

Bye-Law 4 – Elections

Purpose: This bye-law outlines the procedures for running elections of Officers at the Union.

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 rule on any appeal relating to a contravention of the election regulations
- 1.2.4 rule on any appeal relating to the disqualification of candidates from an election
- 1.2.5 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 their nominee.

2.2 The Deputy Returning Officer shall:

- 2.2.1 assist the Returning Officer in the execution of their duties
- 2.2.2 be responsible for the operation of the election and the review and implementation of the rules and regulations.

3. Timing of elections

3.1 The election of Officers shall take place in the second trimester.

3.2 The dates of the election, related timetables, and the rules and regulations shall be posted on the Union website prior to the opening of nominations.

4. Eligibility and Nominations

4.1 Any student member, as defined in Article 9, is eligible to stand for election.

4.2 Candidates wishing to stand are required to complete a nomination form.

4.3 Candidates may not stand for more than one elected position.

5. Balloting

5.1 Balloting shall be conducted through an online ballot.

5.2 All student members may vote for any Officer position defined as a Major Union Office Holder in Bye-Law 3: Officers & Reps.

5.3 Ballots shall bear the name of each candidate, the position being contested, and a re-open nominations option.

5.4 The election shall be held in accordance with the single transferable vote system or alternative transferable vote system.

6. Expenses

6.1 Any available candidates' campaign budgets will be publicised in advance of the elections.

Expenditure for elections materials will be reimbursed on production of receipts, provided that the expenses limit is not breached.

7. Bye-Elections

7.1 A bye-election may be called by the Deputy Returning Officer if at any time there is a vacancy for an elected position.

7.2 Bye-elections shall be overseen by the Returning Officer, or their delegate, in the same manner as a normal election.

8. The Count

8.1 The count shall be conducted by the Deputy Returning Officer or their nominee.

8.2 The count shall take place in a closed area.

8.3 The count shall begin as soon as practicable after the close of balloting.

8.4 The count shall be witnessed by a member of Union staff.

9. Declaration of Results

9.1 The declaration of the results of a Union election shall be made after the completion of the count and posted on the Union website.

10. Disputes

10.1 Any complaints regarding a breach of the election rules and regulations must be received by the Deputy Returning Officer before the count starts.

10.2 Any complaint must be received in writing and clearly state which regulation has been broken, by whom, and supply evidence.

10.3 Any complaint regarding the count must be received within five working days of the count being published.

10.4 In the event of the Deputy Returning Officer receiving a complaint they shall investigate the complaint and accompanying evidence.

10.5 The Deputy Returning Officer will make a decision based on the complaint and evidence.

10.6 If the respondent is dissatisfied with the Deputy Returning Officer's decision they may appeal to the Returning Officer in writing no later than 48 hours after the decision was made. The Returning Officer will investigate the appeal and make a decision within 2 days of the appeal being lodged. The Returning Officer's decision is final.

11. Conduct

11.1 All members of the Union shall act in the interests of a free and fair election.

11.2 All candidates and campaigners shall act in accordance with the election regulations including any additional rules imposed by the Deputy Returning Officer.

11.3 Candidates are responsible for their campaign and the conduct of their campaigners.

11.4 Any candidates found to be in breach of the election regulations shall, at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer, be subject to sanctions including disqualification.

11.5 All candidates and their campaigners shall abide by the Equal Opportunities policy during the election.

11.6 All Union staff are bound by the Staff Protocol in relation to elections, including voluntary, sabbatical, and student staff.