



1 Student Democracy Regulations

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43 **Part 1: Democratic Structures**

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45 **Section A: The Role of the Democratic Structures**

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- i. There shall be Democratic Structures which:
 - a) Are clear, transparent and facilitate accountability;
 - b) Are inclusive, maximise opportunities for student involvement and embody equal opportunities for all;
 - c) Are open and easy for students to interact with;
 - d) Facilitate effective interaction with the University at all levels, to represent all University of Edinburgh students;
 - e) Ensure effective transmission of University of Edinburgh student views to the University and external bodies;
 - f) Ensure accountability for decisions and actions taken by and on behalf of the representative structures of the Association as set out in this Regulation;
 - g) Aim to accurately translate the views of the student body into policy and campaigns, and represent student interests for the improvement of the student experience at the University of Edinburgh.

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63 **Section B: Bodies of the Democratic Structures**

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- i. The Democratic Structures shall comprise the following bodies:
 - a) Online Referenda, which shall also have association-wide powers;
 - b) The Student Council;
 - c) The Association Executive, which shall also have association-wide powers;
 - d) Activities Executive.

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71 **Section C: Elected Officers**

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- i. There shall be elected officers who ensure that the work of the Democratic Structures is carried out.

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- ii. The elected officers shall comprise:
 - a) The Sabbatical Officers, whose roles shall be outlined in the Sabbatical Officers regulation;
 - b) Four Liberation Officers;
 - 1) Women's Officer
 - 2) Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Officer
 - 3) LGBT+ Officer
 - 4) Disabled Officer
 - c) Seven Section Representatives;
 - 1) International Student Representative
 - 2) Mature Student Representative

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- 3) Part-time Student Representative
 - 4) Student Carers Representative
 - 5) Student Parents Representative
 - 6) Postgraduate Taught Representative
 - 7) Postgraduate Research Representative
 - d) Activities Representatives (societies and volunteering);
 - e) An Undergraduate School Representative for each School;
 - f) A Postgraduate School Representative for each School.
- iii. The above elected officers shall be members of Student Council along with:
- a) The Sports Union President or a nominee from the Edinburgh University Sports Union Executive Committee.
 - b) An student representative from Edinburgh Students' Charities Appeal (ESCA) appointed by ESCA.



100 Part 2: Elections

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102 Section A: Cross Campus Ballots

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104 i. In the Second Semester there shall be a General Election which shall be a cross-
105 campus ballot.

106 a) The following positions shall be elected at the General Election:

107 1) The Sabbatical Officers;

108 2) Four Liberation Officers;

109 1) Women's Officers;

110 2) Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Officer

111 3) LGBT+ Officer

112 4) Disabled Officer

113 3) Six Section Representatives;

114 1) International Student Representative

115 2) Mature Student Representative

116 3) Part-time Student Representative

117 4) Student Carers Representative

118 5) Student Parents Representative

119 6) A Postgraduate Research Representative

120 4) Activities Representatives (societies and volunteering);

121 5) An Undergraduate School Representative for each School;

122 b) Those elected to these positions shall serve a term of office of one year,
123 beginning in June of the year of the election.

124 c) Other positions, as required by the Association, will also be elected by
125 Cross-Campus Ballot.

126 ii. In the First Semester there shall be a By Election which shall be a cross-campus
127 ballot.

128 a) The following positions shall be elected at the By Election:

129 1) A Postgraduate School Representative for each School;

130 2) A Postgraduate Taught Representative

131 b) At these elections will also be elected other positions as required by the
132 association.

133 c) Those elected to these positions shall serve a term of office of
134 approximately one year beginning immediately and ending at the next
135 year's By Election.

136 d) In addition, any posts which remain vacant from the General Election
137 shall be elected in the By Election for the remainder of the one year
138 term of office.

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140 Section B: Eligibility to stand and vote in cross-campus ballots

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142 i. Eligibility to stand in all these elections shall be restricted to Members.



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- ii. Eligibility to vote for Sabbatical Officers shall be restricted to Members and Life members, eligibility to vote for all other positions laid out here shall be restricted to Members.
 - iii. Eligibility to stand in the following elections shall be further restricted:
 - a) Only undergraduate students in a given school shall be eligible to stand to be its Undergraduate School Representative.
 - b) Only postgraduate students in a given school shall be eligible to stand to be its Postgraduate School Representative.
 - c) Only students in a given section shall be eligible to stand in the election for the Section Representative.
 - d) Only students who are current members of a society or volunteering group shall be eligible to stand in the election for the Activities Representatives.
 - e) Only students who self-define into a given liberation group can stand in the election for the Liberation Officer.
 - iii. Eligibility to vote shall be further restricted for the following posts:
 - a) Only those who self-define into a given liberation group can vote in the election for the Liberation Officer
 - b) Only students who are part of a given school can vote in the elections for School Representative positions.
 - c) Only students in a given section group can vote in the election for the Section Representative.

Section C: Running of cross-campus ballot elections

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- i. The elections shall be run in accordance with the *Election Regulations* as upon ruled by the Returning Officer.



170 **Part 3: Budgets**

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- i. The total budget for the democratic structures shall be set by the Board of Trustees.
- ii. The Association Executive shall, before the start of the academic year, allocate the budget to the following bodies:
 - a) The Student Council;
 - b) The Association Executive;
 - c) Any other elected representatives or groups of representatives which Association Executive agree should have their own budget.
- iii. The Student Council cannot increase or decrease its overall budget but it may in the first six weeks of the academic year through an extraordinary motion, amend the allocation of any funds within the Student Council budget.



204 **Part 4: Policy**

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- i. Policy constitutes establishing principles or practices which shall have implications for the future direction of the Association.
- ii. Policy, actions and budgets passed through the democratic structures should be forwarded to the Association Executive for information and to ensure that actions do not violate the law or otherwise require action which would be unlawful and/or bring the association into disrepute.
- iii. A record of all policy passed through the various structures should be kept centrally and be made publicly available.



247 **Part 5: Online Referenda**

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249 **Section A: Role of Online Referenda**

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251 i. Outside of General Meetings, online referenda shall be the sovereign decision-
252 making mechanism of the democratic processes of the Association.

253 ii. Decisions made by Online Referenda shall be binding on the Association. The
254 Association shall seek to implement Referendum decisions and communicate
255 the outcome of any referenda to the student body.

256 iii. All Members shall be entitled to vote in each online referendum.
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258 **Section B: Referendum Proposal**

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260 i. A Referendum Proposal is a single proposal that voters may agree or disagree
261 with.

262 ii. Voting for the 'For Response' indicates that the changes proposed should be
263 implemented, while a vote for the 'Against Response' is a vote for no changes to
264 be implemented.

265 iii. The For and Against Responses will be a full sentence succinctly explaining the
266 two options.

267 iv. Each Referendum Proposal shall explain three things:

268 a) The changes being proposed.

269 b) The reasons behind the changes.

270 c) The other relevant implications of the changes.
271

272 **Section C: Submission and Acceptance of Referendum Proposal**

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274 i. Referendum Proposal may be submitted through any of three different
275 mechanisms:

276 a) Any Member may present a Referendum Proposal to Association
277 Executive with the signatures of at least 500 Members.

278 b) The Student Council may submit a Referendum Proposal through an
279 Extraordinary Motion.

280 c) Association Executive may submit a Referendum Proposal by a two
281 thirds majority vote.

282 ii. Once the Proposal is submitted the Association Executive shall issue notice for
283 an Opposer to the Proposal to come forward.

284 iii. A member of Association Executive will work with the Proposer and Opposer to
285 amend the Proposal to fit the following criteria:

286 a) That it maintains the original spirit of the question.

287 b) That where costs are incurred they are offset elsewhere, making the
288 Proposal revenue-neutral or generate a surplus.



- 289 c) That there are no factual inaccuracies and that the facts included are
290 relevant.
291 d) That there is a For Response and an Against Response which are not
292 leading.
293 e) That the consequences of the Proposal are unambiguous.
294 f) That there has been consultation which must include a presentation to
295 Student Council.
296 g) That the Referendum Proposal will not cause the Association to act
297 illegally or outwith its charitable objectives.
298 iv. In the case where the Students' Association is asked to take a stance then there
299 will be two successive questions:
300 a) Should the Students' Association take a stance on X.
301 b) If the Students' Association is to take a stance should it be Z or Y.
302 v. In the case where the Students' Association is asked to commit to two
303 contradictory statements then there will be two successive questions.
304 vi. The Proposal shall be considered 'accepted' and will go forward to the next
305 available Referendum Period when Association Executive considers that the
306 Proposal meets these criteria.
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Section D: Referendum Periods

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310 i. A Referendum Period shall be the period of time between when a referendum is
311 called and the referendum results are announced.
312 ii. There may be up to eight Referendum Proposals put forward in any Referendum
313 Period.
314 iii. Referendum Periods must be held entirely within University term time.
315 iv. Each Referendum Period shall comprise three immediately consecutive periods:
316 a) A Planning Period where For and Against teams are formed and For and
317 Against Statements may be submitted.
318 b) A Campaigning Period where For and Against teams campaign to the
319 student body, subject to the rules laid out in the Election Regulations of
320 the Association.
321 c) A Voting Period where votes are cast.
322 v. The Referendum Period must last no longer than four weeks.
323 vi. The Planning Period must last no less than one week.
324 vii. The Campaigning Period must last no less than one week.
325 viii. The Voting Period must include no less than forty-eight hours of weekday time.
326 ix. The Returning Officer for Referenda will be the Association's Returning Officer
327 who is responsible for the oversight of the referenda and must be able to be
328 satisfied that referenda have been conducted fairly and freely and in accordance
329 with this Regulation and Election regulations.
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332 Section E: Calling a Referendum Period

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- 334 i. A Referendum Period can be called by the Association Executive at any point
- 335 when more than one Referendum Proposal has been accepted.
- 336 ii. The Association Executive must call a Referendum Period as soon as reasonably
- 337 possible after four Referendum Proposals have been accepted.
- 338 iii. The calling notice for a Referendum Period shall inform the student body of the
- 339 accepted Referendum Proposals, the dates of the Campaigning and Voting
- 340 periods, the budget allocated to the campaign teams, and the date, time and
- 341 location of the Referendum Debates. This calling notice will be widely publicised
- 342 to the student body.
- 343 iv. Referendum Proposals submitted after the calling notice will be carried over to
- 344 the next Referendum.
- 345 v. The Planning Period shall begin immediately following the calling notice.

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347 Section F: Referendum Campaigns

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- 349 i. Only two campaigns for each Referendum Proposal shall be permitted and
- 350 funded – one 'For' campaign and one 'Against' campaign.
- 351 ii. The original Proposer and Opposer of the Referendum Proposal shall be the key
- 352 respective contacts for the For and Against campaigns.
- 353 iii. The key contacts for the two campaigns shall be in contact with relevant election
- 354 officials throughout the campaigning period and shall attend, or send a deputy
- 355 to, any official briefings held.
- 356 iv. If a campaign does not send a representative to any official briefing without
- 357 good reason the campaign will be deemed to have withdrawn and no further
- 358 funding will be given.
- 359 v. The individual budgets for the campaign teams during a given Referendum
- 360 Period shall be equal and set by the Association Executive.
- 361 vi. Students' Association Societies and University of Edinburgh Sports' Clubs may
- 362 endorse the For or Against campaign for any question.
- 363 vii. The Students' Association reserves the right to put forward neutral and factual
- 364 information to facilitate informed debate.

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366 Section G: Referendum Debate

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- 368 i. There shall be at least one Referendum Debate held during the Campaign
- 369 Period.
- 370 ii. Where there is a For and Against campaign for a Referendum Proposal they
- 371 should be given equal time in the debate.

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375 **Section H: Referendum Voting Period**

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i. Voting shall take place online.

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ii. The voting page shall display:

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a) A full explanation of the consequences of the Proposal.

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b) A statement from both the For and the Against campaigns.

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c) The names of any Students' Association Societies or University of

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Edinburgh Sports Clubs who have endorsed one of the campaigns.

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d) Three voting options:

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1. For

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2. Against

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3. Abstain

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e) Students also have the option to Skip Question

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f) A video from the Referendum Debate

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iii. The total number of votes cast is the sum of votes cast For, Against and Abstain;

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iv. In the case where the Proposal would amend the regulations there must be

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2000 votes For or a two thirds majority of votes cast, whichever is greater, for

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the decision to be binding;

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v. In all other cases there must be 1000 votes For or a simple majority of votes

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cast, whichever is greater, for the decision to be binding.

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396 **Section I: The Referendum Outcomes**

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i. The results of the Referendum Period should be publicised to the student body
as soon as possible.

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ii. The Association Executive shall be responsible for implementing the decisions of

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the referenda.



402 **Part 6: The Student Council**

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404 **Section A: Role of the Student Council**

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406 i. The primary mechanism for the discussion and initiation of action on all matters
407 shall be Student Council.

408 ii. Student Council shall be the primary mechanism through which student
409 population can scrutinise the work of the elected officers and organisers.

410 iii. Student Council shall have the power to approve societies and their affiliation to
411 the Association, following recommendation from Activities Executive.

412 iv. Student Council meetings will be open to all students and advertised so that
413 attendance by students is maximised.

414 v. The budget of Student Council shall be held by the elected membership of the
415 Student Council, and shall only be accessed through a majority vote of these
416 elected members.

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418 **Section B: Running of Student Council meetings**

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420 i. Student Council meetings shall be run in accordance with the Standing Orders
421 and the Students' Association's Safe Space Policy.

422 ii. Any member of the Association may attend Student Council, submit motions,
423 speak and vote.

424 iii. Student Council meetings must be held during a week day of semester time.

425 iv. Student Council will meet regularly and the frequency of these meetings shall be
426 determined by the Association Executive, with a minimum of three meetings in
427 both the First and Second Semester.

428 v. The draft running order and agenda for Student Council shall be agreed by the
429 Student Council Facilitator and published online at least seven days before the
430 Student Council meeting.

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432 **Section C: Student Council Policy**

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434 i. An Ordinary Motion shall have the power to set Association policy, or allocate or
435 access funds from the Student Council budget.

436 ii. An Extraordinary Motion shall have the power to censure an officer, amend
437 these regulations or submit a Referendum Proposal.

438 a) An Ordinary Student Council motion may be brought either by twenty
439 signatures of Members or by Association Executive.

440 iii. An Extraordinary Student Council motion may be brought either by forty
441 signatures of Members or by Association Executive.

442 iv. The Association Executive will add it to the agenda of the next available meeting
443 of that Student Council.



- 444 v. Motions must be distributed to the membership at least seven days before the
445 Student Council meeting.
- 446 vi. Amendments may change the meaning of a Motion, or even reverse the
447 meaning entirely, but must not change the subject that the Motion discusses.
- 448 vii. For an Amendment to a Motion to be accepted on the Agenda of a given
449 Student Council meeting it must be submitted to the Student Council Facilitator
450 no fewer than five days before the Meeting.
- 451 viii. Policies shall be deemed to have lapsed after 4 years unless they are readopted
452 by Student Council, or they are subsequently replaced, overturned or amended.
453 Policies which are due to lapse shall be discussed each year by Student Council.
- 454 ix. Policy may not be overturned within three months of its initial passing.
- 455 x. Student Council policy may be sent back for reconsideration by Association
456 Executive, by a two third majority vote, providing it meets one of the following
457 criteria:
- 458 a) That the policy will cause the Association to act illegally or outwith its
459 charitable objectives.
- 460 b) That the policy would contradict previous policy of the past three
461 months.
- 462

463 Section D: Emergency Meetings

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- 465 i. The Association Executive, 15 Elected Officers, or 30 Members shall be able to
466 call an Emergency Meeting providing that:
- 467 a) The meeting only discusses matters which cannot wait until the next
468 Ordinary Meeting.
- 469 b) The meeting only discusses the matters for which the meeting was
470 called.
- 471 c) Three working days' notice is given to Members.
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473 Section E. Student Council Facilitator

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- 475 i. There shall be a paid and trained Student Council Facilitator who shall chair
476 Student Council meetings.
- 477 ii. The Student Council Facilitator shall be responsible for ruling on any part of the
478 Articles, the Democracy Regulations, the Standing Orders and Safe Space Policy
479 which relates to the running of the meeting.
- 480 iii. They shall:
- 481 a) Be impartial and not participate in debate, or submit ideas to Student
482 Council.
- 483 b) Be unable to vote at Student Council but shall be able to vote in Student
484 Council online ballots of members.
- 485 c) Ensure the debate is orderly, conducted in accordance with these
486 Democracy Regulations, the Standing Orders, and Safe Space Policy.



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- d) Decide the order of the agenda and the order and length of debate, and make changes to these during the meeting if necessary.
 - e) Be responsible for ensuring that debates are participative, productive and balanced.
 - f) Adjourn the meeting, or remove speaking rights from individuals, if necessary to ensure the good conduct of the meeting.
 - g) Remove any person present from the remainder of the meeting who is preventing the meeting from proceeding in a fair and democratic manner or otherwise in accordance with these Democracy Regulations, the Standing Orders or Safe Space Policy.
- iv. The Association Executive shall ensure that Student Council meetings are facilitated effectively through a substitute if the Student Council Facilitator is unable to attend. A member of Association Executive shall chair Student Council if the Student Council Facilitator is not in attendance.

Section F: Debate at Student Council

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- i. Any member of the Association may speak at Student Council meetings in order to:
 - a) Ask a question
 - b) Give speeches for or against motions and amendments
 - c) State a practical point of clarification
 - d) Make a comment
 - e) Ask for a change to meeting proceedings
 - ii. The order of debate shall be decided by the Student Council Facilitator. This shall normally include:
 - a) Speeches for a motion or expenditure request
 - b) Speeches for and against amendments
 - c) Vote on amendments
 - d) Speeches against a motion or expenditure request
 - e) Questions and comments
 - f) Summation
 - g) Vote on motion or expenditure request
 - iii. Debate at Student Council shall run in accordance with the Students' Association Safe Space Policy.

Section G: Voting at Student Council

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- i. Following debate on motions at Student Council a vote shall take place.
 - ii. Elected members of Student Council shall consult their student constituents on motions and issues to be voted on at Student Council in order to represent their views.



- 529 iii. The vote of an elected member of Student Council counts for 1.5 votes,
530 compared to 1 for a vote from an unelected member.
- 531 iv. If an Ordinary Motion receives 67% or more of the total votes in favour, then it
532 shall become Association policy.
- 533 v. If an Ordinary Motion receives less than 33% of the total votes in favour, then it
534 shall not become Association policy.
- 535 vi. If an Ordinary Motion receives fewer than 67% of votes in favour but more than
536 33%, then the Ordinary Motion will be referred to an online ballot where all
537 members of the Association will get the chance to vote on the issue in
538 accordance with Part 6, Section H.
- 539 vii. An Extraordinary Motion shall pass if it receives 67% or more of the total votes,
540 or fifty votes, whichever is greater, in favour at Student Council. It shall then
541 become Association policy.
- 542 viii. If an Extraordinary Motion receives less than 67% of the total votes in favour at
543 Student Council, then it shall not become Association policy.
- 544 ix. An Extraordinary Motion will not proceed to Student Council online ballot of
545 members if the motion receives less than 67% of the total votes in favour at
546 Student Council.

Section H: Student Council online ballots of members

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- 550 i. Student Council online ballots of members shall be held if an Ordinary Motion at
551 a Student Council meeting receives fewer than 67% of votes for but more than
552 33%, as outlined in Part 6, Section G.
- 553 ii. Student Council online ballots shall take the form of a secret ballot in which all
554 members are asked to vote either for, against or abstain to an Ordinary Motion
555 or Ordinary Motions.
- 556 iii. The Ordinary Motion(s) to be voted on shall normally be posted on the Students'
557 Association website within four working days after the Student Council meeting
558 in which the Ordinary Motion(s) to be balloted was discussed.
- 559 iv. Online ballots shall be communicated to students.
- 560 v. For each Ordinary Motion put to a Student Council online ballot of members the
561 quorum shall be the total number of votes for and against plus one which were
562 cast on the Ordinary Motion(s) at the Student Council meeting at which it was
563 discussed. Abstentions shall not count towards the total votes.
- 564 vi. An Ordinary Motion(s) shall pass at a Student Council online ballot of members if
565 a majority of the total votes are in favour and the quorum outlined in Part 6,
566 Section H.v is met.
- 567 vii. Student Council online ballots will be open for two working days.
- 568 viii. Results will normally be announced within two working days after the ballots
569 close.
- 570 ix. If an Ordinary Motion(s) passes at Student Council online ballot of members then
571 it shall become Association policy.



572 **Section I: Accountability at Student Council**

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574 i. Each of the Sabbatical Officers shall submit a report to each sitting of Student Council for
575 scrutiny and approval. This report shall include recommendations for the approval of
576 societies wishing to affiliate to the organisation.

577 ii. If two reports from a Sabbatical Officer are rejected by Student Council in one
578 semester a member of Association Executive shall bring a vote of censure to the
579 next meeting of Student Council.

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581 **Section J: Policy Passes at Student Council**

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583 i. All policy passed at Student Council shall be referred to Association Executive.



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585 **Part 7: The Association Executive**

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- i. The role, remit, membership and powers of the Association Executive shall be set out in the Association Executive Regulation.



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591 **Part 8: Liberation Officers**

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- i. There shall be Liberation Officers to ensure representation and campaigning on behalf of specific self-defining groups within the student body which are traditionally under-represented due to historical discrimination and inequality.
- ii. These Liberation Officers shall be politically autonomous.



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599 **Part 9: Section Representatives**

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601 There shall be Section Representatives to address the issues of specific sections of the student body
602 with particular needs

603 i. These Section Representatives shall not be politically autonomous.

604 **Part 10: Electronic Business**

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606 i. Elected business can only be conducted for:

607 a) Expenditure requests

608 b) Matters which need to be addressed outside of the teaching period

609 ii. To conduct electronic business an email should be sent to all elected members of
610 Student Council outlining the decision to be made and asking elected members to
611 vote For or Against.

612 iii. Elected members should have at least two working days to reply.

613 iv. Any electronic business will pass if a majority of the total elected members of
614 Student Council vote in favour.

615 v. No amendments will be accepted.



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618 **Part 11: The Activities Executive**

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- i. The role, remit, membership and powers of the Activities Executive shall be set out in the *Activities Executive Regulations*.



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624 **Part 12: Resignations, Reprimands and Dismissal**

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626 **Section A: Resignations of elected officers**

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- 628 i. Resignations by elected officers should be notified to the President in writing.
629 The relevant body on which the resigned person sits shall be notified at their
630 next meeting.
- 631 ii. In the event of a resignation the Association Executive will decide if a By Election
632 should be called.

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634 **Section B: Censure of Sabbatical Officers**

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- 636 i. These officers may be censured through an Extraordinary Motion at Student
637 Council.
- 638 ii. A censure, or formal reprimand, constitutes a formal disapproval of the actions
639 of an individual member. The censure shall have no further penalty attached.

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641 **Section C: Censure of School Representatives, Liberation Officers and Section 642 Representatives**

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- 644 I. School Representatives may be censured by 20 members of their School.
- 645 II. Liberation Officers may be censured by 20 members who self-define into the
646 liberation group.
- 647 III. Section Representatives may be censured by 20 members who are part of the
648 section group.

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650 **Section D: Dismissal of Sabbatical Officers**

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- 652 i. The process for dismissing a Sabbatical Officer is laid out in the Memorandum
653 and Articles of Association.



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Part 13: Amending these regulations

- i. These regulations may be amended by passing an Extraordinary Motion outlining the proposed amendments at two consecutive Student Council meetings.



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Part 14: General Meetings

- i. General Meetings are the sovereign decision making mechanism of the organisation and as such can overturn decisions that come from processes laid out in this document.
- ii. General Meetings run according to the regulations outlined in the Articles of Association.