

# **Student Representation on the Councils of the Schools**

## **Introduction**

A notable change within the University, noticeable even from the narrow time-frame of an undergraduate career, is the status of the Councils of the Schools. Their *rôle* seems to be moving away from advising the General Board on resource allocation priorities and towards taking an active part in strategic academic planning. A joint report of the Council and General Board on *'The Councils of the Schools and Related Matters'*<sup>1</sup> is currently progressing through the University. If approved, this would significantly expand the work of the Schools, by giving them the responsibility to:

work with the institutions which comprise the School to ensure institutional and School academic plans are consistent, realistic, and affordable;<sup>2</sup>

## **Current Situation**

Currently, there is no student representation on any of the Councils of the Schools. This contrasts with the "rung below" where all Faculty and independent Departmental Boards have student members, and the "rung above", the General Board, which has two student members.

In the past, this lack of representation could be explained by the nature of the business that was discussed. As the majority of it seems to have been concerned with personnel, which would automatically be "Reserved" under Statute K,20, having members *in statu pupillari* would have been a rather futile exercise as they would not have been able to be present at the meetings. However, if the Councils of the Schools are to take a more active part in setting the academic vision for the School, then having a student contribution will certainly be worthwhile, as it is on most other bodies within the University, and a continuing lack of representation the Councils might start to appear anomalous.

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<sup>1</sup>see Reporter, 2006-7, p. 230

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*

### **Recommendation**

It is therefore suggested that each Council could co-opt one or two members *in statu pupillari* by a method of its choosing, (two would allow one graduate and one undergraduate, as occurs elsewhere). There are various methods by which the students members could be chosen but it seems that the simplest method would be to run a ballot at the same time as the elections for the student members of the faculty boards. This would require a small number of changes to Chapter VIII of the Ordinances (which details the composition of the Councils). However, it is likely that these will be amended in any case, as a result of the current *Report* and it therefore seems that now, when the composition and *rôle* of the Councils is being widely discussed within the University, would a good time to implement the changes.

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