

**Imperial College Union
Governance & Membership Committee / 6 September 2023**

Complaints & Disciplinary Update

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Clem Jones (Interim Representation Manager)

Action: To approve the proposed role appointments and note the cases summary

1. Background Information and Context

Our statutory complaints and membership discipline procedures are set out in the Union's Bye Laws G and H respectively. Last academic year, a project was undertaken to review these procedures, led by the Union President, and a number of amendments to these byelaws were approved by Board of Trustees and Union Council in May 2023.

2. Appointments Required

The updated byelaws still require a number of roles to be appointed in order to operationalise the processes therein: -

Complaints Officer: This is an appointed member of staff who has responsibility for administrating the Complaints procedure, including checking that submitted Complaints are eligible to be considered, and also for clerking disciplinary and appeals panels. We recommend that Clem Jones be appointed to this role.

Complaint Handlers: These are a pool of appointed staff members or Officer Trustees, from whom a relevant individual will be chosen to deal with a submitted complaint. We recommend that the Senior Management Team and the Union President be appointed to this pool, where in the first instance a Director will be the handler of a complaint relevant to their Directorate.

Complaints Appeal Members: This is to be a designated list of individuals who may be selected by the Chair of the Governance and Membership Committee to sit on a Complaints Appeal Panel. As Byelaw G stipulates these Panels will comprise at least one Officer Trustee and one SMT member, we recommend that the Senior Management Team and the members of the Governance and Membership Committee be appointed to this pool for the Chair to choose from.

Investigating Officer: The procedures stipulate that in the first instance, all *disciplinary* cases are led by an Investigating Officer who is a member of the Governance and Membership Committee. No procedure for selecting this person is specified (they are a 'Union nominee'). We recommend that the Union President or their nominee may act as Investigating Officers, supported by a member of union staff, so that the Union President may delegate if needed. (We recommend that if the allegation is about the President, the Chair of the Trustee Board may act as Investigating Officer and can be contacted via icu.board@imperial.ac.uk).

While Management Committee develops a Union Disciplinary Procedure (introduced under the updates to Byelaw H), the Governance & Membership Committee should approve: -

Panel Members: This is a designated list of members of the Board of Trustees who can sit as members of a Union Disciplinary Panel. We recommend that the members of the Governance and Membership Committee be appointed to this pool, to be called upon as required.

Disciplinary Appeals Panel Members: This is a designated list of members of the Board of Trustees who can sit as members of an Appeals Panel. We recommend that the members of the Governance and Membership Committee, and the Chair of the Board of Trustees, be appointed.

3. Summary of 2022-23 cases

Complaints

As a reminder, complaints as we mean them here are typically expressions of dissatisfaction with a service that ICU provides. There were nine complaints considered under the statutory complaints procedure last academic year. Most (all but one) were resolved at Stage One (local resolution), with one being resolved at Stage Two (formal stage). The latter related to a CSP's experience of arranging a Summer Tour through ICU Activities processes; the complaint was upheld, with an apology extended to the complainants of the CSP, and internal recommendations were made to address the issues raised in the complaint.

<u>Type of complaint considered under procedure</u>	<u>Number of complaints of this type</u>
CSP service/policy-related complaints	3
Purchase refund refusal-related complaints	2
Union membership eligibility-related complaints	1
Venues-related complaints	3

Note – while the statutory complaints procedure is a provision for students, the Union also received a complaint from a non-member contracted by a CSP regarding the ending of a contract. The matter was investigated and responded to by the Director of Membership Services.

Disciplinary

Eleven cases were processed by the Complaints Officer; note that as Byelaw H has stipulated that this procedure does not provide for discipline against CSPs, this number does not include allegations against whole CSPs – more information on this can be provided on request.

<u>Level allegations resolved under</u>	<u>Number of cases</u>
No action needed	3
Level 1 – Summary Punishment	1
Level 2 – Union Discipline Panel	3
Level 3 – Referral to College	2 (ongoing, awaiting further College update)
Signposted to College/no action due to ongoing College discipline process	2