPFS is responsible for ensuring online training and guidance is easily accessible, effective and updated annually before August 1st of each year
- To formally chair a Summer Ball Committee of student volunteers that have creative control over the direction of the Summer Ball, to work alongside the Events & Conferences Manager to have operational oversight, but ultimately to remove operational responsibility from the role, as this is excessively onerous for both the DPFS and student volunteers. This committee will reside under SSB.

- Formally be recognised and responsible for ensuring outreach and engagement with all members, entailing:
 - Greater involvement with other campuses and CUs, helping develop wider community engagement and space planning.
 - The DPFS will lead the way on the Union Services (commercial, space, support etc) we provide – including their direction and purpose.
 - The DPFS will collaborate with the DPW on welfare-related policies regarding our venues/other spaces
 - The DPFS will collaborate with the DPW on matters relating to the Union's Advice Centre, in particular as we work to extend our support to students outside South Kensington