

Committee Title	Student Voice					
Date of Meeting	24 th October 2022					
Item Number and Title/Subject	Election Rules Revision					
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		Approval	X
	<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></p> <p>Candidates' post-election survey</p> <p>Elections Planning Group</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.						



Election Rules

Status	Approved DRAFT
Consultation with GCU Department of Governance	25 th November 2021
Student Voice Approval	6th December 2021
Document Location	S:\Common\Elections
<p>The Election Rules should be read in conjunction with Schedule 4 (Elections) and Schedule 6 (Full Time Officer Accountability) 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

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Candidates must take reasonable steps to ensure that their supporters' 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election activity. 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.
- 2.5 All candidates 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. **If a candidate misses important information by choosing not to attend a briefing they will still be expected to comply with all Election Rules.**
- 2.6 Candidates must at all times act as directed by University staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.
- 2.7 [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 are not allowed to campaign for votes or launch their manifesto until seven calendar days before voting opens.
- 3.2 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 [and networks](#) outlined in the Students' Association By-Laws. This does not include our affiliated clubs and societies.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 Students' personal contact details must not be used for any purpose, other than the purpose for which they were collected by the Students' Association (including affiliated clubs and societies) or the University and must be used in line with Data Protection policies. With the exception of authorised communications sent by the Students' Association, student email lists

(including University email lists), phone numbers and group chat services (ie WhatsApp/Messenger Groups) cannot be used to promote candidates in elections. Candidates can collect students' information separately to create their own email/phone lists or group chat services for election campaigning.

3.6 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.

3.7 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. ~~Candidates should follow the GCU COVID Health and Safety Guidance that is available from~~

3.8 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.

3.9 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.

3.10 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.

3.11 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, such as stickers, chalk and permanent markers. After the close of voting, we encourage candidates to remove and recycle publicity material.

3.12 Once a student has opened the digital voting platform (ie begun the process of voting), no candidate or campaigner should make any attempt to 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.

3.13 Proxy voting is not allowed. Voting by proxy means getting someone to vote on your behalf.

~~3.14 Student Media Groups (currently Radio Caley and The EDIT) are responsible for liaising with Returning or Deputy Returning Officer to ensure fair and balanced coverage of the Students' Association Elections.~~

4. Expenditure

4.1 Campaigns may not exceed the budget limit set in the Election Rules.

4.2 All candidates for contested Full Time Officer elections may claim back up to £560 of expenses (with corresponding receipts) from the Students' Association.

~~4.3 Candidates in Full Time Officer elections may also spend a further £30 of their own money.~~

4.4 All candidates for contested NUS Conference Delegation elections may claim back up to £10 of expenses (with corresponding receipts) from the Students' Association.

4.5 All candidates for contested GCU London Officer elections may claim back up to £10 of expenses (with corresponding receipts) from the Students' Association.

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Commented [MS1]: Covid related rule has been taken out.

Field Code Changed

Commented [MS2]: This rule is now contained within the Elections Schedule and pertains to media not candidates.

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4.7 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.

4.8 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 ~~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 [Election](#) 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 [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 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.

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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.



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Commented [MS5]: We are on the higher end on the budget we allocate for candidates. The sector has been moving towards small campaign budgets primarily for sustainability reasons and we usually get comments from students on the amount of paper waste created by the elections. The smaller campaign budget would nudge candidates to use less paper waste. Further, we have gone from around 10 candidates an elections to over 20 without an increase in budget. Lastly, the majority of candidates don't use all the allocated funds

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