

## **On the resignation of the *Felix* Editor**

A note by the Union President

As most Council members are aware, the performance of the *Felix* Editor has been a challenge over the course of this academic year. Initially, when issues arose with this, we intervened by setting mutual expectations between the Editor, his committee, and ICU. We did this not only to give him a second chance, but also because we felt there were genuine extenuating circumstances which, at least to a point, excused his underperformance.

However, this term, issues have recurred. The Editor was unresponsive with a variety of stakeholders, failed to attend scheduled meetings without providing any reason, and did not always distribute the paper. These issues, and others, meant he was in violation of the expectations we had mutually agreed in January. Moreover, his failure for a third time to bring his termly report to Union Council led many Council members to question his performance.

In light of this, the Officer Trustee team and various members of Union Council were preparing to submit a motion of no confidence in him. Given the time of year, this was likely to be largely symbolic, but would send an important message about a) Council taking its role in holding full-time officers to account seriously and b) full-time officers not being able to act with impunity in these roles.

By Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, it was clear that such a motion would have passed through Union Council. I informed the Editor of this the following day, and he chose to resign. We should understand and respect this decision – nobody wants a public trial, he was within his right to exercise this option, and perhaps most importantly given the time of year this decision would not meaningfully affect *Felix's* output. Nonetheless, we should be clear that, even if the formal mechanism was not invoked, it was pressure from Union Council members which led to this outcome. Union Council members have tremendous power over all officers of the Union, and full-timers are no exception.

I hope that those of you continuing on this body, or those who find themselves on it again in some future academic year, remember this. Those of us who have the opportunity to do these roles on a full-time basis are not impervious to challenge, and Council should not be shy about exercising its responsibilities to challenge us, censure us, and even remove us, where there is justification to do so. In this way, those who find themselves in these roles in future will have a stronger incentive to perform better, because they are being actively held to account by people who care.