

DEMOCRACY BYE-LAW

This Bye-Law describes the process of Elections, Officerships, and Bye-Laws

1. DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE

- 1.1. There shall be a Democracy Committee who shall be responsible for:
 - 1.1.1. The general maintenance of the bye-laws in order to ensure congruency across the governing documents and correct minor textual errors, ensuring amendments of this nature are submitted directly to the Executive Committee for approval.
 - 1.1.2. Developing student democracy, ensuring that the rules and procedures are fair and accessible to all members, and will be likely to maximise participation;
 - 1.1.3. Co-ordinating Referenda and Preferenda, alongside the Returning Officer [or their nominee], in line with the procedures as laid out in the Referenda and Preferenda Bye-law;
- 1.2. Membership
 - 1.2.1. Students' Union Vice President (Union Development)
 - 1.2.2. One representative from each College JCR/PG Board Executive [normally the College Officer with a democracy remit].

2. ELECTIONS

- 2.1. Procedures specified in this Bye-Law shall govern the running of all Students' Union Elections.
- 2.2. By principle, all Students' Union elections shall be: Fair, open, democratic, accessible and transparent
- 2.3. All Students' Union elections will follow this election sequence:
 - 2.3.1. Notice of elections;
 - 2.3.2. Nominations;
 - 2.3.3. Official Candidate Briefing
 - 2.3.4. Campaign period opens;
 - 2.3.5. Candidates' Speeches

- 2.3.6. Polling Period;
- 2.3.7. Count
- 2.3.8. Publication of Results
- 2.4. Re-open Nominations shall be an option in all elections.
- 2.5. The Deputy-Returning Officer shall submit a set of campaigning rules and regulations to the Board of Trustees for approval each academic year, after consultation with Democracy Committee

3. RETURNING OFFICERS

- 3.1. The Returning Officer shall be a suitably qualified person external to the University, appointed annually by the Board of Trustees
 - 3.1.1. The Returning Officer shall have overall responsibility for overseeing the process of elections within the Students' Union.
- 3.2. The Deputy Returning Officer shall be a suitably qualified member of Students' Union staff, appointed by the Trustee Board.
 - 3.2.1. The Deputy Returning Officer shall be responsible for the day-to-day planning of the elections process, producing guidance/information, briefing and training candidates, administering elections, fielding questions, and referring issues to the Returning Officer for decisions to be made.
 - 3.2.2. The Deputy Returning Officer will have the delegated powers from the Returning Officer to issue rulings and warning to those taking part in the election in relation to the election rules.
 - 3.2.3. The Deputy Returning Officer will assume the responsibilities of the Returning Officer in smaller internal Union elections in which the external Returning Officer would not be involved.

4. ELECTED POSITIONS

- 4.1. The following categories of officer shall be elected by Cross Campus Ballot:
 - 4.1.1. Full Time Officers
 - 4.1.2. NUS Conference Delegates as defined by the NUS
- 4.2. The following categories of officer shall be elected by restricted ballot (collegiate):

- 4.2.1. JCR Executive, and PG Board Officers as defined by the JCRs/PG Board
- 4.3. The following part-time officers shall be elected by a restricted cross campus ballot (elected by self-defining electorates):
 - 4.3.1. LGBTQ+ Officer
 - 4.3.2. Disabled Students' Officer
 - 4.3.3. Women's + Officer
 - 4.3.4. Black Students' Officer
 - 4.3.5. Mature Students' Officer
 - 4.3.6. International Students' Officer
- 4.4 Student Group Executive Officers [with the exception of JCR/PG Board Officers] will be elected in accordance with the procedures as agreed annually by the Returning Officers for the Union.

5. TIMING AND NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

- 5.1. Elections for the following Officers will ordinarily be in week 2 of Michaelmas Term.
 - 5.1.1. PG Board Officers
- 5.2. Elections for the following Officers and delegates will ordinarily be in week 8 of Michaelmas Term.
 - 5.2.1. JCR Executive Officers
 - 5.2.2. NUS National Conference Delegates
- 5.3. Elections for the following Officers will ordinarily be in week 8 of Lent Term.
 - 5.3.1. Full Time Officers
 - 5.3.2. Part-Time Officers as outlined in section 4.3
 - 5.3.3. NUS Conference Delegates
- 5.4. There shall be at least five working days' notice of elections given before nominations open
- 5.5. By-elections shall be run concurrent to other scheduled elections if necessary.

6. NOMINATIONS

- 6.1. Nominations for all elections must be open for at least 5 working days

- 6.2. All Members of the Students' Union are eligible to stand for a position in the Student' Union elections, with the exception of where candidacy criteria and electorates have been agreed regarding college or self-defining electorates.
- 6.3. Members may only stand for election to one position in each of the following categories at any given time;
 - 6.3.1. Full Time Officers
 - 6.3.2. JCR & PG Board Officers
 - 6.3.3. Part-Time Officers as outlined in section 4.3
- 6.4. Full Time Officers may stand for election to
 - 6.4.1. Full Time Officer
 - 6.4.2. NUS National Conference Delegates
 - 6.4.3. NUS Conferences Delegates
- 7. CO-OPTION**
 - 7.1. Where no candidates stand for a position, members may be co-opted into position by the Executive Committee, or in the case of JCR and PG Board, by their own executive bodies, and in the case of Liberation Officers, where available by their respective forum/assembly.
 - 7.2. Co-opted officers do not receive a vote, and the position must be put up for election at the next available opportunity.
 - 7.3. In the event of a vacancy or the removal of a Full Time Officer and/or Student Trustee, those posts shall be elected in accordance with the procedures as laid out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- 8. TERMS OF OFFICE**
 - 8.1. Office tenure is based upon an individual's membership status. If an officer ceases to hold full member status of the Students' Union their office tenure will end.
 - 8.2. In accordance with the procedures for the appointment of Student Trustees as laid out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the term of office for Student Trustees will be one year commencing from the 1st July until the 30th June, unless otherwise specified by the Trustee Board.

9. ELECTIONS CAMPAIGNING & CONDUCT

- 9.1. Democracy Committee shall produce and approve an elections rules document which will provide details of how candidates are expected to campaign, and other rules pertaining to the elections period.
- 9.2. These rules should be adhered to by candidates, and used by the Returning and Deputy Returning Officers to make decisions on elections issues.

10. POLLING & COUNT

- 10.1. The polling period will be open for a minimum of 24 hours. This can be extended at the discretion of the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer.
- 10.2. The period, manner, and location of polling will be monitored by the Democracy Committee and will be published with the notice of elections.
- 10.3. Elections counts shall be conducted by the Deputy Returning Officer with support as appropriate.
- 10.4. Democracy Committee may oversee the count, and the results will be sent to the returning officer to confirm. This confirmation may take place after the announcement of results
- 10.5. All election counts must take place and publish results within 2 working days of a poll's closure.

11. ELECTIONS COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

- 11.1. In the first instance, complaints about election conduct and process should go to the Deputy Returning Officer. If the complaint is regarding the Deputy Returning Officer they shall go to the Chief Executive to be conveyed to the Returning Officer.
- 11.2. Complaints shall either relate to breaches of the rules as set by the Democracy Committee, an irregularity in process or activity by persons that could reasonably be viewed to have damaged the integrity of the vote.
- 11.3. The Deputy Returning Officer shall investigate and arbitrate on complaints, and report to the Returning Officer. Where serious action needs to be taken, the Returning Officer shall arbitrate on decisions.
- 11.4. The Returning Officer and/or Deputy Returning Officer can decide to take action based on the outcome of a decision. These actions shall take immediate effect and can include the removal of candidates.

- 11.5. Complaints may be fed into the Union's disciplinary process if they are considered not to be an elections matter first and foremost.
- 11.6. If the Returning Officer believes an offence to have fundamentally damaged the integrity of a vote then they may also call for the election to be rerun as soon as is considered reasonably practical.
- 11.7. All complaints about election conduct must be received before the count begins and no later than one hour after the close of voting.
- 11.8. Complaints about the count must be made in writing to the Deputy Returning Officer before the announcement of results.
- 11.9. All appeals should be directed to the University and will be treated as complaints over the process.

12. OFFICERSHIPS

- 12.1. The Part-Time Officers of the Students' Union are:
 - 12.1.1. Liberation Officers:
 - 12.1.1.1. LGBTQ+ Officer
 - 12.1.1.2. Disabled Students' Officer
 - 12.1.1.3. Womens' + Officer
 - 12.1.1.4. Black Students' Officer
 - 12.1.2. Campaign Officers
 - 12.1.2.1. Mature Students' Officer
 - 12.1.2.2. International Students' Officer
- 12.2. The role descriptions for the Part-Time officers shall be laid out in the appendix to this bye-law. Amendments to these role descriptions are subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.
- 12.3. Student Groups are permitted to create their own Executive Committee officer roles, subject to the provisions as laid out in the Student Groups Bye-Law.

13. BYE-LAW GOVERNANCE

- 13.1. The Democracy Committee shall be responsible for the general upkeep of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Bye-Laws, and may submit changes and amendments of this nature directly to Executive Committee for approval.

- 13.2. Substantive Bye-Law changes shall be submitted to the Executive Committee, who may liaise with the proposer to ensure congruency before approval or sending to a jury.