

## ICE forum informal discussion

**03.12.2019**

**14.00, Senate House Room G34**

Notes submitted on behalf of IWGB ICE Reps, constituting 15 of the 16 filled Representative positions in the 2019–2021 ICE Forum.

### Background

At the ICE forum meeting of August 2019 ICE reps heard a proposal from the University that the first meeting of the forum reps in the new term of office (due to commence November 2019, for a period of two years) should be used to discuss the conduct and format of future meetings, on an informal basis, facilitated by Deputy Director of HR Laura Marks. IWGB ICE Reps were happy to agree to this proposal.

This was followed up in November 2019 in an email from Kayleigh Errington, inviting newly-appointed reps to the forum

It must first be noted that nothing emerging from these discussions or this document will constitute a formal agreement to replace the statutory ICE regulations. Although we are happy to discuss how to ensure smooth and *effectual* running of the forum, we will not sign off on anything that supersedes the default arrangements at this meeting.

ICE representatives are the only set of staff representatives with a remit to represent all staff of all grades, and who are elected (or appointed, if unopposed) to do so. Therefore ICE Reps have the most democratic claim to representing staff opinion, and must (as IWGB Reps do) take this responsibility seriously. We would like the University to take this seriously likewise. Staff Reps all have busy jobs contributing to the success of the University, as do staff who contribute points to be raised. It would be beneficial to the University and its staff to make good use of this time by engaging with the forum in a manner acceptable to all as an index of the seriousness of the University's commitment to the process.

Staff surveys and anecdotal feedback gathered by Reps across all departments indicates that the University consistently has a serious issue with poor communication. The ICE forum can be used as one way to address this, by running it in a fashion which demonstrates a genuine willingness to listen to, and where possible to act on, staff concerns as raised by their representatives.

### IWGB ICE Reps' proposals for future meetings

1. To make the forum work best, **its remit should be as broad as possible** as regards issues of concern/interest to staff.
2. However, Reps are content to remit administrative-type concerns, such as broken facilities in certain areas, to another body such as the departmental working culture groups (where applicable). ICE Reps must be **properly consulted** on issues of concern, whether raised by staff via the reps or brought to the forum by the University. The ICE forum must not devolve into a tick-box exercise. Consultation should involve open discussion, debate and a genuine attempt to engage with staff views (as expressed by their chosen Reps).
3. A minimum of three ICE delegates should be mandated to attend the JNCC.
4. There should be automatic escalation of all agenda items under discussion in the Forum to the University's management committee, to which minutes should be circulated at the earliest opportunity.
5. Chairing of Forum should be done by a person who will adopt a neutral position between University management and Staff Reps.
6. The Forum should have the authority to require certain managers to attend and answer questions on specific issues within that person's remit. e.g. An appropriate HR

representative for a given department, the senior manager of a department affected by restructuring, etc.

7. A quorate meeting should consist of a minimum of 7 staff Reps.
8. Meetings should be held quarterly as standard.
9. ICE reps should be able to request an extraordinary ICE meeting by simple majority vote among the reps.
  - a. This practice will be reserved for issues such as: major changes to staffing arrangements, legislative changes affecting the University, serious health and safety issues, etc.
  - b. Extraordinary meetings will be used responsibly and not requested for minor issues.
10. It has already been agreed at previous meetings that ICE forum meetings should be scheduled for two hours.
  - a. We would like this to continue as a minimum length, with the option to take a recess and reconvene swiftly should major issues arise for which there is insufficient time in the scheduled meeting. This can be agreed by majority vote of the Reps in the meeting concerned.
  - b. The reconvened meeting will deal with those identified issues only, and be limited to one hour.
11. ICE Reps should be able to propose formal agenda items (not only as AOB) by having such a request supported by two other reps: i.e., three reps in total.
12. Agenda items should *ideally* be submitted and shared by both sides two weeks prior to the meeting.
  - a. However, should issues arise after this deadline they should be included as AOB, time permitting, including if arising at the meeting.
  - b. The intended agenda **must** be circulated to reps and published on the ICE Forum intranet page no later than one week (5 business days) prior to the meeting.
13. Draft notes of the meeting must be sent out to Reps and attending managers within ten business days of the meeting.
  - a. Disagreements on minutes must be formally recorded during review of the minutes at the following meeting.
  - b. Finalised minutes should be published on the intranet page within 5 business days of being agreed.
  - c. For clarity in the notes, Forum Reps should be referred to as Reps/ICE Reps/Staff Reps etc. (i.e., including the word 'Reps' or 'Representatives'). Different nomenclature should be found in order to refer to points put forward by representatives of University management who may attend.
14. The Forum should be given equal promotion and prominence to that awarded to other consultation mechanisms (e.g. Trade Unions, the Staff Association, All-Staff meetings) in University communications. For example (but not limited to):
  - a. a link to its intranet page should be created under 'important information' in the 'Need to know' intranet area; in 'quick links'; and as a button next to the 'Trade Union' button on the intranet home page (see screenshot below for ease of ref.)
  - b. a news item advertising the upcoming Forum and including Reps' contact details should be published at least ten business days before the meeting date;
  - c. meeting dates should appear in 'Events'
  - d. Any other applicable features that should occur in future.
15. As small but important point: please supply water at the meetings! Most meetings are two hours long and there is a lot to discuss. Water is not expensive and is presumably provided for guests such as the Board of Trustees. It sends a message of disrespect to staff not to service a Staff meeting to the same level as is shown to senior management.

