

Imperial College Union
Governance & Membership Sub-Committee

DRAFT Minutes / Meeting of 23 November 2022 held at 10am via MS Teams

Present

Prof Dot Griffiths (DG) in the Chair
Nathalie Podder (NP)
Hayley Wong (HW)
Yuki Yuan (YY)

Samuel Lovatt (SL)
Ang Li (AL)
Jane Coulson (JC)

Staff in attendance

Clem Jones (CJ)
Cat Turhan (CT)
Tom Newman (TN)

1. Apologies

Noted from Dr Phil Power (PP) and Jason Zheng (JZ). Noted that DG was standing in as Chair as PP is unwell. Noted JZ had sent in comments which would be mentioned.

2. Draft Minutes of the Previous Meeting

7 September 2022

Approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

Matters Arising

DG asked for an update on the approach to suspended member eligibility. CJ noted that the Union had continued in the Autumn Election with the approach taken in the Summer Election 2022, namely that suspended members can vote but not stand for election. DG asked if the Committee was content to continue in this manner, and the Committee agreed this should continue.

3. Conflicts of Interest

Noted NP, HW, AL, SL, YY [and JZ] all have COI as they are eligible to stand in elections.

4. Identification of Any Confidential Business

None.

5. Election Rules / Byelaw J Review

CT presented paper GM/22-23/04.

- i. JC asked for background information regarding the 89 complaints received in the Leadership Elections 2022 (LE22). CT noted that a large number of complaints related to minor publicity issues e.g., complaints of candidate posters being placed too close together in violation of the Publicity Policy. CT also noted there were a bulk of complaints relating to rule violations among candidates for a single

society. CT further noted there were a number of complaints investigated relating to two candidates which resulted in the complaints being upheld and the two candidates being disqualified. JC asked for a recap on the nature of the complaints upheld that led to the disqualifications. CT noted the complaints related to voter coercion. JC further asked if there were specific issues relating to WeChat, given it was mentioned in the paper; TN and CT noted the issue with WeChat usage previously was that because there had been publicity on that platform in languages other than English posted without English translation, which is a requirement of the Election Rules.

- ii. JC asked how the Union would measure increased candidate satisfaction as a success measure. CT said the election team should ask candidates how they find the experience of participating in the election.
- iii. JC asked if there should be some success measure relating to reducing inequalities affecting students and asked for information on what the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) would look like. CT said there is ambition for a wider EIA to be rolled out across the Union to see how different spheres of Union activity affects different disadvantaged groups.
- iv. NP stated she understood why Rule 3 (regarding Covid) is being recommended for removal in the proposed Leadership Election rule changes, but wondered if the Union should have a clause to cover other potential government mandates that might affect campaigning e.g., a geopolitical conflict. TN agreed and proposed that Rule 3 should say instead words to the effect of “the RO reserves the right to suspend elections for whatever reason” in order to cover these eventualities.
- v. NP noted that collecting self-identification data for Liberation & Community Officers (LCOs) would classify as special category data. CT noted that there would be a need for candidates to consent to the Union processing such data.
- vi. SL asked, if the Union were to move to a position of voter-self-identification, whether students could *stand* for an LCO position if non self-identifying into that liberation group. CT noted that the recommendation is for further consultation, but noted that in principle if the Union wishes to use *voter*-self identification for liberation groups then it would make sense to require *candidates* to self-identify into any liberation group for which they wish to stand as an LCO. DG asked how this would apply regarding the Working Class Officer/Network positions and how this would be determined, and also how the issue of fraud would be dealt with regarding self-ID, suggesting the matter may need some further thinking. CT suggested the Union begins by looking at how other Students’ Unions approach the issue.
- vii. Minor typographical errors in the draft rules were noted for correction.
- viii. JC suggested the candidate spend limit for different candidates should be stated in the rules using the limit that is set by the RO. CT noted this could be incorporated into the candidate pack when set by the RO. JC also suggested that the rules make clear that candidates’ campaign teams (in addition to the candidate themselves) must not obscure, tamper with or remove the publicity of any other candidates

The Committee agreed to propose, subject to the above revisions and the typographical corrections sent in by JZ being incorporated:

- *to the Returning Officer of the 2023 Leadership Elections - that the drafted rules might form the skeleton of the rules he will set for the election*

- *to Board - that the Board approve the Byelaw J updates on the Committee's recommendation.*

DG thanked everyone for attending and closed the Teams meeting.

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