

Bye-Law 4

Elections

1. **Returning Officer**
 - 1.1 The Returning Officer shall be a member of staff from the National Union of Students.
 - 1.2 The Returning Officer shall:
 - 1.2.1 be responsible for the proper conduct of the elections;
 - 1.2.2 be responsible for interpreting the election regulations;
 - 1.2.3 be responsible for producing and publicising an elections timetable;;
 - 1.2.4 make arrangements to publicise the location of voting stations together with a list of candidates;
 - 1.2.5 ensure that provision is made for all members of the Union to vote;
 - 1.2.6 rule on any contravention of the election regulations
 - 1.2.7 recommend the disqualification of candidates from an election for contravention of the Articles of Association or the Education Act 1994; and
 - 1.2.8 undertake any duties necessary to ensure the fair and proper conduct of the election process.
2. **Deputy Returning Officer**
 - 2.1 There shall be a Deputy Returning Officer who shall be the Chief Executive or nominee.
 - 2.2 The Deputy Returning Officer shall be responsible for the following:
 - 2.2.1 assisting the Returning Officer in the execution of their duties; and
 - 2.2.2 acting in the absence of the Returning Officer.
3. **Timing of elections**
 - 3.1 The election of officers shall take place in the second trimester prior to the Easter holiday.
 - 3.2 The election of the Faculty Reps shall take place in the first trimester.
 - 3.3 There will be an annual election of NUS National Conference Delegates held in accordance with the rules and regulations set out by NUS.
 - 3.4 The dates of all elections, related timetables and a copy of the Election regulations shall be posted on the Union website & notice boards at least 18 University working days prior to the first day of balloting.
4. **Eligibility & Nominations**
 - 4.1 Any student member of the Union, as defined in Article 9 of the Articles of Association is eligible to stand for election.
 - 4.2 For elections to Faculty Rep positions, which are specified by

- campus and faculty, all members normally studying at the specified campus and within the specified faculty are eligible to stand.
- 4.3 For election to campus-based officer positions, all members normally studying at that campus are eligible to stand.
- 4.4 Candidates wishing to stand are required to complete a nomination form.
- 4.5 Candidates may not stand for more than one elected position, with the exception of standing additionally for National Conference Delegate.
5. **Manifestos**
- 5.1 Candidates for all Executive Committee positions must produce a manifesto.
- 5.2 The manifesto shall be a minimum of 10 words submitted online and a photograph must be provided.
- 5.3 The Students' Union has the right to reproduce the manifesto but may not alter the content or layout in any way. The Students' Union reserves the right not to publish a manifesto that contains defamatory material or material that contravenes the Union's Equal Opportunities Policy or contravenes the law. The Returning Officer (or nominee) will decide if manifesto material is defamatory or contravenes the Union's Equal Opportunities Policy and their decision is final.
- 5.4 Manifestos will be provided unabridged, with any spelling or grammatical mistakes left uncorrected by the Students' Union.
- 5.5 Once submitted, all manifestos shall be checked to ensure compliance with the Students' Union Policies or Articles and these bye-laws. If the DRO nominee has any issues with the content of the manifesto, the candidate shall be given the opportunity to resubmit the manifesto.
- 5.6 The Returning Officer, or their Deputy, shall be responsible for the oversight and fair running of any formal hustings/candidate question times.
- 5.7 Candidates will receive copies of the elections regulations to which they must adhere before balloting starts.
6. **Balloting**
- 6.1 Balloting shall be held over a period of five University working days, concluding on the fifth day and will be conducted through an online ballot
- 6.2 All members of the Union may vote for any officer position.
- 6.3 Voting for Faculty Rep posts will be restricted to members normally studying at the campus and within the faculty relevant to the post.
- 6.4 Ballots shall bear the name of each candidate and the position being contested and a re-open nominations option.
- 6.5 The elections shall be held in accordance with the single

transferable vote system or alternative transferable vote system as applicable, as specified in the Electoral Reform Society publication "How to Conduct an Election by Single Transferable Vote" and shall be the adopted voting system.

- 6.6 The returning officer will be responsible for the oversight and running of any formal or informal hustings

- 7. **Expenses**

- 7.1 Candidates' campaign budgets and rates for photocopying will be publicised in advance of the elections. Provision will be made for the appropriate use of Union facilities. Expenditure for any elections materials will be reimbursed on production of receipts, provided that the expenses limit is not breached.

- 7.2 If anyone is found to be providing false information on expenditure this is a breach of election regulations and the candidate, at the discretion of the Returning Officer, could be disqualified from the election.

- 8. **Media**

- 8.1 The Union may produce a manifesto document on behalf of all candidates, at no cost to the candidates.
- 8.2 Candidates may use any election material they wish, as long as it conforms to the election regulations.
- 8.3 Material produced on behalf of the candidate must not be of a defamatory nature and may not mention any other candidates in any other Students' Union election unless they are part of an official slate. It must conform to the Students' Union Equal Opportunities policy and to the law.

- 9. **Bye-Elections**

- 9.1 A Bye-Election may be called by the Returning Officer following if at any time there is a vacancy for an elected position.
- 9.2 Bye-Elections shall be overseen by the Returning Officer, or their delegate, in the same way as a normal election.

- 10. **The Count**

- 10.1 The count shall be conducted by the Returning Officer, or nominee.
- 10.2 Each candidate shall have the right to send a representative to attend the count.
- 10.3 The count shall take place in a closed area.
- 10.4 The count shall begin as soon as is practical after the close of balloting.
- 10.5 The Returning Officer, or nominee, will witness the online votes being counted.

- 11. **Declaration of Results**

- 11.1 The declaration of the results of a Union election shall be made at the completion of the count and posted on the Union website.

- 12. **Disputes**

- 12.1 Any complaints must be received by the Returning Officer, or their

- nominee, before the count starts.
- 12.2 Any complaint received must be in writing and clearly state which regulation has been broken, by whom and supply any evidence that they have in their possession. The complainant must provide their full name and contact details.
- 12.3 Any complaint regarding the count must be received within five University working days of the count being published.
- 12.4 In the event of the Deputy Returning Officer receiving a complaint, they shall investigate the complaint and any evidence accompanying it.
- 12.5 The Deputy Returning Officer will make a decision based on the investigation and evidence provided to them.
- 12.6 If the respondent is dissatisfied with the decision they may appeal to the Returning Officer in writing no later than 48 hours after the decision was made, including any additional evidence and the outcome sought. The Returning Officer will investigate the appeal and make a decision which shall be final, within 2 days of the appeal being lodged under normal circumstances.
- 12.7 At the end of the elections period the Returning Officer will compile a report of the conduct of the elections.
13. **Conduct**
- 13.1 All members of the Union shall act in the interests of a fair election.
- 13.2 All candidates and their campaigners shall act in accordance with the Election Regulations including any additional rules imposed by the Returning Officer.
- 13.3 Candidates are responsible for their campaign and the conduct of their campaigners.
- 13.4 Any candidates found to be in breach of any of the Regulations shall, at the discretion of the Returning Officer, be disqualified from the election.
- 13.5 All candidates and their supporters shall abide by the Equal Opportunities policy at all times during the election.
- 13.6 All Union staff and Union members are bound by the Staff/Student Protocol in relation to elections.