

Committee Title	Student Voice					
Date of Meeting	25 th October 2021					
Title/Subject	Elections Schedule					
Paper Presenter	Sara MacLean, Deputy Returning Officer					
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	<p>The Elections Schedule is a part of our constitution that governs elections. It works in conjunction with the Election Rules. If there is a conflict with the Election Rules, the Election Schedule supersedes the Rules. Further, as it is part of our constitution, changes to the schedule must be approved by Student Voice, Trustee Board and GCU Court.</p> <p><u>Changes made (not an exhaustive list)</u></p> <p>The Election Schedule has been redrafted to reflect the different types of elections that we have at GCU as the previous Election Schedule left gaps especially for non-FTO elections.</p> <p>This version makes it more clear the terms of office for each position and edibility.</p> <p>Governance of elections has been redrafted to reflect practice- The Returning Officers role no longer organises elections. It also outlines for more than just the FTO election, the Returning Officer which was a gap in the last schedule</p> <p>The Schedule now includes a part on Complaints. This has been included in the Elections Rules for the last three years.</p> <p>Disqualification section was added making the process of disqualification clearer.</p> <p>By-elections now has a clause that after an election and a by-election has been run yet the role remains vacant, Executive Committee can co-opt a member for the role with final approval of the co-optation up to Student Voice.</p> <p>The Schedule clarifies that a current FTO cannot hold the role of Student Voice Chair or Vice Chair as well as ensuring independence of the Student Voice Chair.</p> <p>Questions of Student Voice members with double mandates has come up in the past. The new schedule clarifies that all Student Voice members receive one vote regardless of how many roles they fill.</p> <p>A clause on “purdah” has been added that reflects what we do in practice to ensure elections remain fair.</p>					
Recommendation(s)	Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Approval	X
	<p>Any member can ask a question by raising their voting card and being recognised by the Chair to speak.</p> <p>Student Voice are asked to approve the Elections Schedule</p>					

Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	Review of all Scottish SU/SA's elections schedule Chief Executive Chair of Student Voice				
Staff/Student Protocol	Yes		No	X	N/A
Will any decision approved directly affect the work of staff?	The Chief Executive has been consulted on this proposal.				
Should the paper be submitted to any other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting?	Trustee Board GCU Court				
If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.					

Schedule 4: Elections

1 Method

1.1 Elections are conducted using Single Transferable Voting method in a secret ballot

1.2 NUS Delegate elections will be run in accordance with NUS guidance

2 Overview of Elections

Position	When election will take place	Terms of Office for Position	Eligibility to stand in election	Eligibility to vote in election
Full Time Officer	Normally held in week 6 of Trimester B	Commencing the first Monday in the first week of June until the last Friday in last week in May annually	All Ordinary Members and current first-year Full Time Officers	All Ordinary members and Full Time Officers
GCU London Officer	Normally held at the beginning of Trimester A	Immediately after the result of the election have been announced until the last day of exams in Trimester 3	Ordinary members studying a programme delivered at GCU London	Ordinary members studying a programme delivered at GCU London

Chair of Student Voice	Normally held at the fourth meeting of Student Voice	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Current members of Student Voice	Current members of Student Voice
Vice Chair of Student Voice	Normally held at the fourth meeting of Student Voice	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Current members of Student Voice	Current members of Student Voice
Student Representatives on GCU and Students' Association Committees	Normally held at the fourth meeting of Student Voice	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Current members of Student Voice	Current members of Student Voice
Ordinary Members of Student Voice	Normally held at the beginning of Trimester A	Immediately after the result of the election have been announced until the last day of exams in Trimester 3	Current GCU students	Current GCU Students (school based)
Radio Station Manager	Normally no later than week 10 in Trimester B	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Members of the radio station	Members of the radio station
Magazine Editor	Normally no later than week 10 in Trimester B	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Members of the magazine	Members of the magazine
Liberation and Representation Officers	Normally no later than week 10 in Trimester B	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Members of the respective Liberation or Representation group	Members of the respective Liberation or Representation group
Societies Council	Normally no later than week 10 in Trimester B	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Members of affiliated societies	Presidents of affiliated societies
Sports Council	Normally no later than week 10 in Trimester B	Commencing and finishing on the first day of Trimester 3	Members of affiliated sports clubs	Presidents of affiliated sports clubs

3 Governance of elections

3.1 The Returning Officer has ultimate responsibility for the interpretation of election rules during the appeal stage of an election complaint.

3.2 The Returning Officer shall be:

3.2.1 A representative of NUS for the purposes of all Full Time Officer elections

3.2.2 For all other elections, an independent person appointed by the University Secretary and/or Head of Governance at GCU

3.3 The Deputy Returning Officer shall be a member of Students' Association staff appointed by the Chief Executive who shall be responsible for operations of the elections and enforcement of the rules.

4 Nominations

4.1 Notice of the Full Time Officer election shall be given at least four weeks in advance of the opening of nominations

4.2 Nominations for all other elections will be determined by the appointed DRO

4.3 All elections shall have an accessible, readily available process for nominations declared by the Deputy Returning Officer in advance of the election

4.4 Alternative name(s) may be used in the nominations/election at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer. The candidate(s) may appeal this ruling. If the appeal is not upheld and the name is ruled inappropriate by the Returning Officer than the candidates' name as it appears in the student record system will be used on the ballot and in promotion of the election by the Students' Association

4.5 A receipt must be issued to confirm the submission of each completed nomination.

4.6 At the close of the nominations, if there is an equal or lesser number of candidate(s) than there are positions, the candidate(s) shall be duly elected at that stage.

4.7 Nominees must comply with all election rules.

5 Complaints

5.1 All complaints regarding the conduct of any candidate or campaigner in an election should be made to the Deputy Returning Officer in writing using the Complaints Form provided.

5.2 The timeframe for an election complaint is from the close of nominations to an hour after the close of the voting period.

5.3 Any evidence should be submitted alongside the complaint.

5.4 All complaints will be dealt with at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer, including any investigations, sanctions or referral to the University for consideration under the Code of Student Conduct. The Deputy Returning Officer will respond to all formal complaints in writing as soon as practically possible.

5.5 Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the response they have received to their complaint, they may request a review of the handling of the complaint by the Returning Officer. This request should be in writing

to elections@GCUstudents.co.uk and include why they feel their complaint has been improperly handled and/or what new information has come to light. This email will be forwarded to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer's response will either confirm the validity of the original response, or provide details of any further action taken, or to be taken in the future to address any issues raised in the complaint. The Returning Officer's response is final.

5.6 Any requests for a review of the handling of the complaint must be made within 12 hours of the original response to the complaint.

5.7 No complaints will be accepted by the Deputy Returning Officer more than one hour after the close of voting. Complaints received after this time may be considered under the Students' Association's standard Complaints Procedure but will have no bearing on the outcome of the election.

6 Disqualification

6.1 Where the rules relating to elections are infringed, a candidate may be disqualified by the Deputy Returning Officer.

6.2 The candidate may continue to campaign until an appeal is heard.

6.3 The Deputy Returning Officer may suspend the candidate from campaigning with immediate effect where they consider this to be necessary.

7 By-Elections

7.1 By-elections shall be held to fill a vacancy that exists due to resignation, vacancy in the post caused by officeholder no longer being a member or no candidate coming forward for election.

7.2 Those elected in a by-election shall take office immediately after the results of the election have been announced until the usual end of term of office date for that post.

7.3 If an elected position remains unfilled after a by-election, the Executive Committee may co-opt a member to be the acting officer for that position. A co-opted Officer must be voted on at the next meeting of Student Voice to confirm their Office.

7.4 By-elections shall be held in line with the procedure for elections in as far as are deemed practical by the Deputy Returning Officer.

7.5 If a Full Time Officer-elect resigns within ten weeks of being elected, then this vacancy can be filled by the next placed candidate.

8 Other

8.1 No person may hold the post of Full Time Officer and Student Voice Chair or Vice Chair at the same time.

8.2 The Student Voice Chair may not hold any other Officer role at Student Voice.

8.3 All members of Student Voice receive one vote regardless of how many roles they fill.

8.4 Staff will monitor Students' Association official social media channels and direct mass communications to students during the Full Time Officer election period (close of nominations to results declared) to ensure incumbents do not have an unfair advantage to the communication channels.

Current Elections Schedule for Comparison

SCHEDULE 4: ELECTIONS

1. The Returning Officer

a) The Returning Officer shall be:

- i. A representative of NUS Scotland for the purposes of all Executive Committee elections in accordance with the rules and regulations approved by Student Voice.
- ii. A student elected by the Student Voice for all other elections required by the constitution, schedules and by-laws in accordance with the rules and regulations approved by Student Voice.

b) The Returning Officer has sole responsibility for the interpretation of election regulations.

2. The Deputy Returning Officer

a) The Deputy Returning Officer shall be:

- i. A full time member of Students' Association staff appointed by the Chief Executive for the purposes of the Executive Committee elections, who shall be responsible for supporting the Returning Officer in all aspects of their role in accordance with the rules and regulations approved by Student Voice.
- ii. The Chair of Student Voice for all other elections required by the Constitution, Schedules and By-laws in accordance with the rules and regulations approved by Student Voice.

b) In the absence of the Returning Officer, the Deputy Returning Officer assumes all of the responsibilities of that role.

3. Elections Committee

a) The Elections Committee is responsible for supporting the roles of the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer.

b) The Elections Committee shall be elected at the fourth meeting of Student Voice and will hold office until the same meeting the following year.

c) The membership of the Elections Committee is as follows:

- i. Chair of Student Voice (Chair, non-voting).
- ii. Five members elected by Student Voice.

- iii. Chief Executive (observer)
 - iv. Returning Officer (observer)
 - v. Deputy Returning Officer (observer)
- d) The Elections Committee shall be responsible for:
- i. Promoting all aspects of the elections
 - ii. Dealing with election complaints when referred from the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.
- e) No member of the Elections Committee may take part in the Executive Committee elections as a candidate, agent or campaigner.
- f) If any member wishes to participate in the Executive Committee elections then they must resign from the committee in order to do so.

4. Elections

- a) The following positions will be elected by an annual cross campus ballot open to Ordinary Members:
- i. Executive Committee members
 - ii. Delegates to NUS National Conference and NUS Scotland Conference
- b) The following positions will be elected by an annual cross school ballot open to Ordinary Members within each School:
- i. Ordinary Members of Student Voice
- c) The following positions will be elected annually by any students who are, or define as, coming from each liberation or representation group:
- i. Delegates to all NUS Liberation and Representation Conferences
 - ii. Student Voice Officers
- d) The following positions will be elected annually by members of their activity group:
- i. Radio Station Manager
 - ii. Magazine Editor
- e) The following positions will be elected annually by members of Student Voice at the fourth meeting:
- i. Student places on university committees
 - ii. Places for ordinary members on Students' Association committees
 - iii. Chair and Returning Officer of Student Voice

5. By-Elections

- a) By-elections shall be held to fill any vacancy that exists due to resignation or no candidate coming forward for election.
- b) By-elections shall be held in line with the procedure for elections in as far as are deemed practical by the Returning Officer.
- c) Those elected in a by-election will hold post from the date the result is declared until the usual end of term of office date for that post.

6. Nominations

- a) Notice of all cross campus elections shall be given to all members at least four university weeks in advance of the date of polls opening.
- b) All nominations shall be submitted using an accessible process declared by the Returning Officer.
- c) The nomination must include the name, student number, email address and contact telephone number of the nominee.
- d) A receipt must be issued to confirm the submission of each completed nomination.
- e) Nominees must comply with all election rules.
- f) No member may stand for more than one position in the same election.
- g) A candidate's meeting must be held following the close of nominations at a time specified by the Returning Officer. At this meeting the Returning Officer will provide a campaign rules briefing and other relevant guidelines for those involved.

7. Complaints

- a) The Elections Committee shall meet one hour after the close of polls to discuss any outstanding complaints not dealt with by the Returning Officer during the campaign
- b) All complaints must be made in writing to the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer no later than one hour after the close of polling.
- c) Any evidence to be considered alongside these complaints must be submitted by this time.
- d) The Elections Committee shall consider all complaints and decide if action should be taken in line with the election rules.

All candidates and campaigners bringing or named in complaints must make themselves available at this time to answer questions from the Elections Committee.