



## Election Rules

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<p>The Election Rules should be read in conjunction with <a href="#">Schedule 4</a> (Elections) and <a href="#">Schedule 6</a> (Full Time Officer Accountability) to the Constitution and the <a href="#">Code of Practice relating to the operation of the Students' Association</a>.</p>	

## **1. Election Rules**

- 1.1 All candidates must abide by the laws of the land, election rules, Students' Association's rules and policies and the rules and policies of Glasgow Caledonian University.
- 1.2 The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer has the authority to take proportionate action in response to breaches of the election rules, including suspending all or part of the election process.
- 1.3 The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer have the power to sanction a candidate for breaking these rules. Sanctions include, but are not limited to, directing a candidate or their campaign team to stop engaging in rule-breaking activity, stop candidates using their election material, candidates and their campaign team having time out from campaigning and disqualifying candidates from the election.
- 1.4 The Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer can refer candidates or members of their campaign team to other disciplinary processes in line with the Students' Association policies or the GCU Code of Student Conduct.

## **2. Conduct**

- 2.1 Candidates must take reasonable steps to ensure that their campaign team actions comply with the Election Schedule and rules at all times and must be able to demonstrate this in the event of an election complaint against them.
- 2.2 Bribes or inducements may not be offered in any form to any person. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes sweets and other small gifts.
- 2.3 Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election campaigning, including that there is no working from height or use of drones. All candidates and their campaign team are responsible for ensuring that in any area they are campaigning that there is freedom of access for any person who needs it and that doors, stairwells and passage ways are not blocked or made difficult to pass through.
- 2.4 All candidates or a designated nominee from their campaign team must attend all the Candidate's Briefings (Full Time Officers and GCU London Officer elections only) and any further meetings called by the Returning or Deputy Returning Officer. Failure to attend or send a nominee to the Candidate's Briefing will result in disqualification from the election.
- 2.5 Candidates must at all times act as directed by University staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.
- 2.6 Where the rules relating to elections are infringed, a candidate may be suspended or disqualified with immediate effect by the Deputy Returning Officer. This decision may be appealed through the Election Complaint Procedure.

## **3. Campaigning**

- 3.1 Candidates can undertake election campaigning as outlined by the Deputy Returning Officer in the election timetable. For Full Time Officer elections only, physical election campaigning is not permitted whilst voting is open in the election.
- 3.2 For Full Time Officer elections only, when permitted in the election timetable, physical election campaigning must only take place between the hours of 8am and 5pm. Physical campaigning includes, but is not limited to, lecture shouts, posters, flyers, banners and wearing campaign t-shirts.
- 3.3 Online election campaigning is permitted as outlined in the election timetable.
- 3.4 For Full Time Officer elections only, Candidates are allowed a maximum of four currently registered GCU students involved in their physical election campaign. Candidates are responsible for registering their campaign team by the deadline set by the Deputy Returning

- Officer in the election timetable. Election campaigners must always wear the official election campaign high vis vest and name lanyards whilst physically campaigning.
- 3.5 For Full Time Officer elections only, all candidates and their registered campaign team must have successfully completed the election campaign training, that includes Gender Based Violence (GBV) Training, by the deadline set by the Deputy Returning Officer in the election timetable.
  - 3.6 Candidates and their campaign team may use their personal social media accounts for campaigning purposes but posts must not be made to or via any Students' Association social media accounts, including social media accounts from committees, groups and networks outlined in the Students' Association By-Laws. This does not include our affiliated clubs and societies.
  - 3.7 Any elected or appointed officers, academic reps or committee members can endorse candidates, including the use of their name, title and why they support the candidate. No committees and groups outlined in the Students' Association By-Laws can endorse a candidate.
  - 3.8 Candidates are encouraged to perform "lecture shouts" but must not disrupt timetabled learning and teaching. Permission must be sought from any lecturer present and respect their decision.
  - 3.9 Students personal contact details collected by the Students' Association (including affiliated clubs and societies) or the University must be used in line with Data Protection policies. With the exception of authorised communications sent by the Students' Association, existing student email lists (including University email lists) and phone numbers cannot be used to promote candidates in elections. Candidates can ask for students' information separately to create their own email/phone lists or group chat services for election campaigning. Candidates must not take phone numbers from an existing group chat service (such as WhatsApp Groups) to send students a direct message about their campaign. It is the responsibility of the affiliated clubs or societies committee to decide whether to endorse candidates or allow election campaigning on their social media and group messaging services.
  - 3.10 GCU Learn and its integrated tools is used for learning and teaching and must not be used by candidates, their campaign team or students to campaign for votes or post their manifesto. This includes the use of email, messages, Collaborate Ultra, blogs, wikis, discussion boards, Padlet and other publishing tools.
  - 3.11 No election campaigning may take place on Level 2 of the Students' Association Building, on level 2, 3 or 4 of the GCU Glasgow Library, the GCU London Library, in computer labs, Caledonian Court or any area specifically designated by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.
  - 3.12 In principle, candidates must only do what all other candidates have an equal opportunity to do. For example, candidates cannot make use of personal connections to gain commercial advantages or use resources in their campaign which are made available to them by way of their position. Candidates and their campaign team who have an official role or position inside or outside the Students' Association may continue to act in this capacity, but they must not abuse their position for any purpose directly related to the election. Full Time Officers wishing to campaign must not do so during working hours, and must not use Students' Association resources to do so.
  - 3.13 No candidate may use Students' Association offices, meeting rooms, employee computers, work telephones or any other resources not freely available to all students for the purposes of their campaign. Candidates' campaign materials cannot be stored within the Students' Association Building.
  - 3.14 Campaign material must not use the Students' Association or GCU logo, as this would give the impression that the Students' Association and/or the University endorses the content of that

campaign material. You may share posts that originate from the Students' Association or GCU social media accounts on personal social media sites.

- 3.15 Candidates must ensure that any images, footage and music used in election campaigns is either their own, is copyright free or they have the expressed permission from the copyright holder.
- 3.16 Candidates and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own physical campaign materials. Campaign methods that damage or deface surfaces (eg adhesives, double-sided tape) may not be used and the cost (which could be considerable) for fixing the damages will be the responsibility of the candidate. Physical campaign materials are not allowed on the exterior of GCU buildings, including but not limited to railings, lamp posts and planters. Candidates must remove election campaign materials by the deadline set by the Deputy Returning Officer in the election timetable.
- 3.17 All candidates must respect that every student has the right to vote confidentially and freely. Once a student has opened the digital voting platform (ie begun the process of voting), no candidate or their campaign team should make any attempt to influence, intimidate or interfere with their decision or voting devices in any way. If a voter needs assistance with voting or wishes to raise a complaint, then students should be referred to election help staff, the Welcome Desk of the Students' Association or to the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 3.18 Proxy voting is not allowed. Voting by proxy means getting someone to vote on your behalf.

#### **4. Expenditure**

- 4.1 Campaigns may not exceed the budget limit set in the Election Rules.
- 4.2 The budget limit per candidate for Full Time Officer elections is £30 which is reimbursable with corresponding receipts from the Students' Association.
- 4.3 The budget limit per candidate for NUS Conference Delegation elections is £10 which is reimbursable with corresponding receipts from the Students' Association.
- 4.4 The budget limit per candidate for GCU London Officer elections is £10 which is reimbursable with corresponding receipts from the Students' Association.
- 4.5 All candidates must submit a written list of all campaign costs and corresponding receipts to the Deputy Returning Officer within one hour of the close of polls. If candidates have not spent any money on their campaign they must make this clear in their submission at this time.
- 4.6 All materials used by a candidate, except items freely and readily available to all, must be included within their submission with an estimated market value if they have not been purchased for the campaign and/or where no receipt is available. For the avoidance of doubt on what could be determined as free or readily available you should consult the Deputy Returning Officer.

#### **5. Complaints**

- 5.1 Any complaints regarding the conduct of any candidate or campaigner in an election should be made to the Deputy Returning Officer, normally submitted in writing to [elections@GCUstudents.co.uk](mailto:elections@GCUstudents.co.uk) or by using the online Election Complaints Form on the Students' Association website.
- 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 Students' Association Discipline Schedule and/or the University for consideration under the Code of Student Conduct. If the Deputy Returning Officer during the course of their investigation finds that any other rule has been

broken, even if it is not mentioned in the original complaint, then the Deputy Returning Officer can sanction appropriately. 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](mailto: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 Officers response is final.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 Any requests for a review of the handling of the complaint must be made within 12 hours of the original response to the complaint.
- 5.8 Any election complaint in the Full Time Officer election may be referred to the Elections Committee by the Returning or Deputy Returning Officer for consultation.

If candidates are in any doubt the interpretation of these rules they should ask the Deputy or Returning Officer for clarification.

The elections are run under the rules and regulations of GCU Students' Association Constitution, Schedules and By-Laws available from [www.GCUstudents.co.uk/keyinformation](http://www.GCUstudents.co.uk/keyinformation).