

2. Elections

Positions

- 2.1 There shall be a cross-campus ballot for the following positions:
 - 2.1.1 Sabbatical Officers
 - 2.1.2 Part-time Officers
 - 2.1.3 Delegates to the NUS National Conference where allocated spaces not filled by Sabbatical Officers
 - 2.1.4 3 Student Trustees
 - 2.1.5 Faculty Representatives
- 2.2 All un-elected positions will go to a bye-election, to be held at the start of term 1, apart for roles where this is the main election. In this case they bye-election will occur in term 2.
- 2.3 If there is still an un-elected position after two election periods (usually Spring elections, then Autumn bye-elections), a student may nominate themselves for a role in writing to the Chair of Student Council no less than 10 working days in advance of a meeting of Student Council.
- 2.4 When this happens the following timeline is followed:
 - 2.4.1 The Chair must publicise that nominations for that role have opened on the UNSU website and Facebook page within 2 working days of receipt of a nomination.
 - 2.4.2 Nominations for that role will close at the same time as the paper deadline for Council closes
 - 2.4.3 Manifestos must also be submitted by the Council paper deadline, and published along with papers.
 - 2.4.4 Candidates will be bound to campaigning rules set out in the General Conduct and Campaigning sections, however candidates will not have a campaigning budget.
 - 2.4.5 Hustings shall occur at Student Council
 - 2.4.6 An Alternative Transferable Vote election will be conducted at Student Council, with results published at the Student Council meeting.

Eligibility

- 2.5 Only full members of the Union are entitled to stand in any election, nominate others for election and to hold any office.
- 2.6 Members cannot stand if they are, or have been, disqualified to act as an Officer; have any criminal convictions or imminent legal proceedings which, in the view of the Returning Officer, may result in them being unsuitable to be an Officer of the Students' Union. Members are obligated to disclose such information and must advise the Returning Officer of the circumstances before standing.
- 2.7 Members cannot stand if they have been sanctioned for gross misconduct by the Students' Union as a paid employee or as a volunteer.
- 2.8 All nominees for the any Sabbatical Officer position must sign a declaration of eligibility proving that they are eligible to be a trustee.

- 2.9 Students must relinquish any office immediately upon ceasing to be a full member of the Union, for example through intermission or termination of study.
- 2.10 Candidates may not stand for more than one position on Executive Committee in an election.
- 2.11 No member may nominate or second more than one candidate for the same position.
- 2.12 Candidates may join together to stand on a single platform as a Slate but must inform the Deputy Returning Officer before campaigning begins.

Election of delegation to NUS National Conference

- 2.13 The total number of delegates the Union is entitled to shall be determined by and from the most current allocation from NUS (UK). The number of delegates to be elected shall be this number minus one, this space is reserved for the President.
- 2.14 Delegates shall be elected in a cross-campus ballot in the Autumn Term, any unallocated spaces shall be elected in the Spring Term.
- 2.15 The President of the Union shall be the delegation leader for all NUS conferences including special or emergency conferences.
- 2.16 If the delegation from the most recent conference includes members of the Union who hold office within the NUS, those delegates who hold NUS office and are obliged to attend a special or extraordinary conference of the NUS in that capacity shall be replaced by full members of the Union selected by and from Student Council.
- 2.17 Members of the delegation who hold office within the National Union requiring attendance at special or extraordinary National Conferences will be replaced by members elected at the next meeting of Student Council. In the event of the delegation leader being replaced, that role shall be determined by Student Council.

Timetable

- 2.18 Elections for Sabbatical Officers and Part-time Officers (excepting the Postgraduate Students' Officer) shall take place in the Spring Term.
- 2.19 The election for the Postgraduate Students' Officer shall take place in the Autumn Term.
- 2.20 Elections for Student Trustees will occur at the next opportunity, either Autumn or Spring election periods.
- 2.21 In the event of the holder of a position resigning, the following shall be the procedure for replacing them:
 - 2.21.1 Part Time Officers
 - 2.21.1.1 If a position becomes available less than two calendar months before the end of an office period, that role will be left vacant until the new officer is in post. The duties of that post will be shared amongst the Executive Committee.
 - 2.21.1.2 If a position becomes available more than two, but less than six calendar months before the end of an office period, the role will be made available through Student Council and be governed by Bye-Laws 2.3 and 2.4.
 - 2.21.1.3 If a position becomes available three months after a candidate has taken office but before nominations open for the bye-elections, a bye-election shall be held.

- 2.21.1.4 If a position becomes available within 3 months of a candidate taking office, the next candidate from that election is offered the role, where there is no alternative candidate, a vote is held during the next election period.
- 2.21.2 Sports and Societies
 - 2.21.2.1 Only members of each society and Sports club are eligible to vote on committee positions.
 - 2.21.2.2 If one of President, Secretary or Treasurer role is vacated a bye-election must be held at the next possible opportunity (Autumn bye-elections, Spring main elections or May bye-elections)
- 2.21.3 Full Time Officers
 - 2.21.3.1 If a position becomes available before 31st August, the next candidate from that election is offered the role, where there is no alternative candidate, a vote is held during the next election period.
 - 2.21.3.2 If a position becomes available on or after 1st September, but before nominations have opened for the bye-elections, a bye-election shall be held.
 - 2.21.3.3 If a position becomes available after the bye-election deadline, that role will be left vacant until the new officer is in post. The duties of that post will be shared amongst the Executive Committee.
- 2.22 Notice of all Union elections will be placed on the Union website at least 5 working days before nominations open for the election. Such notice will include details of the dates and times when nominations open and close and where voting will take place as well as a list of all the posts to be filled.
- 2.23 The dates and times of the election will be proposed by the Deputy Returning Officer to Student Council in the third term.
- 2.24 Nominations will be open for a period of at least 7 days for all roles, including for sports and societies committee positions. Nominations will close at least 7 days before the election takes place. Notice of those candidates nominated will be displayed as soon as reasonably possible following the close of nominations.
- 2.25 Candidates shall be allowed at least 5 days to campaign before the election itself.
- 2.26 Any candidate wishing to withdraw from the election will notify the Deputy Returning Officer in writing.
 - 2.26.1 Any candidate wishing to withdraw from sports and societies will notify the relevant co-ordinator.
- 2.27 Any complaints relating to conduct prior to the count must be submitted before the count begins. The Deputy Returning Officer will outline a deadline for complaints to all candidates at the Candidate Briefing.

- 2.28 Any complaint relating to the conduct or validity of the count must be made within 5 days of the count taking place.

Supervision of Elections

2.29 The Returning Officer

- 2.29.1 The Returning Officer shall be ultimately responsible for calling all Union elections, and for their free and fair running. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for enforcing these regulations.
- 2.29.2 The Returning Officer shall be selected by the Union's Board of Trustees and jointly approved by the Governing Council of the University and Student Council.
- 2.29.3 The Returning Officer shall be a suitable person, who demonstrates the knowledge necessary to fulfil the role, and shall be independent of the Union. For clarity, the Returning Officer may not be a full member of the Students' Union or a member of Union staff.
- 2.29.4 The Returning Officer shall oversee all aspects of the elections process. They shall be responsible for the conduct of the count and the subsequent declaration of results.
- 2.29.5 The Returning Officer will submit a report on the conduct of the elections to the Student Council and the University following each election. The report shall where necessary identify what steps are required to resolve outstanding issue(s) and ensure future elections are free and fair.

2.30 Deputy Returning Officer

- 2.30.1 The Senior Staff Member of the Union (or their nominee) shall act as the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 2.30.2 The Deputy Returning Officer shall be responsible for assisting the Returning Officer in carrying out their duties.

Nominations

- 2.31 Nominations for posts shall be valid only for candidates who complete and submit a nomination form prior to the close of nominations. Forms will be checked by the Deputy Returning Officer before the nomination is accepted.
- 2.32 Nomination forms submitted after the close of nominations shall not be valid.

Announcement of Candidates

2.33 The Returning Officer or Deputy shall publish the following on the Union website:

- 2.33.1 The names of all candidates submitting valid nomination papers.
- 2.33.2 The manifesto provided by each candidate.
- 2.33.3 The date of the Election.
- 2.33.4 The times and methods of which votes may be cast.
- 2.33.5 The dates(s), time(s) and venue(s) of all Question Times (Hustings).
- 2.33.6 Details of any invalid nomination paper, together with the reason for its invalidity.

Manifestos

- 2.34 All candidates must submit three-to-five key manifesto points, these manifesto points must be:
 - 2.34.1 No longer than 140 characters.
 - 2.34.2 Must be a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) Objective, clearly outlining what a candidate would like to achieve.
- 2.35 All candidates must submit three areas of interest that they plan on working on during their term in office. These areas of interest should be no longer than 140 characters.

Question Time (Hustings)

- 2.36 There shall be the opportunity for Question Time in the week leading up to the start of voting, in which candidates shall have the opportunity to explain their manifestos to the members.
- 2.37 All candidates must attend Question Time at both campuses. Failure to do so, except on certain grounds specified by the Returning Officer, will result in disqualification.
- 2.38 All candidates for full-time and part-time positions shall deliver a speech at Question Time, to be followed by questions from the floor.
- 2.39 Question Time will take place at a venue(s) and time(s) as stated in the election timetable. The candidates shall be allowed to refer to their opponents only in a factual manner.
- 2.40 Candidates should concentrate on issues and are not permitted to make derogatory or personal remarks about other candidates, University staff, Union staff or individual students.
- 2.41 Speeches should not refer to the direct content of other candidates' manifestos.
- 2.42 Anyone is permitted to attend the Question Time, but only members of the Union may ask questions of candidates.
- 2.43 Question Time will be chaired by the President (unless they are standing for re-election, in which case the Executive Committee shall nominate an alternative Officer not running for election), assisted by the Returning Officer or their deputy.

General Conduct and Campaigning

- 2.44 Candidates shall adhere to the following acts of general conduct throughout the campaigning period:
 - 2.44.1 Candidates shall not defamatory, unsubstantiated, or inaccurate statements concerning any other candidate(s);
 - 2.44.2 Candidates shall not destroy or in any way endorse the destruction, removal or defacing of campaign materials of other candidate(s);
 - 2.44.3 Candidates shall abide by the Union's Constitution and bye-laws, the rules of the University and the law throughout the elections process;
 - 2.44.4 Candidates shall ensure that their publicity does not impinge on the health and safety of campus users, and that it does not become a litter nuisance. Each candidate shall ensure that elections publicity (principally but not exclusively their own) is cleared at the close of the poll.

- 2.44.5 Candidates will be held responsible for the conduct of their agents and supporters.
- 2.44.6 All supporters and agents of any candidate shall adhere to the same acts of general conduct as outlined in 2.44 above.
- 2.44.7 All elections regulations shall apply to supporters and agents of candidates, and it is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that anyone assisting in their campaign read, understand and abide by these regulations.
- 2.44.8 Candidates shall be informed of their campaign budget during the Candidates' Briefing.
 - 2.44.8.1 Printing for all candidates will be overseen by the Students' Union. Full time Officers will all be allowed the same amount as each other, and Part-time Officers will be allowed half of that of candidates running for full time positions. The budget of leaflets and posters will be communicated during Candidates Briefing, as well as the deadline to submit their designs or to opt out of leaflets and posters. Candidates cannot use external companies to produce additional leaflets or poster. If candidates chose not to have posters or leaflets then they will be given the amount of money it cost to print in addition to their campaign budget.
- 2.44.9 The website of UNSU, and all pages of that website however designated, may not be used for promotion by individual candidates
- 2.44.10 Candidates and supporters must not break any Union rules, University rules, or the law with any of their campaign activity.

Canvassing

- 2.45 It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure that they have the necessary authority and/or permission to canvass in University-owned accommodation.
- 2.46 Any complaints made by residents regarding the conduct of candidates during canvassing shall be dealt with by the Returning Officer.
- 2.47 Candidates shall not canvass in the clearly marked area designated for polling or enter the area except to cast their personal vote.
- 2.48 Each subcommittee of Student Council must host their own question time for the candidates accountable to said Subcommittee.
 - 2.48.1 Each question time will be held by the chair of that committee. If the chair of said committee is running for one of the elected positions in question, the event will be facilitated by the appropriate staff member.
- 2.49 No candidate shall use Student Council as a forum for campaigning, except for the election Question Times, if applicable.
- 2.50 Candidates cannot canvass for votes when polling is open using an electronic device that is capable of accessing the online voting page.

Other Methods of Campaigning

- 2.51 All photocopying and printing must be declared to the deputy returning officer, in conjunction with the candidate budget.
- 2.52 Posters and any other publicity must not be publically available prior to the start of campaigning.
- 2.53 Campaigning materials must be removed on the last day of voting. Any costs incurred for removal of materials, damage to property or cleaning as a result of campaigning will be billed to candidates.
- 2.54 Candidates must recycle campaign material, where possible.
- 2.55 The SU will have a team of people promoting the election during campaigning week.

Voting Process

- 2.56 The SU will man a polling station on both Park and Avenue campuses
- 2.57 Polling station locations will be posted on the UNSU website.
- 2.58 Voting will be by Alternative Transferable Voting (ATV) for single vacancy elections and Single Transferable Voting (STV) for multi-vacancy elections in accordance with the rules for the operation of transferable voting systems as set by the Electoral Reform Society.

Interpretation

- 2.59 The Returning Officer shall be solely responsible for the interpretation of these regulations. The ruling of the Returning Officer shall be final.
- 2.60 Requests for interpretation of these regulations or complaints about the conduct of candidates shall be made in the first instance to the Deputy Returning Officer in writing.
- 2.61 The Returning Officer, assisted by their assistants if necessary, shall investigate all complaints and make adjudication according to the seriousness and complexity of the complaint.
- 2.62 In the event of a candidate or slate being found to have broken one or more of these Regulations the Deputy Returning Officer shall have the power to:
 - 2.62.2 issue a verbal or written warning;
 - 2.62.2 impose a fine on the campaign budget;
 - 2.62.3 restrict the amount of publicity available to the candidate or slate;
 - 2.62.4 disqualify the candidate or to take other action as they see fit.
- 2.63 In the event that a candidate wishes to appeal a decision of the Deputy Returning Officer, they must do so within 48 hours of the ruling or 1 hour before the start of balloting, whichever is sooner. They should address their appeal to the Returning Officer whose ruling is final.
- 2.64 All rulings made by the Returning Officer or the Deputy Returning Officer shall be posted on the Union website. Candidates are expected to consult this regularly.
- 2.65 The University is satisfied that these regulations ensure the conduct of fair elections as required by the Education Act 1994. The Returning Officer is recognised by the University as the independent person to whom complaints should be referred to under the Code of Practice in relation to all matters concerning the conduct of elections. The Returning Officer shall submit a statement to the University's Registrar and Secretary following each election, stating whether the elections have been conducted fairly and properly in accordance with the Election Regulations.

- 2.66 Amendments to these regulations shall only be made by a vote in favour of a proposed change by Student Council meeting. All changes shall be agreed by Student Council and Board of Trustees prior to their taking effect.

Appeals

- 2.67 Appeals regarding the validity of the election must be directed to NUS in writing within 72 hours of polling closing.
- 2.69 In the case that NUS is the Returning Officer, the appeal must be directed to the University.

2. Elections Bye-Law

Date of this revision: 29 June 2020

Date of next revision: 30 September 2021

Revision date	Previous revision date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
03/07/2017	02/05/2017	2.1.5 Election Positions – addition of Faculty Representatives 2.21.2 Addition Sports and Societies elections section 2.24 Includes sports and societies. 2.26.1 added to include sports and societies Added Revision Tracking Page	
01/02/2018	03/07/2017	Change Points (as agreed in by Trustees on 15/12/17) 2.10: Add – in an election 2.13: Add ‘but must inform the Deputy Returning Officer before campaigning begins.	
09/04/2018	01/02/2018	Agreed at Board of Trustees 29/03/18 Addition of 2.44.8.1 Printing materials for elections.	
06/11/2018	09/04/2018	Update Logo	
26/06/20	06/11/18	Change revision date to fit with Revision status of the Students’ Union Constitution	

Owner

Name	Email Address	Title	Date of Issue	Version
K Macintyre	Kate.macintyre@northampton.ac.uk	Governance Administrator	29/06/2020	9