Imperial College Union (ICU)
Union Council / 24 June 2025

Motion on ICU Democracy Review [2024-2025]

Proposer: Camille Boutrolle (Union President)
Seconders: Emina Hogas (Deputy President (Education))
Nico Henry (Deputy President (Welfare))
Christian Cooper (Deputy President (Clubs & Societies))
Stephanie Yeung (Deputy President (Finance & Services))

Union Notes

1. That a wholescale review of ICU's democratic and student representation structures has been undertaken this academic year**,** engaging stakeholders such as Imperial students, University staff and Union staff, with the assistance of a sector consultancy.
2. That an updated report with recommended solutions to current democratic deficits was circulated to Union Council members ahead of the June 2025 Union Council meeting for consideration.

Union Believes

1. That in order to be effective, a student-led membership-organisation like ICU should periodically review the effectiveness of its democratic input mechanisms.
2. That changes proposed by the Democracy Review which are endorsed by Council should be taken forward.

Union Resolves

1. To endorse the recommendations of the Democracy Review appended to this motion (including any amendments at the June 2025 Union Council meeting),

Union Requests

1. Endorsement/consideration by the ICU Board of Trustees of passed recommendations, so that work towards passed recommendations can begin.

Appendix:

Red indicates changes between 1st & 2nd paper circulations for May Council, blue indicates changes between May/June Council.

Thematic Area	#	Council recommends...	Clarifications
1 Organisational Transparency	1.1	ICU holds annual general meetings to present activity and finances	Meetings are held at least once per year, advertised at the beginning of the first term to give students notice to attend.
	1.2	ICU releases summaries of the proceedings of its Finance, Audit & Risk Committee in a digestible, front-facing format, and a written termly commercial update to be provided to Council	Summaries to be released within the month of a meeting.
	1.3	ICU delivers annual student experience and impact reports	ICU Staff Team members would facilitate the delivery of this work and explore formats of the report that would be most preferred to students.
	1.4	ICU ensures every student-facing team will provide opportunities for student feedback and input	
	1.5	ICU holds effectiveness reviews of Council/democratic structures once after the first year of implementation of the democracy review, then every 3 years	By June 2026, an ICU working group of student leaders and staff will evaluate and review the impact of democracy review changes. Once it has convened and reviewed how well the recommendations have worked towards the aims of the review, the ICU staff team will deliver any operational changes, and structural changes will be voted on by Union Council.
2 Officer Structure	2.1	Sabbatical Officers to be line-managed by the ICU Managing Director	This applies to sabbatical officers' responsibilities/accountabilities as paid/employed members of staff. Includes ICSMSU President.
	2.2	ICU renames DPCS to DP Activities	Includes amending remit to contain community development for students (including student-led events, volunteering, reward and recognition, and

2 Officer Structure			skills development) with support from the ICU staff team
	2.3	ICU does not elect a fifth Officer Trustee for AY 2025-2026.	
	2.4	that trustees give consideration to prioritising resource to support postgraduate community and representatives via additional staff support e.g. a Postgraduate Coordinator	
	2.5	that the Union further considers the need for a fifth officer portfolio, and what this might look like	This could include previously considered options such as a part-time or full-time PG Officer, or a reformed version of the DPFS.
	2.6	Set up a termly student forum for student-led events within ICU venues and commercial activity.	ICU will establish a termly student forum for commercial services to receive feedback on initiatives and shape ideas for events/commercial activity. This would enable students to provide direct feedback and shape commercial policies and activity.
	2.7	Reform Officer accountability mechanisms	Officers will still be held to account at Council, and the Council Chair will convene a working group over summer 2025 to establish best practice for this, as well as an implementation plan. Each officer will align to the proposed committees (theme three) - receiving feedback, and co-developing policy. Manifestos or reports would be published on the website with compulsory monthly term-time updates – reviewed regularly with ICU staff, with input from students.
3 Community Organising	3.1	that trustees consider introducing a funding pot for volunteers to use to deliver community organising initiatives and events	

	3.2	ICU delivers community organising training to all relevant student reps and volunteers	
4 Union Council	4.1	Replace existing committees and fora with 4 committees of Council for deliberative matters and policy discussion spaces, with Council meeting at least termly.	The 4 Committees would be: i. Activities Committee (rename CSPB) ii. Academic Committee iii. Constituent Union Presidents Committee iv. Liberation & Wellbeing Committee A working group will be established over the Summer, convened by the Council Chair, to create a timetable of committees and the structure to ensure it develops viable policy. Similarly, it will focus on how to demonstrate Officer and representative accountability to the wider student body.
	4.2	Create an online form for students to submit ideas to ICU.	ICU will create an online form for students to submit ideas to the Union. Ideas will either be given directly to relevant teams, or, if a policy suggestion, directed to a relevant committee to workshop. This will then be turned into a policy and voted on either by the committee or by Council.
	4.3	Establish a Democracy Working Group	A neutral democracy working group will be established to ensure that ideas are signposted to the right place, and that the idea becomes a formal motion.
	4.4	ICU develop a communication plan for Council and its sub-committees.	ICU will develop a communication plan for Council, reviewed by the Council Chair, and its committees to ensure students understand, and can access, decision making. The plan will consider how it communicates the contents of the

			meeting, the decisions made, and the impact of this work. Plan will come to Council for approval.
5 Constituent Unions	5.1	ICU and CUs co-develop partnership agreements	
	5.2	The creation of a CU Officer development programme	
	5.3	Postgraduate representation is embedded into CU structures	The ICU would work closely with each faculty to codevelop a structure that works for them
	5.4	The introduction of faculty level representation and community-building between ICU and the Business School	Codeveloped with the Business School
6 Liberation & Community	6.1	The Liberation & Community Networks are elected altogether in Leadership Elections, and the network elects a lead LCO	
	6.2	The Liberation & Community Networks can substitute representation where necessary (e.g. when the LCO delegate from a particular community is unavailable to attend relevant University/union meetings)	
	6.3	That the Liberation & Community Networks report to the Liberation & Wellbeing Committee of Council	
7 Governance	7.1	ICU reviews the rights of associate members	
	7.2	ICU modernises its Bye Laws in line with democracy review outcomes	
	7.3	ICU Election processes are simplified and cease the operation Summer Elections (for leadership positions only).	Remove the Summer Elections cycle for leadership positions, but this will remain in place for CSP positions. If a major union leadership position remains unelected, then a by-election can be held. Other unfilled positions can be elected in the Autumn elections cycle.