

Committee Title	Student Voice				
Date of Meeting	7 th December 2020				
Item Number and Title/Subject	Election Rules				
Paper Presenter	Sara MacLean, Deputy Returning Officer				
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	<p>The revised Election Rules are presented for approval to Student Voice. 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>Feedback from candidates' post-election interviews, the report from the Returning Officer and discussions from the Deputy Returning Officer Network was taken into consideration. In addition, consultation took place with the GCU Interim Head of Governance, GCU Director of Academic Development and Student Learning and the Elections Committee. In addition, all members of Student Voice were also invited to provide feedback. The current Coronavirus pandemic was considered when the rules were reviewed.</p> <p>In reviewing the Election Rules a benchmarking exercise took place with the National Union of Students (NUS) Rule-setting and candidate briefing principles (2018-19) that was created with the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission is the independent body which oversees elections and regulates political finance in the UK.</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 proposed final 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 approve the Election Rules.</p>				
Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	<p>Candidates' post-election interviews Returning Officers Report 2020 (NUS) Elections Committee Student Voice Members Elections Planning Group Interim Head of Governance, 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.						

Synopsis of Proposed Election Rule Changes
Nov 2020

Change	Rationale
The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer has the power to sanction a candidate for breaking these rules, including removing <u>disqualifying</u> candidates from the election. <u>Disciplinary action in line with the Students' Association policies or the GCU Code of Student Conduct may also be taken where appropriate.</u>	Changed wording to reflect wording used in practice. Added sentence to clarify that action may also take place under other policies and code of conducts.
8. Candidates must should at all times act as directed by University staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.	Word change to reflect necessity of following university staff directions.
<u>1.</u> Candidates are not allowed to campaign for votes or launch their manifesto until the close of nominations for that election <u>seven calendar days before voting opens</u> .	Reduced campaigning period for elections from three weeks to two weeks due to feedback from candidates on the impact to their physical and mental health. Kept at two weeks to assist candidates with placements, jobs and course timetables. Candidates encouraged to focus on preparing for elections and increased focus on digital campaigning. The specific date will be added to elections timeline on the website and in the candidates briefing. For example, if the voting open on a Monday than campaigning can begin on the Monday before.
4.2. 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 our constituted groups <u>committees and groups outlined in the Students' Association Bye-Laws</u> . This does not include our affiliated clubs and societies.	Feedback that term "constituted group" was confusing as all affiliated clubs and societies have constitutions. New wording clarifies the original intention.
4.5. Candidates are encouraged to perform "lecture shouts" but must not disrupt <u>timetabled learning and teaching</u> lectures . Permission should be sought from any lecturer present and respect their decision.	"Lecture shouts" changed to "timetabled teaching and learning" to include wider learning and teaching, ie seminars, labs etc.
2. University mailing lists such as class lists and GCU Learn mailings are owned by the University and may not be used — doing so will not only result in disqualification but also in referral to the University authorities. <u>6.</u> With the exception of authorised student emails sent by the Students' Association, email lists <u>including University email lists</u> cannot be used to promote candidates in elections as this would not comply with our Data Protection Policies. This includes sports, societies and group email lists.	Original rule number 2 (University email lists) amalgamated into new rule number 6 (student emails and Data Protection) with the same intended outcome. Separate new rule added on use of GCU Learn.

Synopsis of Proposed Election Rule Changes
Nov 2020

<p><u>8.</u> 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, <u>Caledonian Court</u> 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.</p>	<p>The University no longer allow candidates to campaign in person at the halls of residence (Caledonian Court). The Students' Association will provide the manifestos to the University to distribute to residents.</p>
<p>1. <u>GCU Learn and its integrated tools is used for learning and teaching and must not be used in the promotion of candidate statements by them and their supporters. These include use of e-mail, Messages, Collaborate Ultra, blogs, wikis, discussion boards, Padlet and other publishing tools</u></p>	<p>The University specified that they want GCU Learn to be used for learning and teaching purposes only. The Students' Association will still promote the elections and candidates' manifestos on the institutional home page and Students' Association organisation page on GCU Learn.</p> <p>On assessing the functionality on GCU Learn, we could not establish how to ensure its fair use. As students are only attached to relevant modules and their programme this could be unfair. For instance a student on the large nursing programme could have greater access to more students than a student on a small masters programme.</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 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.</p>	<p>The amendment to this rule will only be for the academic year 2020/21 as we do not want to encourage unnecessary travel and students unnecessarily being on campus during the Coronavirus pandemic.</p>
<p><u>9.</u> 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. <u>To be explicit, Full Time Officers can only campaign for candidates in their own time</u></p>	<p>The instructions issued to Full Time Officers has been formalised within the rules.</p>
<p>7.11. Candidates and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own campaign publicity. <u>Candidates are responsible for removing campaign publicity within 24 hours of the close of election. After the close of voting, we encourage candidates to remove and recycle publicity material.</u></p>	<p>Enforcing the removal of campaign publicity by candidates is operationally challenging to enforce by the Returning Officer, especially as the timeframe for election complaints has concluded. Focus on encouragement rather than punitive measure.</p>
<p>8.12. Campaign methods which damage or deface surfaces may not be used. This includes stickers, <u>and chalk and permanent markers.</u></p>	<p>There were some instances of permanent marker being used on dry-erase boards and causing damage to University property.</p>

Synopsis of Proposed Election Rule Changes
Nov 2020

<p><u>14.</u> Once a student has <u>opened the digital voting platform (i.e.</u> begun the process of voting), no candidate or campaigner should make any attempt to speak to them or to influence or interfere with their decision in any way. <u>Students are entitled to vote in private.</u> 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.</p>		<p>In post-election interviews, candidates wanted more clarity about what constituted the beginning of the process of voting. We also added information on the underlying principle of being able to vote in private.</p>
<p>Complaints</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Any formal complaints regarding the conduct of any candidate or campaigner <u>in an election—</u>should be made to the Deputy Returning Officer in writing to <u>elections@GCUstudents.co.uk</u> using the Complaints Form provided. <u>The timeframe for an election complaint- is from the close of nominations to an hour after the close of the voting period.</u> 		<p>This change is to clarify that complaints can be submitted about a candidate or campaigning in relation to an election. The timeframe for submitting an election complaint has been made explicit.</p>



Election Rules

Status	Approved
Consultation with UniversityGCU Department of Governance	4th to 17th October 2019 28th October 2020
Consultation with Elections Committee	26th November 2020
Student Voice Approval	28th October 2019
Document Location	S:\Common\Elections
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.	

Elections Rules

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer have the power to sanction a candidate for breaking these rules, including ~~removing-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.

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.
5. All candidates and their election agents should attend the Candidate's Briefings (Full Time Officers and GCU London Officer elections only). 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. Candidates ~~should~~must at all times act as directed by University staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.

Campaigning

1. Candidates are not allowed to campaign for votes or launch their manifesto until ~~the close of nominations for that election~~ seven calendar days before voting opens.
- 1.2. 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 ~~our constituted groups~~ committees and groups outlined in the Students' Association By-Laws. This does not include our affiliated clubs and societies.
- 2.3. 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.

- ~~3.4.~~ 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 ~~constituted group~~ can endorse a candidate.
- ~~4.5.~~ Candidates are encouraged to perform "lecture shouts" but must not disrupt timetabled learning and teaching ~~lectures~~. Permission should be sought from any lecturer present and respect their decision.
- ~~5.6.~~ With the exception of authorised 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 ~~our~~ Data Protection Policiesiesy. This includes sports, societies and group email lists.
- ~~6.~~ University mailing lists such as class lists and GCU Learn mailings are owned by the University and may not be used – doing so will not only result in disqualification but also in referral to the University authorities.
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.
- ~~7-8.~~ [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.
- ~~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.
- 9.
- ~~9-10.~~ 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 and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own campaign publicity. Candidates are responsible for removing campaign publicity within 24 hours of the close of election. After the close of voting, we encourage candidates to remove and recycle publicity material.
- ~~11-12.~~ Campaign methods which damage or deface surfaces may not be used. This includes stickers, ~~and~~ chalk and permanent markers.
- ~~12-13.~~ Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election activity.
14. 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 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.

~~13.~~

~~14.~~ ~~15.~~ 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.



Election Rules

Status	
Consultation with GCU Department of Governance	28 th October 2020
Consultation with Elections Committee	26 th November 2020
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>	

Elections Rules

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer has 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.

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.
5. All candidates and their election agents should attend the Candidate's Briefings (Full Time Officers and GCU London Officer elections only). 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. Candidates must at all times act as directed by University staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer.

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.
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 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.
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.**
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.
11. Candidates and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own campaign publicity. After the close of voting, we encourage candidates to remove and recycle publicity material.
12. Campaign methods which damage or deface surfaces may not be used. This includes stickers, chalk and permanent markers.
13. Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should be aware of the safety of others when engaging in any election activity.
14. 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 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. 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 elections 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.