



Byelaw 17

Election Regulations

1. General Regulations

- 1.1. The Elections Committee shall have overall responsibility for all elections and shall be empowered to rule on any matter relating to the conduct of elections.
- 1.2. The Elections Committee Chair shall be responsible to Student Council for the organisation of elections held by cross-campus ballot. The Elections Committee shall appoint up to 3 Deputy Returning Officers, to support the Elections Committee in maintaining the regulations within this Byelaw and monitor conduct of candidates, and a Returning Officer, who shall not be a Member of AUSA and who shall have relevant experience.
- 1.3. Elections shall only be held on weekdays during the academic terms defined by the University Senate.
- 1.4. Single vacancy elections shall be held by the Single Transferable Voting (STV) system.
- 1.5. Elections of delegates to the Annual Conference of the National Union of Students and the Annual Conference of the National Union of Students Scotland shall normally be conducted by the Single Transferable Vote system and shall be gender balanced.
- 1.6. All elections shall provide the opportunity to vote for "Re-open Nominations", in preference to one or more candidates.
- 1.7. If insufficient nominations have been received to fill all vacancies at the close of nominations, the election shall proceed as normal.
- 1.8. The Chair of the Elections Committee and the Returning Officer Team shall be responsible for all matters relating to the counting of elections.

2. Duties of the Returning Officer

- 2.1. To satisfy themselves on the basis of information provided by the Deputy Returning Officers and the Elections Committee that the conduct of elections and referenda is in accordance with this Byelaw.
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- 2.2. To advise the Returning Officers and Elections Committee on any matter they deem necessary.
- 2.3. To produce a report on the elections.

3. Duties of the Deputy Returning Officers

- 3.1. To support the Elections Committee on any matter relating to the conduct of the election.
- 3.2. To ensure that the election is conducted in accordance with this Byelaw and any other regulations specified.
- 3.3. To seek advice from the Returning Officer on any matter of interpretation of this Byelaw.

4. Elections Committee

- 4.1. The Chair of the Elections Committee shall be one of the Sabbatical Officers.
- 4.2. Student Council shall appoint an Elections Committee for each academic year. The Committee shall consist of up to 2 members elected by Student Council.
- 4.3. The Elections Committee shall consider and advise on the promotion and organisation of the election, on the regulations for publicity and on the rules for candidates.
- 4.4. Members of the Elections Committee shall not be candidates or be involved in any candidate's campaign team in any election for which they are responsible.

5. Eligibility to Stand and Vote

- 5.1. All Members shall be eligible to stand as candidates and vote in all elections, except as specified below.
- 5.2. Members shall not seek election for more than one post of Student Officer, as constituted under Byelaw 4, or more than one post of Councillor, in any set of elections. Members who have stood for one post of Student Officer in an academic year may not stand for any other post in that year, except where such a post is newly created or has been substantially changed and can be reasonably seen to being open for election for the first time.
- 5.3. Candidates for Student 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 Student Officer.
- 5.4. The right to vote and stand as a candidate for Liberation and Section forums shall be limited to students who identify as a member of those groups represented by each Group, as defined in Byelaw 6.
- 5.5. The right to vote and stand as a candidate for NUS Liberation and Section Conferences shall be limited to those students who identify with each group as per NUS regulations.

6. Election Timetables

6.1. Ordinary Elections and NUS UK & Scotland Delegate Elections

- 6.1.1. Elections shall be held by cross-campus ballot for the Student Officers, Student Council, and NUS Conference delegates.
- 6.1.2. Elections shall normally be held in accordance with the following timetable:
 - 6.1.2.1. Students' Association Council and Delegates:
 - 6.1.2.1.1. Nominations should open either in the second week of term of first semester or after the Student Officer elections in the second semester.
 - 6.1.2.1.2. Nominations should remain open for a minimum of 10 working days.
 - 6.1.2.1.3. Publication of candidates and their election statements should be no later than 3 days after close of nominations.
 - 6.1.2.1.4. Polling should take place for 3 days, other than Monday.
 - 6.1.2.1.5. Publication of full results by 10.00pm on Friday after results close.
 - 6.1.2.2. The Elections Committee shall be empowered to vary this timetable, subject to publishing an amended timetable before the opening of Nominations.
 - 6.1.2.3. Student Officers:
 - 6.1.2.3.1. The Election Timetable should be published at least 5 working days before the opening of nominations.
 - 6.1.2.3.2. Nominations should open within the first half of the second semester.
 - 6.1.2.3.3. Nominations should remain open for a minimum of 10 working days.
 - 6.1.2.3.4. Publication of candidates and their election statements should be no later than 5 days after close of nominations.
 - 6.1.2.3.5. At least one Husting Session should take place before the Election Week.
 - 6.1.2.3.6. Polling should take place for 3 days, other than Monday.
 - 6.1.2.3.7. Publication of full results by 10.00pm on Friday after results close.
 - 6.1.2.4. The Elections Committee shall be empowered to vary this timetable, subject to publishing an amended timetable before the opening of Nominations.

7. Regulations for Elections by Cross-Campus Ballot

7.1. Notice of Elections

7.1.1. The Chair of the Elections Committee shall give notice of elections, which shall include:

- 7.1.1.1. details of posts for election;
- 7.1.1.2. the election timetable, in accordance with this Byelaw;
- 7.1.1.3. ensuring the online nominations process is quick, easy and fair.

7.1.2. This notice shall be published in the AUSA Students' Union Building, on AUSA website, in any regular publication of the Students' Union, and in such other places as the Elections Committee may determine.

7.2. Nominations

7.2.1. Nominations shall be made on an online nomination form which shall require:

- 7.2.1.1. the title of the post to be contested;
- 7.2.1.2. the registered name and Student ID number of the candidate;
- 7.2.1.3. alternative, preferred name (by which the candidate is commonly known);
- 7.2.1.4. a photograph bearing a genuine likeness of the candidate, as on their Student card;
- 7.2.1.5. a slogan of up to 15 words which the candidate may have placed by their name on the ballot paper;
- 7.2.1.6. an election statement of no more than 100 words, or 250 words for candidates for Officer posts.
- 7.2.1.7. If any nomination is deemed to be invalid, in accordance with the Constitution and Byelaws the Elections Committee shall inform the person nominated within one day, and publish the details at the time of publishing nominations.
- 7.2.1.8. 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 the Constitution and Byelaws. The Returning Officers shall rule on the challenge and their decision shall be final.
- 7.2.1.9. Any candidate may withdraw from an election, no later than 3 days prior to voting and at the discretion of the Elections Committee, only by writing to the Elections Committee.
- 7.2.1.10. Candidates may specify an alternative preferred name, by which they are commonly known, on the nomination form, which may then be used on the voting paper and in any election publicity. The Returning Officers shall have discretion to rule on the appropriateness of any specified alternative names. If candidates do not specify an alternative preferred name, or if the Returning Officers rule that the name specified is inappropriate, then the candidate's registered name shall be used on voting papers.

- 7.2.1.11. Delegates to the Annual and Scottish Conference of the National Union of Students (NUS) shall be elected by a ballot of all students, with the exception of the President who shall be an ex-officio delegate. An election shall be held for the full permitted number of delegates, conducted in accordance with this Byelaw. In the event of an insufficient number of delegates being elected, no further election shall be held and no other members appointed to the delegation.

7.3. Election Campaigns

- 7.3.1. All candidates shall act in accordance with the regulations contained within this Byelaw and with any other regulations approved by Student Council, and shall be required to sign an undertaking to this effect.
- 7.3.2. No Student Officer, as defined in Byelaw 4, Student Council or Standing Committee, as defined in Byelaw 5, shall endorse any candidate for election to any of the posts outlined in Clause 4 above in any written or published material.
- 7.3.3. The Elections Committee shall determine regulations for publicity, and arrangements for financial assistance towards publicity costs.
- 7.3.4. Hustings shall be arranged for the elections for Sabbatical Officers, and for other elections as deemed appropriate, as determined by the Elections Committee.
- 7.3.5. Any Standing Committee may request a statement from any candidate for a post of Student Officer on issues specific to that Committee. Such a request shall be submitted in writing and copied to the Elections Committee. Any statement produced in response to such a request shall not exceed 100 words, and shall be published on the AUSA website by the Returning Officers within two days of its receipt.
- 7.3.6. Any complaints regarding the conduct of the election campaign shall be submitted in writing to the Elections Committee before the start of the count. The Elections Committee, along with the Returning Officer Team, shall decide on any complaints, subject to Student Council.
- 7.3.7. All student media provided by committees constituted under other Byelaws shall ensure that their coverage of elections and referenda is unbiased and balanced. The Elections Committee may take action where necessary to ensure compliance with this requirement.

7.4. Polling

- 7.4.1. Location: Polling shall take place online unless otherwise approved by the Elections Committee.
- 7.4.2. Polling for ordinary elections shall be held over at least:
 - 7.4.2.1. Three days for elections for Student Officers and Student Council.
 - 7.4.2.2. The Elections Committee shall determine the duration of polling for by-elections.

- 7.4.2.3. Polling for referenda shall be conducted in accordance with Byelaw 2: Referenda.
 - 7.4.2.4. Polling dates shall be published before, and may not be altered after, the start of polling.
 - 7.4.3. Entitlement to vote: Any current registered student will be able to vote via the AUSA website after signing in with their university account.
 - 7.4.4. Canvassing: There should be no publicity relating to an individual candidate, or favouring/opposing a Referendum proposal within the AUSA Students' Union Building, with the exception of the election/referendum statements. Candidates must adhere to regulations relating to campaigning set out within the election rules.
 - 7.4.5. Complaints: Any complaints regarding the conduct of polling shall be submitted in writing before the start of the count. The Elections Committee shall decide on any complaint.
- 7.5. Regulations for Referenda
- 7.5.1. Referenda shall be conducted in accordance with the regulations in this Byelaw and Byelaw 2, except where otherwise specified in this clause.
 - 7.5.2. Voting will follow the voting guidelines as above via the electronic voting mechanisms on the AUSA website.
 - 7.5.3. All Members shall be able to vote.
 - 7.5.4. Referenda shall be held concurrently with elections, whenever possible.
 - 7.5.5. Proposers of a Referendum may not withdraw their names after it has been submitted to the President.
 - 7.5.6. The proposers of a Referendum shall be entitled to produce a statement of not more than 200 words, and proposers of amendments a statement of not more than 100 words, supporting their proposals. Opponents of a proposal, or of amendments shall be given equal opportunity to state their case. The Elections Committee shall rule on which Member(s) shall produce the statement, in case of any dispute. The statements shall be published as election statements.
- 7.6. Elections for Student Council and Committees
- 7.6.1. The Chair and Vice-Chair of Student Council shall be elected by cross-campus ballot alongside the Standing Committee Elections.
 - 7.6.2. Student Council and Committees may elect other Members from within their membership for specific duties as they determine.
 - 7.6.3. Positions within Committees can only be amended following changes to the relevant Byelaws.
 - 7.6.4. Notice of such elections shall be circulated with the notice of the meeting at which the election is to be held.
 - 7.6.5. Nominations shall be taken at the meeting.
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7.6.6. The meetings may decide to invite candidates to speak in support of their nominations.

7.6.7. Voting for Committee Chairs and Committee representatives to Student Council shall be conducted by open ballot by show of hands.

7.7. Regulations Governing Counting

7.7.1. The Count shall be organised the Elections Committee and shall be overseen by the Returning Officer Team.

7.7.2. 'Re-open nominations' shall be considered as a candidate for counting purposes, and no other candidate shall be elected unless they obtains a higher vote than 'Re-open Nominations'.

7.7.3. The count shall be conducted within one day of the close of voting.

7.8. Single Transferable Voting System

7.8.1. The Elections Committee shall ensure that any elections under the Single Transferable Voting System are conducted in accordance with the rules laid down by the Electoral Reform Society.

7.9. Tied Votes

7.9.1. If the Elections Committee and Returning Officers deem a vote to be tied at any stage of the counting process it shall be resolved by random electronic selection.

8. Glossary of Terms

8.1. First preference: the number '1' placed against only one candidate.

8.2. Second and subsequent preferences: the numbers '2', '3', etc., each placed against only one candidate.

8.3. Election result sheet: a sheet showing the vote credited to each candidate and the non-transferable vote at each stage of the count.

8.4. Stage of the count: the determination of the first (or subsequent) preferences expressed for each candidate.

8.5. Overall majority: a majority over all other candidates.