

Election Regulations

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1 GENERAL

- 1.1 The elections of the President and Vice-Presidents (together being the “Sabbatical Officers”) and all other elected officers of the Association (“Elections”) shall be carried out in accordance with these regulations (the “Regulations”).
- 1.2 The Association’s Administration Manager (“the Assistant Returning Officer”) shall implement the Election process.
- 1.3 The Elections shall be by secret ballot of all Ordinary Members of the Association.
- 1.4 In addition to the Regulations, the Association shall be obligated to comply with;
 - 1.4.1 The University of Edinburgh rules, regulations and policies (including but not limited to IT, Health and Safety, Dignity and Respect, the Code of Student Conduct etc).
 - 1.4.2 Association rules, regulations and policies.
 - 1.4.3 The laws of Scotland.

2 THE RETURNING OFFICER

- 2.1 A returning officer for the Elections (“Returning Officer”) shall be appointed by the Elections Sub Committee of the Board of Trustees and shall not be a member of the Association, a member of staff of the Association or a staff member of the University.
- 2.2 The Returning Officer may appoint nominees to act on their behalf in the day-to-day supervision of the Elections.
- 2.3 The Association’s Administration Manager shall, in acting on behalf of the Returning Officer, carry out the following functions:
 - 2.3.1 Oversee the procedure for the acceptance of nominations and the publication of valid nominations.
 - 2.3.2 Propose the date of the Elections which will be ratified by the Elections Sub-Committee, the publication of the notices giving information about the date and arrangements for the Elections.
 - 2.3.3 Oversee the Count.
 - 2.3.4 Oversee the announcement of the Results Event.

3 NOMINATIONS

- 3.1 Each Ordinary Member shall be eligible to stand as a candidate for Election.

- 3.2 A candidate may only stand for election for one post within the Students' Association Election.
- 3.3 A notice will be published on the Association's website at least eight days before the date on which nominations open stating the;
 - 3.3.1 Period for nominations.
 - 3.3.2 Posts for which nominations can be made.
 - 3.3.3 Places from which nomination forms can be obtained.
 - 3.3.4 Places to which completed nomination forms must be returned.
- 3.4 Candidates are encouraged but not required to submit a manifesto with their completed nomination. All manifestos received will be published by the Association.
- 3.5 On closing of the nominations, the Assistant Returning Officer will inspect all nominations and manifestos and verify that they comply with the Regulations.
- 3.6 The Assistant Returning Officer will draw up a list of candidates after the close of nominations and will post a notice on the Associations' website as soon as is reasonably practicable stating the candidates, the date of the Election and the arrangements for voting.
- 3.7 The Returning Officer shall, as soon as reasonably practicable following the publishing of the notice in terms of Clause 3.6, arrange a meeting at which candidates will be briefed on the Election process and procedure. All candidates will be afforded an opportunity to ask questions relating to the Election at the end of the briefing.

4 CAMPAIGNING

- 4.1 As soon as is reasonably practicable following the commencement of the campaigning period, a list of valid nominations and manifestos will be published by the Association.
- 4.2 The campaigning period shall commence at a time announced by the Returning Officer and shall end at the close of voting.
- 4.3 Any coverage of the Elections by the Association by whatever means or media shall be fair and balanced providing equal exposure to all candidates, as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 4.4 Each candidate may receive a small budget from the Association for publicity materials and no other monies shall be spent on canvassing by the candidate. Finances shall be confirmed within the Publicity Regulations document.
- 4.5 No offensive or derogatory election material shall be produced during the campaign by any candidate.
- 4.6 The Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer reserve the right to remove any election material which in their reasonable opinion is inappropriate.
- 4.7 An Election Debate for Sabbatical Officer candidates shall be held at a designated time following the candidates' briefing and shall be chaired by a nominee of the Returning Officer.
- 4.8 All candidates are encouraged to attend the Election Debate.
- 4.9 There are specific regulations set by Accommodation Services for Pollock Halls and details can be found online.

5 ELECTION

- 5.1 The Annual Elections shall be held no later than the final Friday in March of each academic year. The By Elections shall be held no later than the final Friday in October of each academic year.

- 5.2 In the event that following the proper conclusion of the Elections, at least one post remains vacant, it shall be permissible to hold further elections with a view to appointing candidates to assume such posts. The decision on whether or not to hold such elections shall be at the sole discretion of the Returning Officer.
- 5.3 In such cases, any further election(s) must take place by the final Friday in October of the relevant year. The same procedure for nominations and campaigning shall apply as set out in Clauses 3 and 4 of these regulations except for the timing restrictions which shall be decided at the sole discretion of the Returning Officer.

6 VOTING

- 6.1 The voting method used shall be by Single Transferable Vote.
- 6.2 The responsibility for ensuring that voting is conducted in accordance with the provisions of this Clause 6 shall rest with the Returning Officer.
- 6.3 Voting shall be conducted by online ballot at times to be determined by the Returning Officer.
- 6.4 The arrangements for voting stations and the list of candidates shall be publicised by the Association as an absolute minimum as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 6.5 Ordinary Members of the Association may vote via valid electronic access.
- 6.6 Ballots shall bear the name of each candidate, the position being contested and a suitable space for indicating the voting preference of the voter.
- 6.7 Voting shall be carried out by:
- 6.7.1 Placing all, or some, of the candidates in the voter's numerical preference;
 - 6.7.2 As appropriate in and as directed by the circumstances.
- 6.8 Where a number of vacancies exist on one ballot paper, each voter may only vote for the number of vacancies which exist.
- 6.9 There shall be an option on the ballot paper entitled "Re-Open Nominations" ("RON").
- 6.9.1 RON, for the purposes of the count, shall be treated as a candidate, though it will not be allowed a publicity budget as allowed to the other candidates in the Election in terms of Clause 4.4.
 - 6.9.2 If RON wins the Election, then the Election shall be re-run at a date to be determined by the Returning Officer.
 - 6.9.3 In the event of a re-run of the Election RON shall appear as an option on the ballot paper.
- 6.10 In all non-electronic elections, adjustments shall be made to ensure no voter shall be disenfranchised.
- 6.11 Candidates and their supporters should not be in the immediate vicinity of a voter when they are in the act of casting their vote.

7 COUNT and RESULTS

- 7.1 The Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer shall administer the Count.
- 7.2 Candidates are not allowed to be present at the Count, full voting statistics will be available to scrutinise following the announcement of the results.
- 7.3 Where appropriate, the Returning Officer shall be entitled to appoint Polling Officers.
- 7.4 The quote shall be calculated as follows:
- 7.4.1 The quota will be determined by dividing the total number of valid votes by the number of positions available (plus one)

- 7.4.2 In the event the quota contains a decimal it may be rounded up or down as the Returning Officer sees appropriate.
- 7.5 If the candidate reaches the quota on the first count then they will be deemed to be elected to that post.
- 7.6 If no candidate has yet reached the quota, the votes shall be redistributed in accordance with Electoral Reform Society Scotland and NUS Scotland guidance.
- 7.7 In the event of a tie at the exhaustion of all transferable votes, the Returning Officer will perform and record a coin toss to eliminate one of the bottom two candidates.
- 7.8 The Returning Officer shall be responsible for announcing and publicising the results of the Election both by way of the Association website and by any other reasonable means or media they shall deem appropriate.

8 CANDIDATES

- 8.1 Candidates already in office shall be given the same privileges and restrictions as the other candidates in the Election.
- 8.2 Candidates may only benefit from what is openly available to all candidates.
- 8.3 Candidates are not permitted to make, or state an intention to make, personal financial commitments as part of their campaigning strategy and/or manifesto.

9 TENURE OF OFFICE

- 9.1 The tenure of office for the Sabbatical Officers shall be a 12 month period commencing in the same year as election from which they were elected to that post.
- 9.2 Incoming Sabbatical Officers shall have a one-month training period prior to start of tenure.

10 COMPLAINTS, APPEALS and CONDUCT OF CANDIDATES

(Full details are available at: eusa.ed.ac.uk)

- 10.1 The procedure for the consideration of complaints relating to elections shall be as follows:
- 10.1.1 Formal complaints must be submitted in writing with supporting evidence to the Returning Officer within 24 hours of the alleged incident, or the alleged incident coming to light, and no later than one hour before voting closes.
- 10.1.2 The Returning Officer reserves the right to investigate and make any rulings which are fair and reasonable in all circumstances, including but not limited to the disqualification of any candidate concerned, or the annulment of the relevant election.
- 10.1.3 Disqualified candidates may appeal the decision of the Returning Officer in writing to elections@eusa.ed.ac.uk before the end of the voting period.
- 10.2 An investigation into a complaint against an election candidate may provide evidence of misconduct by the candidate. Examples of such misconduct include, but are not limited to:
- (a) Violation of any part of these Regulations
 - (b) Bribery
 - (c) Multiple voting
 - (d) Interference with the actual voting
 - (e) Conspiracy by the candidate acting in concert with others to commit any of the offences mentioned in (b) to (d)
 - (f) Any offence listed in section 12 of the University of Edinburgh's Code of Student Conduct, if committed during an election campaign.

- 10.3 Candidates are regarded as responsible for the conduct of their campaign teams. Candidates may therefore be subject to conduct investigation and potential sanctions if a member of their campaign team commits an act of electoral misconduct.
- 10.4 Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and the safety of others when engaging in any Election activity.

11 Review of Election Regulations

These Regulations will be subject to review from time to time and approved by the Election Sub-Committee of the Students' Association Board of Trustees.