**Proposal for Constitutional Amendment: Section 43.4 – Chair and Deputy Chair Eligibility**

**Submitted by:** Janmejay Singh on behalf of the Trustee Board
**Date:** 14/05/2025

**Background**

Currently, Section 43.4 of the Royal College of Art Students' Union (RCASU) Constitution restricts the roles of Chair and Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board limiting the occupancy of each role based on the current occupant of the other. Historically, filling the role of Deputy Chair under this limitation has presented significant challenges, resulting in the role frequently remaining vacant or difficult to fill effectively. This creates a risk for the organisation in case the chair is unavailable or leaves the organisation. When the constitution was being created the board requested that the only limitation of this kind be that at least one of the two roles was occupied by an external trustee. This was to ensure a degree of continuity that might otherwise be lost. Unfortunately the boards desire was mistakenly missed from the final draft of the constitution.

**Proposal**

This proposal recommends amending Section 43.4 of the RCASU Constitution to remove the restriction that the Chair and Deputy Chair must specifically be one of each of an External Trustee or a Sabbatical Trustee. The amendment will provide the Trustee Board greater flexibility in appointing suitable trustees to the role, and lead to the role of deputy chair being filled more consistently.

**Current wording (Section 43.4)**

“43.4 If the Chair is a Sabbatical Officer then the Deputy must be an External Trustee. If the Chair is an External Trustee then the Deputy must be a Sabbatical Officer.”

Proposed working (Section 43.4)

“43.4 At any time at least one of the Chair or Vice chair should be an external trustee”

**Rationale**

* **Flexibility in Appointment:** Reducing the limitations on who can hold which role will ensure a greater degree of flexibility to the board.
* **Maintaining continuity:** The requirement for at least one role to be held by an external trustee will ensure continuity between directors and during changes to the board.
* **Improved Board Functionality:** A consistently filled Deputy Chair role supports better governance, continuity of leadership, and more effective Trustee Board operations.
* **Enhanced Trustee Engagement:** Offering leadership opportunities to all Trustees, Trustees, fosters greater trustee engagement and ownership, reinforcing the democratic and representative ethos of the Students' Union.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Student Members Meeting approves this proposed amendment to Section 43.4 of the RCASU Constitution.