

Draft Laws Working Group

Monday 13th April 2026

Activities Office

16:30 – 18:00

Agenda

Present: Aidan Cronin (AC), Jacob Carey (JC), Ava Byrne (AB), Cecilia Kircher (CK), Cam Brown (CB), Trinity Gortschacher (TG), Anna Di Bona (ADB), Justin Goldberg (JG), Jack McNealy (JMc), Elise Bateman (EB), Holly McDonald (HMc, Clerk).

| Item | Owner |
|---|-------|
| 1. Welcome & Introductions | ALL |
| 2. Review of Actions | ALL |
| 3. Review Draft Laws – Preface and 4-11 | ALL |
| 4. Updates for any other laws a. Discussions points and notes re: alternative model to the democracy structure | ALL |
| 5. Update on timeline | ALL |
| 6. AOCB | ALL |

1. Welcome & Introductions

Meeting begins 16:37.

EB gave a short welcome, and indicated that the following meeting would focus on the Laws only, not the Ordinances or other legislation.

2. Review of Actions

JC confirmed that the Union Executive met and agreed on what had been discussed at DLWG on the Union Executive Law. They wanted more clarity on who oversees who, but were broadly in agreement.

EB has completed the move to make the meeting weekly (or fortnightly thereafter).

3. Review Draft Laws – Preface and 4-11

JC had posted a document prior to the meeting for review.

Preface:

- JMc flagged some thoughts shared by Amy H in relation to PG issues. JC has an updated document which contains the amendments following this feedback (circulated during).
- ADB asked if the Standing Orders (referenced) need to be updated. JC said that updates to the Forum & Executive Standing Orders had been confirmed at Union Executive. JC also has draft Society Standing Orders for circulation.
- JG asked for clarity on the line that the Laws are subordinate to Societies Standing Orders. The group agreed the Laws should work alongside these documents but be above them, and subordinate to the Constitution.
- JMc asked for clarity on if the Code of Conduct is now sitting with staff, Elise confirmed this is the case.
- AC asked for clarity on now referring to SAB as 'Trustee Board' in the Laws.

(4) Union Executive:

- JC said the Union Executive were happy with this Law, and language has subsequently been edited to better reflect the roles/responsibilities for PGT and PGR Presidents.
- JC also raised that there was an Opps Forum motion that only non-Officers could chair that Forum (this had been approved in the Opps Forum). JC clarified that this is only for the Opps Forum, not for other remit Forums.
- AB mentioned 'student engagement intern' at 3.4.2 under 'composition.' This has now been removed.

Discussion around Forums & ASF

- AC asked about Union Affairs Forum Chair. JC suggested that such a Forum would, if required, be specific to an issue area (e.g. accommodation). JMc said that this Forum is also akin to ASF, but a Union Affairs Forum could allow for a space to address specific issues such as sustainability. AC felt that as long as the remit was sufficient, it could work, but a Forum solely for two officers seemed superfluous. JC will circle back to this. CB suggested that in prior consultation, accommodation and environment didn't feel they fit into an existing Forum, so having a regular space to discuss issues as substantial as these would be useful (and having such a Forum meet as necessary, rather than being a 'standing' session). CB also wondered if Alumni Officer would fit within there too. JC and JG said Alumni will stay within Opps Forum. CB said that anyone (including officers) can attend any Forum, and Alumni could also attend if they wished. The group agreed that officers could attend spaces as necessary/desired.
- TG mentioned that the governance side of the PresAffs role might work in a Union Affairs Forum. JG said they had spoken with EB about this and that the elected officer meeting could do this. JMc felt that ASF is a space for governance and for

ordinary students to get involved should they wish to. JC said that governance doesn't solely sit with Exec Officers, and now also with staff for continuity. EB said that staff consult with Exec Team on changes where needed, and PresAffs is consulted as their remit includes democratic processes. JMc felt this makes sense given the turnover of Exec Officers. JC felt that now there are more Chairs (as opposed to solely an Association Chair role), governance is a bit more spread out. TG feels that there should be a space for students to get involved with governance and democracy, such as if there were to be another DemRev. Others noted that the ASF is such a space, and students can raise issues directly at the ASF, without necessarily approaching the other Executives or Forums.

- CB asked if we need to increase ASF frequency to account for this. EB said there will be 5 meetings next year (or at least 3). The group felt greater frequency made sense.
- AC suggested adding that if there was confusion about where an issue should sit, it ought to go to the ASF to resolve. JC said that it could be nailed down by Union Executive as the group finalising the ASF agenda. AC and EB mentioned the need for a mechanism in writing (JC said this was the case).
- TG asked how issues could be escalated to ASF from another Forum. EB said that all Forums should report to ASF.
- TG asked how we can increase the turnout for ASF. AC raised concern that more levels/committees may isolate students from attending ASF. AB said there was a need to make the space relevant for students, and ensure that students feel they have a voice. AC wants the Laws to encourage efficiency. EB said that it's not exciting to attend ASF, which is a challenge regardless of how many Forums. TG felt that remit Forums help mitigate this so they can attend where the topic area feels relevant to them, and that the ASF could be more structured. AC doesn't want the ASF to become unhelpful.
- EB clarified ASF can be *a* point of call for students, but not *the* point of call, and they can be advised to approach a different space. AB felt that if we want to move students to remit Forums, we should ensure that the Laws give details on notice periods. JG said that ASF is a space where students should make their voice heard, rather than a space where primarily officers speak.
- JC said that the Standing Orders give details on notice periods. AB suggested cross-posting this information and ensuring there is consistency as the Law currently flags ASF notice periods, not for other spaces. ADB said that keeping the notice periods the same is advisable. JC agreed, and also said there was a need for better marketing. ADB felt that it's boring to a lot of students, so we can't expect significant turnout, which the group agreed with.
- JC asked about quorum. EB said it is 50%+1 of the people in the room. EB considered the need for a minimum attendance level (at present JC has this as 25 as this was the previous number for subcommittees).

- CB felt that coming to Forums can be a good opportunity for students to speak to Officers and ask questions (as had been the case at SRC previously). CB questioned why students would attend ASF if Officers don't attend. There was a discussion of the need for Officers to provide an update at ASF (as had been the case at SRC for Sabbs).
- JMc also noted there had formerly been a three-strike policy at SRC for non-attendance, which had not always been utilised, and AB felt that there should be consequences whilst balancing how attendance can be linked health, disability, or caring responsibilities etc.
- CB suggested that Executives and Forum meetings could be combined, and have one half for Officers only, and the second half being for wider involvement. CB asked HMc for context on the Wellbeing & Community Forum, and HMc responded that this was how the pre-DemRev Equality Forum had operated and was successful for collaboration with staff and students. JC and JG felt that from an Opps perspective this would be difficult for agenda-setting and for interfacing between Officers, and would prefer separate Executives and Forums. TG said that at Laidlaw this has worked (e.g. an Executive and then the Forum immediately afterwards).
- JC said that Opps Exec was fortnightly, Forum is twice a semester. JC was concerned about having long meetings together. JMc said the W&C Exec didn't have agenda items so moved to monthly and kept Forums as they were once per semester, which worked.
- JG suggested setting a baseline for all Execs in terms of frequency, and they can all make their own decisions.
- AC said combining may help with burnout for some but not for all. JMc said that different Forums and Execs have different needs to meet, e.g. W&C can be more private whereas Opps is more public.
- The group seemed to be of the view that each group had different needs with no one-size fits all, but we can set a general baseline for Forums & Execs, from which they can make their own decisions.

(5) Part-time officers

- JMc doesn't like 'Association Part-time Officer' nomenclature. The group moved to 'Association Representative Officers.'
- CB asked if it should be 'Union' or 'Association' in this instance. CB suggested 'Union' preferable to Association for this and for Union Executive, and that there had been a move to use 'Union' as it is more accessible to students vs Association. The group suggested 'hereafter referred to as Union Representative Officers.'
- JMc suggested removing part-time as PGT and PGR are part-time but paid.

- TG flagged the need to clarify elected officers vs appointed, and if elected only, where the appointed should appear in the Law. AB felt we should consult the appointed officers if needed on this point.
- EB suggested putting the appointed officers below. CB suggested splitting this Law with subheadings for elected and appointed officers. JC said that the appointed are non-voting conveners, not officers.
- TG mentioned the Rector's Committee and Rector's Assessor could feature here. EB said this was not the case as these are University entities.
- There was a short discussion to clarify appointed vs elected roles within this Law where these roles still exist (Volunteering Convener).
- AB felt that there should be something in the Laws about SVS. EB thinks that there should be something generally about appointed conveners, and how they might arrive in their posts. JC will speak with SVS on this.
- **Action: to include a section on appointed officers/conveners (clarifying they are not representative, but the elected officers are).**
- There was a short discussion about whether appointed conveners provide representation or not.
- EB feels that role descriptions (as referenced here) should become Standing Orders. JMc noted that this would help given changes to some roles.
- CB asked if role changes could be run past the new role holders, and also mentioned the 'VP Student Opps' and thought there was need for wider consultation. JC responded that the VPs were added by RoMo given his manifesto. TG asked if there would be a hierarchy between officers if these VPs were implemented. JC said that changes are coming within Opps in due course. EB thinks this needs to be raised in another space for more oversight/consultation given there are wider implications.
- TG asked if the Forum Chairs are being treated as representative officers. JC said that Forum Chairs are elected within their Forums. CB said that the Chairs are not representative officers, with which the group agreed. JC said that the Chair of ASF is elected overall, but the other Forum Chairs are elected within their remit Forum.

Decision-making & motions

- AB asked for clarity about if Union Executives pass motions, JC said that motions are now not being utilised, AB responded that the website needs to be updated to clarify this. ADB thinks the Standing Orders for ASF also reference motions, and EB said that we are no longer using motions but consensus.
- TG flagged clarity around 'petitioning the University' and which spaces have that authority/legitimacy. AB said that we need to be clearer in student-facing documents on decision-making.

- There was a short discussion on clarity on how decision-making occurs, with ADB noting that there is nothing on the consensus model within the draft laws. EB said it isn't about decision-making as such, but consensus and co-creation and taking things forward based on that. JC clarified that if an idea is brought to ASF, depending on feedback, it can be agreed upon, disregarded, or reworked.
- CB asked how the group felt about moving away from a motions structure. ADB said that motions are discussed and voted on (and if so by majority). TG felt that a position-taking/decision-making power like the former SRC didn't transfer post-DemRev. EB disagreed and felt that this group came out of the ASF not agreeing with the Draft Laws as they then were. ADB felt that it is useful to have a firmer stance on 'this is what students said' like with a motion, but wanted clarity on when an agenda item is 'agreed upon.' CB felt that there can be merit in having something that says what the students' stance is, like motions previously. JC suggested some sort of post-meeting document that would clarify what the position on the issue is (ADB thought this course of action may work).
- EB fed back that 'consensus' may not feel a strong enough wording.
- JC felt that Forums are intended to be more informal. TG felt that Forums don't set positions which the University respects. EB feels that we can work to find wording/an approach which the University responds better to. JMc said they do a version of this in their role. ADB mentioned that there can be scope for the University to respond that they don't know what the students' perspective is.
- EB asked what happened previously when motions were passed at SRC, and if the University agreed and actioned in line with this. CB responded that the University took more interest in an SRC motion when the motion outlined that the Union/Union staff were to do something or when it said that they would lobby the University to do something.
- JC said that if the University won't take an ASF outcome seriously, that is an issue on their end.
- ADB wondered if the Union should be able to present something as the student opinion when there is mixed consensus.
- CB responded that motions were at times brought by student petition previously, and could still be brought to SRC when such motions could have been blocked by SMT.
- EB responded that the Union should be able to lobby the University to do something based on outcomes/voting at ASF.
- **Action: EB asked the group to think about the mechanism for having a decision within the democratic spaces.**

4. Update on timeline

- 28th April next ASF to discuss Main Bar and the Draft Laws (and the preference to get the Laws in front of students at this meeting, but also at June meeting if needed).

Meeting adjourned 18:00.

Items not discussed due to lack of time:

5. Updates for any other laws
 - a. [Discussions points and notes re: alternative model to the democracy structure](#)
6. AOCB

Following the meeting of 21/04/2026, it was further requested in writing in the DLWG Teams channel by TG that a further addition be added: “that the omission [of the Rector’s Committee or Rector’s Assessor from the Draft Laws] wasn’t unanimously supported by the students in the working group.”

Actions

| Action | Owner |
|---|--------------|
| Include a section on appointed officers/conveners in (5) | JC |
| Think about the mechanism for having a decision within the democratic spaces. | ALL |