



Byelaw 13

Election Regulations

1. General

- 1.1. This byelaw regulates elections to be held by all member ballots.
- 1.2. The Returning Officer Team shall be responsible for ensuring that elections are delivered in line with this byelaw and any other regulations set down.

2. Returning Officer Team

- 2.1. A Returning Officer shall be appointed prior to the commencement of the election process. For the purposes of the Sabbatical Officer Elections, the Returning Officer shall be external to AUSA.
- 2.2. The Returning Officer shall:
 - 2.2.1. Satisfy themselves on the basis of the information provided by the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) that elections are free and fair and delivered in accordance with this byelaw and any other regulations set down.
 - 2.2.2. Advise the DRO on any matters relating to the elections.
 - 2.2.3. Deliver a Returning Officer report following the elections.
- 2.3. A Deputy Returning Officer shall also be appointed to assist the Returning Officer in their duties.
- 2.4. The DRO shall be responsible for:
 - 2.4.1. Acting as the first point of contact for ensuring that the elections are delivered in accordance with these regulations.
 - 2.4.2. Seeking advice from the Returning Officer on any matter relating to the elections.
 - 2.4.3. Ensuring the necessary arrangements are made for any election debate, the count, and any results event.
- 2.5. Together the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer will be referred to as the Returning Officer Team.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1. All AUSA members shall be eligible to stand as candidates and vote in all elections, unless otherwise specified in AUSA Constitution or Byelaws.
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- 3.2. Prospective candidates must be members at the point that nominations open.
- 3.3. Members shall not seek election for more than one post of Sabbatical Officer, as constituted under Byelaw 4, or more than one post of Student Councillor, in any set of elections.
- 3.4. Candidates for Sabbatical Officer posts shall be required as part of the nomination process to sign a declaration that they are eligible and willing to serve as a Trustee of AUSA. Members who are ineligible to serve as a Trustee or unwilling to sign the declaration may not stand for election as a Sabbatical Officer.

4. Timelines

- 4.1. The Sabbatical Officer Elections shall be held in the second semester.
- 4.2. The Standing Council Elections shall be held at least once per academic year at a time chosen to maximise student engagement.
- 4.3. The timeline for each set of elections shall be agreed by the Returning Officer Team and published on AUSA website no less than 10 working days prior to the nominations opening.
- 4.4. Nominations shall be open for a minimum of 10 working days and shall be submitted online.
- 4.5. If insufficient nominations have been received to fill all vacancies within a particular set of elections at the close of nominations, the election for posts where nominations have been received shall proceed as normal.
- 4.6. Any Member may challenge the validity of a nomination, within 2 days following the publication of nominations, on the grounds that it does not comply with AUSA Constitution and/or Byelaws. The Returning Officers shall rule on the challenge and their decision shall be final.
- 4.7. Any candidate may withdraw from an election prior to the voting period.

5. Election Campaigns

- 5.1. The Returning Officer Team shall be responsible for updating the Election Rules which shall be ratified by the Trustee Board.
- 5.2. All candidates shall act in accordance with the regulations contained within this byelaw and any additional rules specified by the Returning Officer Team.
- 5.3. For the election of Sabbatical Officers, a spending limit and budget may be allocated by the Returning Officer Team.
- 5.4. For the election of Sabbatical Officers, an elections debate shall be arranged.
- 5.5. AUSA will promote all candidates in a fair manner during the campaign period.
- 5.6. All student media affiliated to AUSA shall ensure that their coverage of elections and referenda is unbiased and balanced.

6. Voting

- 6.1. Voting shall take place via online secret ballot and held over a minimum of three days for all elections.
- 6.2. Voting will be carried out via the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system.
- 6.3. Polling dates shall be published before and may not be altered after the start of polling.
- 6.4. All elections shall provide the opportunity to vote for "Re-open Nominations", in preference to one or more candidates.

7. The Count

- 7.1. The count shall be carried out by the Returning Officer Team.
- 7.2. 'Re-open Nominations' shall be considered as a candidate for counting purposes, and no other candidate shall be elected unless they obtain a higher vote than 'Re-open Nominations'.
- 7.3. The count shall be conducted within one day of the close of voting unless determined exceptional circumstances by the Returning Officer.
- 7.4. If any election is deemed to be tied at any stage of the counting process it shall be resolved by a method of random selection to be determined by the Returning Officer.

8. Complaints

- 8.1. Any complaints regarding the conduct of any election campaign shall be submitted via the official complaints form within two hours of polls closing the close of voting. The Returning Officer team shall rule on any complaints which have been properly submitted.

9. Term of Office

- 9.1. The Sabbatical Officer term shall start on the 1st of July and end on the 30th of June.
- 9.2. No member may hold Sabbatical Office for more than two years.
- 9.3. The terms for Student Council and Standing Committee posts shall commence immediately upon their election or co-option, but no earlier than the beginning of the Sabbatical Officer term. They shall end upon the commencement of a successor's term, the representative's graduation from the university and cessation of student status, or, in any case, upon the first meeting of a new Student Council following an election.
- 9.4. No member may hold more than one Standing Committee/Student Council post at any one time.

10. Vacancies

- 10.1. In the case that a Sabbatical Officer-elect or Sabbatical Officer resigns, a by-election may be held at the discretion of the Returning Officer Team in line with AUSA Constitution.