

Council  
11<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Imperial College Union  
**Staff-Student Protocol**  
*A Paper by ICU President – Scott Heath*

**Introduction**

1. The Staff-Student Protocol is a document which the President is obligated to uphold.
2. It details the relationship between staff and students, both in their remits as officers of the Union and users of our facilities.
3. The current Staff-Student Protocol is difficult to interpret, understand and use. This provides a barrier to both staff and students interacting with the protocol and using efficiently; which fundamentally renders the purpose unachieved.
4. Furthermore, this in itself causes issues; seen with disciplinary actions undertaken this year.
5. Due to this, a combination of former-Sabbaticals, the Union Court, the Union General Manager and I have created a collaborative document which should (we hope) resolve the issues highlighted in 3.

**Resolves**

1. To pass the new Staff-Student Protocol

**Current STAFF/STUDENT PROTOCOL**

**(The Relationship of the Elected Officers of ICU,  
its Committees and its Permanent Staff)**

1. It is recognised that any officers elected by the student members of ICU are accountable to that membership, through the ICU Council, or through its committees. ICU staff are accountable through the line management structure to the General Manager and ultimately, through the ICU President, to the ICU Trustee Board. Any staffs with an operational management line to the General Manager are covered by this protocol, even where direct line management is through the College.
2. The aim of this Protocol is to clarify the relationships between students, their elected representatives and staff. The document serves to provide protection to staff and the democratic processes of the Union, but also to promote an effective working environment.
3. The President of the ICU and the General Manager are responsible for ensuring all officers and members of ICU staff are aware of this protocol. Sabbatical Officers and any other person who derives employment from elected office are "ICU officers" and not "staff" for the purposes of this protocol.

**THE ROLE OF STAFF IN MATTERS OF ICU POLICY**

4. The maintenance of the integrity of democratic practice within ICU precludes the direct involvement of staff employed in the Union in matters of policy.
5. Staff shall at all times strive to uphold the policies, aims and objectives of the ICU.
6. Staff members may attend meetings of any body of the ICU when invited or with the permission of the President.
7. Staff members may not exercise a vote in any Union meeting.
8. Staff members may advise officers of the ICU on any matter within their work area, but shall not in any other way seek to influence the policy-making process of the Union.
9. Staff members may not take part in public discussion of ICU policy nor give public expression to views contrary to ICU policy within the Union.
10. Staff members shall not comment on ICU policy except to answer factual questions which come within their area of work.
11. Staff shall not involve themselves in any partial way in the election of any officers or representatives of the ICU.

**THE ROLE OF MEMBERS OF THE ICU IN EMPLOYMENT ISSUES**

12. The maintenance of the integrity of the Union as an employer precludes any staff matters, either related to work or personal matters, from being discussed in any open forum of the Union. This does not prevent the discussion of any activities undertaken by the Union, even if staff led, as long as staff performance does not feature in said discussion. This does not prevent the discussion of any activities undertaken by the Union, even if staff-led, as long as staff performance does not feature in said discussion.
13. All matters relating to conditions of service, performance and conduct of members of staff employed in the Union shall be dealt with by the ICU President in consultation with the ICU, General Manager where appropriate. The ICU President and General Manager may seek the advice and support of the College's Human Resources Division.
14. All matters relating to the conditions of service, performance and conduct of the ICU General Manager shall be dealt with by the ICU President as the General Manager's line manager, in consultation with the College's Human Resources Division, where appropriate.
15. All matters relating to the performance and conduct of members of College staff shall be raised at the appropriate level in the College by the ICU President , where appropriate.
16. The officers of the ICU shall refer complaints about individual members of staff employed in the Union to the ICU President who will handle them in consultation with the ICU General Manager and in accordance with the line management structure of the Union.
17. The officers of the ICU shall not permit discussions relating to the conditions of employment, performance or conduct of members of Union staff in articles, correspondence or other publications produced under the auspices of the ICU.
18. Officers of the ICU should be encouraged to make use of the staff support available, but shall not directly manage the work of individual members of staff employed in the Union. In the event that an ICU officer wishes to change the priorities of an ICU staff member, this should be done through the Union's line management structure.
19. Complaints about the conduct of ICU Staff members while not on Union business, which are raised by members of the Union, College or the general public or by shall be addressed through the appropriate line management structure.
20. Matters relating to ICU staff shall be considered within the context of the line management structure of the Union and, where necessary, in accordance with the College's disciplinary and grievance procedures .

### **SABBATICAL OFFICERS**

21. Sabbatical Officers shall be subject to the same scrutiny and discipline as any other ICU officer, subject to the relevant Union Regulations and policies.

### **STUDENT STAFF**

22. Students may be employed by the Union on a part-time basis. These students should not be prevented from exercising their democratic rights as student members of the ICU because they are also members of ICU staff. Therefore, student staff may take a full and active part in the democratic administration of the ICU, including full membership of all its committees with the exception of the Trustee Board.
23. Student staff may not raise any issue relating to the employment, terms and conditions of service, performance and conduct of themselves or any other staff member in any committee of the ICU.
24. Student staff are entitled to comment on policies relating to the areas of the ICU where they work, other than employment policies, and shall not be discriminated against for doing so.
25. Student staff will be afforded the same protections as permanent ICU staff members under this protocol.
26. Student staff should pursue any issue which arises in connection with their employment through the relevant line management structure.

#### **ENFORCEMENT and INTERPRETATION**

27. The ICU President is ultimately responsible for the enforcement of this protocol and shall be responsible for clarifying the relationship between the ICU and members of staff. When the Trustee Board or Court are sitting, its chair shall be responsible for the clarification or enforcement of the protocol. The Court shall interpret this protocol when required as with any other Union rule.
28. When the President or other ICU officer for the time being with delegated authority to manage staff act through such staff, the conduct of the President or other officer may be the subject of comment in any open meeting or forum. Discussion of the conduct of the staff themselves shall be subject to the prohibitions set out above.
29. The Trustee Board, Executive Committee and Court may discuss matters relating to employment issues for staff with safeguards for propriety set out elsewhere in the Constitution and Regulations. The Trustee Board and Court may require staff to attend, answer questions and produce documents or items.
30. Breaches of this protocol by ICU staff shall be resolved through the line management structure, by the ICU General Manager. If the General Manager is implicated the ICU President shall resolve the matter.
31. Breaches of this protocol by ICU members shall be resolved by the President, if necessary, through the appropriate disciplinary procedures. If the President is implicated the matter shall be referred to the ICU Trustee Board

## Proposed STAFF/STUDENT PROTOCOL

### **(The Relationship of the Elected Officers of the Union, its Committees and its Permanent Staff)**

#### **1. Core principles**

1. The aim of this Protocol is to clarify the relationships between students, their elected representatives, committees and staff. The document serves to maintain democratic control of the Union by students while providing appropriate protection for employed staff and promoting an effective working environment.
2. There are two core principles underlying this Protocol:
  1. **First**, the elected Officers of the Union are responsible to the membership for the government and actions of the Union.
    1. Therefore, staff may not participate in the government of the Union, neither setting policy nor expressing public views contrary to the Union's.
  2. **Second**, all employed staff are responsible through a management structure via the General Manager to the President, who is the senior elected officer.
    1. Therefore, the conditions of service, performance and conduct of Union staff ("staff matters") should be discussed only in the appropriate forum and where necessary in confidence.

#### **2. Definition of Staff**

1. In this document:
  1. "Staff" are individuals or groups of individuals employed by Imperial College Union, excluding Sabbatical Officers
  2. "Student Staff" are students of Imperial College who are working during their period of study, whose primary purpose at the College is as a student. Permanent staff who have chosen to take a course at the college to complement their work will not normally be regarded as students staff.
  3. The distinction between "Staff" and "Student Staff" in this document exists to provide guidance on issues of conflicting rights and responsibilities. In the event of confusion as to the status as to an individual staff member, guidance from the President and General Manager should be sought.

#### **3. The role of staff**

1. Staff are expected to provide professional advice to the elected officers in their areas of expertise. However they may not seek to influence political policy discussions or the political policy positions of others.
2. Staff may attend meetings at which they are permanent observers or when otherwise invited or required to attend. Staff may not hold membership of any constituted committee or vote upon them.
3. Staff should not comment on political policy or political discussion; including:
  1. In College, Union or external media
  2. On online fora or websites (including social media)

3. In formal or informal union meetings.
4. Unless defined as 'student staff' in accordance with section two of this document, the responsibilities and restrictions placed on staff members shall override the privileges of Union membership. In practice;
  1. Staff members may not participate in democratic meetings
  2. Staff members may not stand or vote in any Union elections
5. Student staff shall enjoy the full rights and privileges of Union membership, save for any restriction placed on that staff member whilst on duty. In particular;
  1. Student staff may not campaign on an issue or in an election whilst on duty for Imperial College Union.
  2. Points 3.1-3.3 apply to Student Staff whilst on duty or acting as a staff members.

#### **4. An effective working environment**

1. The core principle is: all employed staff are responsible through a management structure via the General Manager to the President, who is the senior elected officer.
2. Misconduct by Union staff shall be dealt with by the President and Union Managing Director through the line management structure.

#### **5. Discussion of Staffing Matters**

1. Matters comprising conditions of employment, performance or conduct of staff shall not be discussed in publications or other Union media.
2. Matters comprising conditions of employment, performance or conduct of staff may be discussed in meetings of the Trustee Board, Executive Committee and Court but always in closed session, with only members and others specifically permitted by that committee to attend.
3. The Trustee Board may permit, either expressly or by necessary implication, a sub-committee of it to do so with the same restrictions as its parent committee. The creation of such a sub—committee and its terms of existence are not themselves a staff matter.
4. The Trustee Board, Executive Committee and Court may require staff to attend and answer questions, in consultations with the General Manager
5. Council may require the General Manager (who is a permanent observer) to answer questions subject to the approval of the chair and the President. In the latter case the President may answer (or if appropriate not answer) the question in the place of the General Manager. A nominee of the General Manager may attend with the Council's approval.

#### **6. Responsibilities of Officers**

1. Union Officers shall ensure that discussion of staff matters do not take place
  1. In College, Union or external media
  2. On online fora or websites (including social media)
  3. In formal or informal union meetings, save for those meeting outlined in section five.

2. The Officers and Trustees of the Union will delegate their responsibility for ensuring a fair election to the returning officer and deputy returning officers nominated by the Union, and all associated administrative functions to appropriate staff members, so as not to undermine their right to take an active role in the political aspect of any election process.

#### **7. What does not constitute staff matters**

1. This Protocol is not intended to inhibit free and fair discussion of the performance of the Union's commercial services, departments and administrative provision to clubs, societies and activities. In particular, any departmental policy, rule or convention is not a staff matter, nor is the action of staff putting this in to effect.

#### **8. Management of staff**

1. The President may delegate authority to manage staff to the General Manager and other staff where necessary.

#### **9. Sabbatical Officers**

1. Those holding sabbatical office are subject to the same scrutiny and accountability as other elected officer. No matter relating to their conditions of service, performance and conduct are staff matters.
2. Those holding sabbatical office are responsible to the President in respect of their performance and conduct as employees.

#### **10. Complaints about staff**

1. Complaints about staff should be directed to their line managers or the General Manager, or the President. A committee authorised to discuss staff matters may consider whether to direct a complaint in a similar fashion.

#### **11. Complaints about Union Officers**

1. Staff members are encouraged to resolve issues regarding conduct and behaviour of officers in an informal manner, under the advice of the General Manager or President as appropriate.
2. Serious matters should be dealt with in accordance with Regulation Seven of the Constitution (Disciplinary and Complaints)

#### **12. Implementation and interpretation**

1. The President, or their nominee, should clarify and explain the Protocol when required. The Court shall interpret this Protocol when required as with other Union rules.
2. A breach of the Protocol by staff may be dealt with by the President or senior staff through the line management structure. A breach by any student may be dealt with by the President which may in serious or deliberate breaches involve appropriate disciplinary sanction.