

Schedule Two Elections & Referenda Schedule

1. General

- 1.1. This Schedule applies to the election procedures for all the positions identified in the Officer Profile Schedule (Schedule Three) of the Constitution of the Union.
- 1.2. The Union's NUS Delegate Entitlement, as defined by the National Union of Students (NUS), less one place which shall be reserved for the President as ex-officio delegate leader, shall be elected in line with the regulations provided for in this schedule, and shall be further subject to the restriction of NUS Delegate Entitlement Quotas.

2. Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer

- 2.1. The Returning Officer, who shall be appointed by NUS Scotland from amongst their own staff, shall:
 - i) have ultimate responsibility for the organisation and fair conduct of all Union elections and referenda.
 - ii) take the final decision in relation to any matter concerning Union elections and referenda and concerning any breaches of the Election and Referenda Schedule (Schedule Two) attached to the Constitution.
 - iii) be responsible for the supervision and conduct of the count;
 - iv) oversee the announcement of the result;
 - v) receive a report from the elections committee of the Union in respect of any action taken following any complaint in accordance with section 4 below.
- 2.2. The Deputy Returning Officer shall be a member of Union staff appointed by the Chief Executive and shall have the following functions:
 - i) to co-ordinate the day-to-day work of running and promoting the Union's elections, and ensuring they are fair and in accordance with the Elections & Referenda Schedule of the constitution (Schedule 2).
 - ii) to chair and advise the Elections Committee, ensuring it is undertaking its responsibilities in accordance with section 3 below but otherwise to act as a non-voting member of that committee.
 - iii) on behalf of the Elections Committee, to be the single point of contact for the returning officer
 - iv) Deciding the timetable of elections and referenda within the parameters of the constitution and this schedule;
 - v) The acceptance of nominations and the determination and publication of valid nominations on the union's website;

- vi) Ensuring that submitted manifestos are in accordance with the Union's Equal Opportunities Policy;

3. Elections Committee

- 3.1. There shall be a standing procedural committee of the Union which shall be called the "Elections Committee" which shall be delegated powers by the Returning Officer, General Meeting and Trustees Board to be responsible for:
 - i) ensuring that all candidates adhere to the rules as set out in this schedule;
 - ii) consideration of complaints through the procedure laid out in section 4 below;
 - iii) taking action to address, and if required, issue reprimands for breaches of this schedule;
- 3.2. The Committee shall consist of three students elected by the General Meeting prior to any elections or referenda taking place, plus the Deputy Returning Officer in a non-voting capacity who shall act as Chair of the Elections Committee.
- 3.3. All members of the elections committee must remain totally neutral in all elections or referenda. If any member wishes to run for a position or express any public preference for a candidate or outcome they must immediately resign.
- 3.4. The Deputy Returning Officer shall as required undertake day-to-day work coordinating the elections and advising students on behalf of the Elections Committee between meetings on any matters which are explicitly covered in the Elections and Referenda schedule. All formal decisions such as the issuing of a formal warning, must be referred to the Committee for a decision.
- 3.5. For any decision of the Elections Committee to be made a quorum of half plus one of the members of the Committee must be present.
- 3.6. If the membership of the Elections Committee drops below three, including the Deputy Returning Officer, sufficient ordinary members of the Union shall be appointed by the Executive Council to fill the vacancies to achieve a membership of three in a temporary capacity pending the vacancy being filled by the General Meeting.
- 3.7. The Elections Committee shall give an oral report to the General Meeting after each set of elections has been completed.

4. Complaints and Appeals

- 4.1. Any complaints regarding the conduct of those involved in any election or the fairness of the election or the application of this Schedule during the election period up to the 31st May, shall be submitted to the Elections Committee for its consideration.

- 4.2. All complaints must be made in writing using the elections complaint form to the Elections Committee and submitted to the Deputy Returning Officer. The Deputy Returning Officer shall circulate the complaint to the Committee and provide a receipt by email to confirm the complaint has been received.
- 4.3. The Elections Committee shall investigate any complaint and should it determine that a breach has occurred it shall decide what action, if any, to take up to and including the issuing of a formal warning. The Deputy Returning Officer shall make a report to the Returning Officer on complaints dealt with during the election period.
- 4.4. Should more than one formal warning be issued to a candidate, or if the seriousness of a single complaint is judged to warrant it, the Elections Committee can vote to disqualify a candidate from the election. If such a vote is taken and passed it must be submitted in the form of a report to the Returning Officer as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter for ratification. If necessary, candidates can be disqualified after the close of voting or after the result has been announced, until they take office.
- 4.5. Complaints made by a candidate or any other matter of concern raised by any Ordinary Member shall be considered by the Elections Committee.
- 4.6. The onus of proving a complaint is justified rests with the complainant.
- 4.7. The Returning Officer shall have the power to suspend, cancel, restart or annul an election
- 4.8. Subject to the powers of the returning officer and in the event of the Elections Committee deciding that action should be taken or a sanction imposed, there shall be no right of appeal against that action or sanction.

5. Notice and Period of Elections

- 5.1. The timetable of elections for posts as defined in Section 1 of this Schedule will be as follows:
 - i) There will be a main election where all positions, (with the exception of the NUS delegates, INTO UoS Officer and the 4 Equalities Officer positions), will be open for students to run in and will be held in the second semester of the academic year and these elections will be conducted over two consecutive days.
 - ii) There will be a separate election held every year, at which the Union's NUS delegation entitlement and the INTO UoS Officer will be elected as well as any positions which remain, or have become vacant since the previous year's main election. This election will take place within the first half of the first semester of the academic year.
 - iii) There will be a separate election held every year, at which the Unions' 4 Equality Officers will be elected; this will be done at a quorate Equalities

Zone Meeting. This election will take place during the second semester of the academic year

- iv) If the President cannot fulfil their role as the NUS Delegate Leader it will fall to one of the other Sabbatical Officers to fulfil this role as agreed by the Executive Council.
- v) By-elections may be called at the discretion of the Elections Committee and must be held during University semester time.
- vi) There shall be a meeting for all candidates one week prior to the first day of the elections taking place. Thereafter, there will be regular meetings during the election between all the candidates for Sabbatical Officers posts and, if necessary, all candidates in contested elections. These meetings will take place to enable any issue, problem or complaint to be discussed informally and to help the Elections Committee maintain good communication between all parties. Such meetings must take place at the start of every day during which the election is underway. The Deputy Returning Officer will arrange, chair and facilitate this.
- vii) An election must be announced to the student body two weeks before nominations open.
- viii) Within three days of nominations closing all candidates for all positions will be required to attend a meeting with all other candidates in the election, where the Deputy Returning Officer shall communicate all important information to them on the process and answer any questions. If a candidate cannot attend this meeting they can send a representative.
- ix) Printed publicity for all positions will be made available to the candidates at the same time from the Union, so that no candidate gains an advantage.

5.2. Full details of dates and times will be produced and publicised prominently two weeks prior to the first date on the Elections Timetable by the Deputy Returning Officer.

5.3. The procedure for nomination shall be as follows:

- i) All nominations must be made via the Union website, which shall be electronically signed and dated by the nominee.
- ii) Nomination of a candidate for election to the Sabbatical Officers posts may be made by any Ordinary Member of the Union, provided that the nomination is proposed and seconded by any other fifty ordinary members.
- iii) Nomination of a candidate for election to non-sabbatical posts may be made by any Ordinary Member of the Union, provided that the nomination is proposed and seconded by any other fifteen ordinary members.
- iv) Nomination of a candidate for election to the post of Extended Campuses Officer are the same as nominations of candidates for election to non-

sabbatical posts with the exceptions that they may only be made by Ordinary Members from the Highlands and Islands campuses and that the number of nominations required will be 15.

- v) Nomination of a candidate for election to the post of Postgraduate Officer are the same as nominations of candidates for election to non-sabbatical posts with the exceptions that they may only be made by Ordinary Members who are registered postgraduate students and that the number of nominations required will be 15.
- vi) An ordinary member wishing to stand for any position at a Students' Union election is prohibited from publicly declaring their wish to stand until the election is officially announced by the union. They are also prohibited from discussing or soliciting possible seconders until the election is officially announced. They are also prohibited from forming an election committee until the election is announced. Any ordinary member is prohibited from offering themselves as a seconder to a candidate until the election is announced.

5.4. No persons or candidates shall indulge in campaigning for a particular candidate, or themselves, until the candidate's nomination has been registered with the Elections Committee, nominations have closed and the nomination has been approved by the Deputy Returning Office via the Union website. This includes all social media sites and the responsibility of ensuring that this is adhered to is that of the candidate. Monitoring shall be carried out by the Elections Committee.

- i) Campaigning is defined as all actions performed with the intention of the promotion of a confirmed candidate for a position at a Students' Union election. This includes both in-person and online promotion in the form of verbal addresses to supporters, distribution of flyers and supportive and promotional posts online.

5.5. Each post may only be filled by one member of the Union. No member may run for Election for more than one post as listed in section 1 in any one election, with the exception of those wishing to run for NUS delegations.

6. Referenda

- 6.1. If policy is referred to referenda by either a General Meeting or the Executive Council it must be followed by a cross-campus vote within fifteen University days.
- 6.2. Publicity for the referendum shall be displayed on the Union website the University day following the General Meeting's decision.
- 6.3. All Ordinary Members of the Union shall be entitled to vote at referenda.
- 6.4. In order to validate the result, referenda shall require a minimum of 1/40 of the Full Time Equivalent population of ordinary members to vote, except in issues of

affiliation which will follow the regulations of the body in question.

- 6.5. All business taken to referenda shall be judged to have passed if a simple majority votes in favour, except on issues of affiliation which will follow the regulations of the body in question.
- 6.6. Amendments to the constitution, questions of affiliation and the overturning or alteration of policy previously passed by a referendum must be put to referendum.
- 6.7. The categories for voting will consist of 'Yes', 'No' and 'Abstain' so a referendum question must reflect this.
- 6.8. All referenda will be conducted in accordance with this schedule.

7. Publicity

- 7.1. All printed publicity material shall be supplied by the Union and, accordingly, the only expenditure to be incurred for elections shall be through the Union.
- 7.2. All candidates must submit a manifesto and printed poster design by the date of close of nominations. The poster will consist of the candidate's name, position, pledges, the Union logo, the date of the election and the ways in which members may vote. The manifesto will have a 500 word limit and will outline the candidate's pledges for their year in office. This manifesto will be used by the Union both online and in the Atrium polling booths.
- 7.3. Candidates for the sabbatical positions shall be allowed a budget to the value of £15 for printed publicity.
- 7.4. Candidates for the sabbatical positions may be afforded an additional budget of £10 to spend on non-printed publicity. This may include balloons, decorations, bunting, coloured un-marked paper and t-shirt printing. Candidates can only use materials that all other candidates would have access to.
- 7.5. Candidates may not offer gifts to voters.
- 7.6. Receipts for all non-printed publicity materials must be submitted in line with Union guidelines on making claims.
- 7.7. Candidates for all non-sabbatical posts shall be allowed a budget to the value of £10.00 for printed publicity.
- 7.8. All candidates will be provided with a space through the Union's own website to promote their candidacy. The content will include the candidate's publicity poster, 500 word manifesto, image, and slogan.
- 7.9. Candidates are free to use the internet in any other appropriate way they wish, with the strict stipulation that no cost can be incurred by a candidate or anyone associated with a candidate. They may only promote their candidacy after their nominations have been confirmed by the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 7.10. Candidates are free to use social media to promote their campaign,

although this must be fair and equal, with all candidates having the same opportunity and access to promote their campaign across any social media platform. Online content must also abide by the Union's Equal Opportunities policy.

- 7.11. All candidates in elections shall be allowed no other publicity other than that described in the relevant section above. The Elections Committee will be the sole interpreter of whether something is deemed as 'additional publicity' or not.
- 7.12. Candidates may use their own money to purchase drawing pins, selotape, blue tack, sticky back plastic, masking tape, brown tape, unmarked cardboard, string, glue or staples. Alternatively candidates may have equal access to a limited stock of the above held by the Union Office. Should the Elections Committee rule at any time that such resources are being misused then they can be withdrawn.
- 7.13. No candidates may distribute or make use of any printed or non-printed publicity from third parties inside or outside the University.
- 7.14. No candidates shall be afforded additional publicity or promotion by any Union group, including all Union Clubs, Societies, or Sports teams. Where elections are covered in Union media, equal, fair and impartial exposure shall be given to all candidates standing in an election.
- 7.15. Printed publicity material cannot be put up within the Library, the Union, next to PCs or computer work stations, on glass doors or windows, over signs or other posters or anywhere that breaches Health and Safety guidance. Anyone caught with their publicity in any of the aforementioned areas - may be disqualified
- 7.16. All election materials produced by or on behalf of candidates in the election must not offend the Union's Equal Opportunities policy or be offensive in any other fashion as may be determined by the Elections Committee and shall not seek to denigrate by name or title, any other Member of the Union.
- 7.17. Candidates are responsible for their own publicity material which must not deface the University. Only official notice boards may be used. No publicity shall be displayed in the Union premises, on glass doors, in a way as to obscure security camera or within the vicinity of the polling desk.
- 7.18. No candidates or their campaign team shall deface, alter, move, remove or interfere in anyway with another candidate's publicity.
- 7.19. Once nominations have closed, if any candidate is uncontested, with the exception of Re-open Nominations, then the Elections Committee may halve their print and extra publicity allowance. The changes to a candidate's expenditure in this eventuality should be negotiated with the candidate by the

Elections Committee. If a candidate has a good reason to appeal against this halving of their allowance then the Elections Committee can revoke this in exceptional circumstances

8. Campaigning

- 8.1. The Elections Committee shall work to increase turnout at all elections and referenda to the best of their ability but must only do so in a neutral and impartial manner.
- 8.2. If any campaigning by a candidate, associate of a candidate or any individual taking part in the election is deemed to be inappropriate the Elections Committee can take whatever action is necessary to stop this, including excluding them from the Atrium or if appropriate referring them to the Union Discipline Committee.
- 8.3. No club, society or sports club, in its entirety, can endorse any candidate, and candidates are not permitted to wear club branded clothing when campaigning.
- 8.4. In the specific case of online campaigning, members and observers to the election can comment and discuss the election online but should any inappropriate content be posted the Elections Committee is entitled to require Any content posted by a candidate, or a member of their campaign team, to be removed.
- 8.5. The Elections Committee have the power to make ad-hoc rulings on matters not covered in this Schedule, if they feel that unforeseen circumstances, technology or tactics are having an unfair and detrimental impact on the fair and proper running of the election process.

9. Hustings

- 9.1. The Elections Committee will be responsible for organising the Union Hustings for candidates for the posts of Sabbatical Officers and contested part-time Officer Positions in the week prior to the first day of the elections taking place.
- 9.2. The exact time and place for hustings will be decided by the Elections Committee and all candidates will be notified of the details at their respective candidates meetings.
- 9.3. Each of the candidates for the posts set out above are required to make a speech at hustings of a maximum length of two minutes.
- 9.4. Any questions from the audience must be submitted to the elections committee in writing specifying the candidate to whom they are addressed
- 9.5. The timings, order, organisation and execution of the above process will be decided by the Elections Committee and all candidates will be informed of the details at their respective candidates meetings.

10. Voting

- 10.1. Responsibility for ensuring that the voting is conducted in accordance with this schedule shall rest with the Deputy Returning Officer who shall report to the Returning Officer.
- 10.2. Voting shall be undertaken online, through an election system decided upon by the Elections Committee. Online voting shall be available from 9.00am on the first day of the election and shall close at 6.15pm on the second day of the election. In the event of a sufficiently serious technical fault in any of the voting systems, the Elections Committee in consultation with the Returning Officer may extend the period of the election to compensate for any lost time.
- 10.3. Online voting booths manned by the Elections Committee shall also be made available for all students to vote in the Atrium. Voting shall take place in the Atrium between the hours of 9.00am and 6.15pm on the second day of the election. The location and arrangements of voting stations along with the list of candidates shall be publicised under the guidance of the Deputy Returning Officer
- 10.4. Only ordinary members of the Union may vote. An Elections Committee member shall operate the polling desk at all times
- 10.5. The Elections Committee shall be available to help any student who needs assistance in how to vote and only the Elections Committee or Union Staff can provide this assistance.
- 10.6. All voting forms shall bear the name of each candidate and the office being contested
- 10.7. All voting forms shall bear a brief description of the voting procedure.
- 10.8. There shall be an option on the voting forms entitled "Re-open Nominations". This, for the purposes of the count, shall be treated as a candidate, though it will not be allowed the publicity allowed to other candidates in the election. If "Re-open Nominations" wins the election, then the election shall be re-run, at a date to be determined by the Elections Committee.
- 10.9. To ensure Sabbatical Officers who have graduated can vote, the Elections Committee will work with the Returning Officer and the administrators of the online voting system to ensure a confidential and secure method of voting is adopted.

11. The Count

- 11.1. The Alternative Transferable Vote system shall be employed as appropriate to determine the result of the election except for NUS Delegates which will be elected by Single Transferable Vote.
- 11.2. The Count shall be made in the presence of the Returning Officer on a date and time decided by the Deputy Returning Officer in consultation with the Elections Committee. The count will follow the guidance provided by the

Electoral Reform Society.

12. Tenure of Office

- 12.1. Tenure of office for those elected in the main elections shall be from June 1st that year until 31st May the following year. For those elected through by-election, the tenure will run from the date of their election until 31st May in that same academic year.
- 12.2. No one can hold elected office for more than any two terms for any one officer position.

13. Vacancies

- 13.1. Any vacancies occurring shall be filled by way of a by-election, in accordance with the Elections and Referenda Schedule if the timing within the academic year is deemed appropriate by the Elections Committee. The calling of said by-election rests with the Elections Committee.