

Committee Title	Student Voice					
Date of Meeting	25 th October 2021					
Item Number and Title/Subject	Election Rules Revision for Consultation					
Paper Presenter	Sara MacLean, Deputy Returning Officer					
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	<p>GCU Students' Association revises its Election Rules yearly incorporating learning from previous years and feedback from candidates and other stakeholders.</p> <p>As part of this consultation, Student Voice is encouraged to read and feedback their thoughts on the current direction of the revision of the rules.</p> <p>Do note that the Election Rules work in conjunction with Schedule 4 (Elections) to the Constitution and the Code of Practice relating to the operation of the Students' Association.</p> <p>The rationale for the proposed changes are outlined within the paper. The revised Election Rules are presented as a tracked changes document and as a clean version.</p>					
Recommendation(s)	Information		Discussion	X	Approval	
	<p><i>Any member can ask a question by raising their voting card and being recognised by the Chair to speak.</i></p> <p>Student Voice is asked to discuss the Election Rules.</p>					
Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	<p><u>To date</u> Candidates' post-election survey Elections Planning Group Data Protection Lead, GCU</p> <p><u>Planned</u> Health and Safety Officer, GCU Director of Academic Development and Student Learning, GCU</p>					
Staff/Student Protocol	Yes	X	No		N/A	
Will any decision approved directly affect the work of staff?	This paper was devised by the Election Planning Group and reviewed by the Chief Executive.					
Should the paper be submitted to any other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting?	Trustee Board					

If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.

Change	Rationale
<p>4. All candidates and campaigners 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. <u>Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election activity.</u></p> <p>13-14. Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election activity.</p>	<p>Merging of two rules, both with a health and safety theme, into one rule</p>
<p>5. All candidates and their election agents should attend the Candidate's Briefings (Full Time Officers and GCU London Officer elections only) <u>and any further meetings called by the Returning or Deputy Returning Officer.</u> Candidates may request a meeting with the Deputy Returning Officer if they cannot attend the briefing. If a candidate misses important information by choosing not to attend a briefing they will still be expected to comply with all Election Rules.</p> <p>7. Candidates should attend any further meetings called by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer during the course of the campaign or make alternative arrangements to meet with them.</p>	<p>Change to reflect practice and merging of two rules with a similar theme. We don't require that candidates "election agents" (e.g. campaign manager) attend the candidates briefing.</p>
<p>6. A Motion of No Confidence vote will not be held at a meeting or extraordinary meeting of Caledonian Student Voice between the period of the close of nominations and the election process concluding, which is normally the election result announcement for any candidate in the Full Time Officer elections.</p>	<p>This is covered in Schedule 6 of the constitution. Deleted for repetition.</p>
<p><u>3. Campaigning</u></p> <p>1. Candidates are <u>not allowed to campaign for votes or launch their manifesto until seven calendar days before voting opens.</u></p>	<p>Currently reviewing this rule. What is the line separating "campaigning" from "preparing"? Would like to hear from Student Voice on this</p>
<p>2. Candidates and their supporters may use their personal social media accounts for campaigning purposes but posts must not be made to or via any Students' <u>Association</u> social media accounts, including social media accounts from committees and groups outlined in the Students' Association By-Laws. This does not include our affiliated clubs and societies.</p>	<p>This is the rule that is most often contravened. Can we make it clearer? Candidates are not allowed access to Students' Association resources (here it is social media resources) to ensure fairness</p>

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<p>6. With the exception of authorised <u>communications</u> student emails sent by the Students' Association, email lists including University email lists cannot be used to promote candidates in elections as this would not comply with Data Protection Policies. This includes sports, societies and group email lists. <u>This rule also applies to lists of phone numbers and social media accounts such as WhatsApp groups. Personal contact details must not be used for any purpose other than the purpose for which they were collected.</u></p>		<p>This rule was sent to review to the Data Protection Officer of GCU for consultation. It is to update the GDPR rule for modern methods/tools for communication.</p>
<p>7. <u>GCU Learn and its integrated tools is used for learning and teaching and must not be used by candidates or their supporters 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.</u></p>		<p>DRO has asked university to reconsider access to GCU Learn. Rule still under review</p>
<p>8. [Once voting has opened, no campaigning may take place on Level 2 of the Students' Association Building, on level 2, 3 or 4 of the GCU Library, in computer labs, Caledonian Court or any area specifically designated by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer. Campaigning includes but is not limited to posters, flyers, banners and wearing campaign t-shirts.] <u>During the academic year 2020/21 no physical campaigning is allowed in elections due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Separate guidance will be issued on physical campaigning due to the coronavirus pandemic in academic 2021/22.</u></p>		<p>Due to the fluctuating nature of the covid pandemic, it is hard to predict what March 2021 may look like and what kind of physical campaigning can take place within Scottish and GCU regulations. Thus separate guidance will be issued closer to the time period.</p>
<p>10-11. <u>Candidates must ensure that images and footage used in campaign material is either their own or they have permission from the copyright holder</u></p>		<p>Introduction of rule to comply with copyright of images and footage</p>
<p>11-12. <u>Candidates and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own campaign publicity. Campaign methods which damage or deface surfaces may not be used. This includes stickers, chalk and permanent markers. After the close of voting, we encourage candidates to remove and recycle publicity material.</u></p> <p>12-13. <u>Campaign methods which damage or deface surfaces may not be used. This includes stickers, chalk and permanent markers.</u></p>		<p>Merging of two rules</p>
<p>14-15. <u>Once a student has opened the digital voting platform (ie begun the process of voting), no candidate or campaigner should make any attempt to speak to them or to</u></p>		<p>The act of speaking, in of itself, is not what this rule is trying to mandate against, it is the act of interfering or influencing. Rule clarified to highlight this.</p>

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influence or interfere with their decision in any way. Students are entitled to vote in private. For the avoidance of doubt – “helping” a voter or “showing them how to vote” will be regarded a breach of the rules. If a voter needs assistance with voting then campaigners should refer them to polling station staff, the Welcome Desk of the Students’ Association or to the Deputy Returning Officer.		



Election Rules

Status	
Consultation with GCU Data Protection Lead	October 2021
Consultation with GCU Health and Safety	
Consultation with GCU Learn Lead	
Consultation with Student Voice	25 th October 2021
Student Voice Approval	
Document Location	S:\Common\Elections
<p>The Election Rules should be read in conjunction with Schedule 4 (Elections) to the Constitution and the Code of Practice relating to the operation of the Students' Association.</p>	

1. Elections Rules

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer have the power to sanction a candidate for breaking these rules, including disqualifying candidates from the election. Disciplinary action in line with the Students' Association policies or the GCU Code of Student Conduct may also be taken where appropriate.

2. Conduct

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.
2. Candidates must take reasonable steps to ensure that their supporters' actions comply with the election rules at all times and must be able to demonstrate this in the event of a complaint against them.
3. 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.
4. All candidates and campaigners 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. Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election activity.
5. All candidates ~~and their election agents~~ should attend 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. Candidates may request a meeting with the Deputy Returning Officer if they cannot attend the briefing. **If a candidate misses important information by choosing not to attend a briefing they will still be expected to comply with all Election Rules.**
6. ~~A Motion of No Confidence vote will not be held at a meeting or extraordinary meeting of Caledonian Student Voice between the period of the close of nominations and the election process concluding, which is normally the election result announcement for any candidate in the Full Time Officer elections.~~
7. ~~Candidates should attend any further meetings called by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer during the course of the campaign or make alternative arrangements to meet with them.~~
- 8-7. Candidates must at all times act as directed by University staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.

Commented [MS1]: Merge rule 13 from campaigning

Commented [MS2]: remove as it is covered in schedule 6 of the constitution

Commented [MS3]: Compiled into rule 5

3. Campaigning

1. Candidates are not allowed to campaign for votes or launch their manifesto until seven calendar days before voting opens.
2. Candidates and their supporters 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 and groups outlined in the Students' Association By-Laws. This does not include our affiliated clubs and societies.
3. ~~All candidates may make use of social media and these will be linked from the Students' Association elections pages if details are supplied to the Deputy Returning Officer.~~

Commented [MS4]: What constitutes the beginning of a campaign? Where is the line between preparing (e.g. social media pages, building campaigning team)

Commented [MS5]: To review further.

4. 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.
5. Candidates are encouraged to perform "lecture shouts" but must not disrupt timetabled learning and teaching. Permission should be sought from any lecturer present and respect their decision
6. With the exception of authorised [communications](#) student emails sent by the Students' Association, email lists including University email lists cannot be used to promote candidates in elections as this would not comply with Data Protection Policies. This includes sports, societies and group email lists. This rule also applies to lists of phone numbers and social media accounts such as WhatsApp groups. Personal contact details must not be used for any purpose, other than the purpose for which they were collected.
7. GCU Learn and its integrated tools is used for learning and teaching and must not be used by candidates or their supporters 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.
8. ~~Once voting has opened, no campaigning may take place on Level 2 of the Students' Association Building, on level 2, 3 or 4 of the GCU Library, in computer labs, Caledonian Court or any area specifically designated by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer. Campaigning includes but is not limited to posters, flyers, banners and wearing campaign t-shirts.~~ During the academic year 2020/21 no physical campaigning is allowed in elections due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Separate guidance will be issued on physical campaigning due to the coronavirus pandemic in academic 2021/22.
9. No candidate may use Students' Association offices, meeting rooms, employee computers 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. To be explicit the Full Time Officers cannot campaign for candidates during working hours.
10. 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.
- ~~10-11. Candidates must ensure that images and footage used in campaign material is either their own or they have permission from the copyright holder~~
- ~~11-12. Candidates and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own campaign publicity. Campaign methods which damage or deface surfaces may not be used. This includes stickers, chalk and permanent markers. After the close of voting, we encourage candidates to remove and recycle publicity material.~~
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- ~~14-15. Once a student has opened the digital voting platform (ie begun the process of voting), no candidate or campaigner should make any attempt to speak to them or to~~

Commented [MS6]: Consult with GCU Data Protection Lead

Commented [MS7]: Review with university.

Commented [SM8]: Incorporated into rule 3.11

Commented [SM9]: Incorporated into rule 2.4

influence or interfere with their decision in any way. Students are entitled to vote in private. For the avoidance of doubt – “helping” a voter or “showing them how to vote” will be regarded a breach of the rules. If a voter needs assistance with voting then campaigners should refer them to polling station staff, the Welcome Desk of the Students’ Association or to the Deputy Returning Officer.

~~15-16.~~ Proxy voting is not allowed. Voting by proxy means getting someone to vote on your behalf.

Expenditure

1. Campaigns may not exceed the budget limit set in the election rules.
2. All candidates for contested Full Time Officer elections may claim back up to £60 of expenses (with corresponding receipts) from the Students’ Association.
3. Candidates in Full Time Officer elections may also spend a further £30 of their own money.
4. All candidates for contested NUS Conference Delegation elections may claim back up to £10 of expenses (with corresponding receipts) from the Students’ Association.
5. Candidates in NUS Conference Delegation elections may also spend a further £10 of their own money.
6. All candidates for contested GCU London Officer elections may claim back up to £10 of expenses (with corresponding receipts) from the Students’ Association.
7. Candidates in the GCU London Officer elections may also spend a further £10 of their own money.
8. 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.
9. **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.

Complaints

1. Any formal complaints regarding the conduct of any candidate or campaigner in an election should be made to the Deputy Returning Officer in writing to elections@GCUstudents.co.uk using the Complaints Form provided. The timeframe for an election complaint is from the close of nominations to an hour after the close of the voting period.
2. Any evidence should be submitted alongside the complaint.
3. 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.
4. 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 Officers response is final.

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



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