

Clubs and Societies Election Protocol

All club and society elections should be facilitated online via the Students' Union website, unless there are extenuating circumstances. These extenuating circumstances must be presented to the Union Opportunities Team where a discussion can take place. The act of online election allows them to be as transparent and accessible as possible to all members of the society and club, ensuring all standard members no matter their circumstance have the opportunity to vote.

UEASU Bye Law 9 Extract Student Group Elections:

9.27 Only ordinary members of the Union who are members of the student opportunity group may stand and vote in elections for Committee member positions.

9.28 The student opportunity group Election Returning Officer (ERO) shall be the Student Union's Deputy Returning Officer.

9.29 They are responsible for ensuring that there is a fair process for all elections and that the regulations are publicised at least three days before each election commences.

9.30 In the case of a dispute about the process or outcome of an election, decisions of the ERO can be challenged in the same way as Committee decisions are challenged as outlined in this Bye-Law, or a complaint can be made to a Full-Time Officer who can start the election process again if they find any problems with the process or outcome of any student opportunity group election provided they are not voting in the election.

9.31 Each post shall be voted on separately and the voting system used shall be the Single Transferable Vote.

9.32 No individual student member may hold more than one Presidency of a Student Opportunity Group No individual student member may hold more than three committee positions within Student Opportunity Groups.

General Queries Clubs and Societies Elections:

- Setting your roles - Current committee members will determine the roles for the following year. These must be submitted to the union opportunities team before the deadline set by the opportunities team, you will be emailed dates and deadlines for this via the committee newsletter.
- If you do not notify us of any change to the committee you would like to elect, we will put the roles we have on record for your student group committee live for election
- Eligibility to be a candidate - All those running in the elections must be a current student of UEA and a standard member of the club or society –
 - If a student is studying on a year abroad and would like to stand in the election for their return, they would not need to pay for membership on the grounds they will not be using any of the facilities or taking part in activities. To get this arranged

Commented [CS1]: What counts as an extenuating circumstance? Most socs that run their own election just do so because they want to (at least as far I as understand it)

Commented [ES2R1]: can i redo that sentence

Commented [AM(-S3R1): @Elizabeth Payne (UEASU - Staff) go for it

Commented [CS4]: I collected this info via a form sent this only to presidents to prevent multiple applications from the same soc/club

Commented [AM(-S5R4): This is fine I don't think we need to name the president specifically

Commented [CS6]: Add a line saying if they don't contact us and let us know the roles to elect that we will just run their election with the same roles they currently have

please send the name, username and email addresses of the student/s . To union.opportunities@uea.ac.uk

- If a student is intercalating, they would be allowed to stand and vote in the elections as normal as they can purchase standard membership
- Foundation year students are eligible to run if they continue to be a current student at UEA the next year
- If a student is a current undergraduate and has a confirmed postgraduate place at UEA, they must email proof of this to union.opportunities@uea.ac.uk and we will manually add you to the election
- If students wish to nominate themselves or run as a slate this is possible and can be done via the SU website function.
- Students may run for as many positions as they wish, but can only be elected into **three roles** and only to include **one presidency across both clubs and societies**
- Gender Balancing on Committee is encouraged but not compulsory – we encourage everyone to promote and enable equality of opportunity as part of the makeup of their committee
- If you have specific methods/timeframe of electing your committee or wish to do it outside of the window, then you must provide the union on your process and timeline of electing individuals – however this is not encouraged
- Seeing who is running – Once candidates have been approved by the SU you will be able to see a list of them on the elections part of your club/society webpage which you can find at the bottom of your student group website page. Before this point they will be in a secret ballot and should you wish to find out who is running to ensure posts are filled, please email union.opportunities@uea.ac.uk
- Please note your name will not be present on the ballot until voting opens. But you will receive an email notification of your ballot being received by the election system.
- The nominations period will be open for a minimum of 2 weeks and voting a minimum of 5 working days' times and dates will be announced with plenty of notice via the committee newsletter
- Notification of the Result – All valid results of an election will be posted on the elections results page on the UEASU website – a link to this will be sent to you via the committee newsletter.
- Whilst there is a primary period for the main student election we do recognise that some elections will take place at different times during the academic year, but we do strongly encourage all election to take place in the months of March to June.
- Where there is no evidence of an election taking place or a club/society fails to partake in the union organised election, it is the responsibility of the current committee to ensure an election takes place.

Commented [CS7]: Line saying that foundation year students are eligible to run as long as they are a member of the soc/club

Commented [CS8]: which you can find at the bottom of your student group page

Election Regulations

- The Returning Officer of the election shall be the Activities and Opportunities officer with the Deputy Returning Officer being the Head of Student Opportunities. The Activities and Opportunities Officer can start the election process again if they find any problems with the process or outcome of 71 any student opportunity group election provided they are not voting in the election.

- All Manifestos shall have a word limit of 200 words alongside a limited to 6-word slogan all manifestos shall be checked for inappropriate content and if found to be so the union holds the right to remove it from the ballot upon notification to the candidate
- The Union endorses open, fair and positive campaigning for the election a breach of [this] may result in the Union withdrawing that candidate from the election, this also falls in line with the Union's code of conduct, University regulations and the law.
- Candidates must allow students their right to democratic choice and cannot force students to vote for them
- There is no designated budget for campaigning provided to students. We do not expect students to spend any money campaigning for student group elections to ensure there is no financial barrier for others to participate.
- The voting system shall be single transferable vote a link to how this works can be found here - <http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/elections-and-voting/voting-systems/>
- Due to the number of roles available in the club and society elections, the Union will accept late candidates in the grounds that the current role is currently unfilled
- If a student has submitted an incorrect nomination for a role they may withdraw and be re-submitted for the role they wish on the assumption that this is uncontested
- If the vote ends in a draw and Re- Open Nominations isn't voted for, the Union Opportunities team will toss a coin to determine the winner of the election or the club/society may request a revote with the only the two candidates that drew both agreeing to this process
- The winner of each election if they win outright is final and cannot be contested as all complaints must be received before the close of the election
- Should committees wish to see a breakdown of the vote this can be requested via email to union.opportunities@uea.ac.uk
- To void an election, the Union opportunities team must be notified by the whole committee of the Club/Society, without any objection and with prior notice given to current candidates we may re-organise the election to ensure it is more representative.
- If anyone incorrectly votes the Union will not void the vote the act of voting is final

Commented [CS9]: Might need to include info somewhere on slate election and running for a position as a pair

Commented [CS10]: Add guidance on seeing anonymously the breakdown of the voting. This was requested a few times after first yr rep elections, especially by political societies

Candidate and Campaigner Conduct

- We expect all candidates to adhere to the following election and campaigning principles:
 - Fair and open
 - Democratic
 - Accessible
 - Transparent
- We encourage candidates to treat each other with respect and discourage negative campaigning but ultimately the tone of the election is decided by the candidates.
- However, the following will not be tolerated:
 - Zero tolerance for personal attacks by candidates or their supporters
 - Must not make any offensive or defamatory statements
 - Must not conduct yourself in a manner that is detrimental to uea(su) or UEA

- Must not make promises you know you cannot keep
- Campaigners must take reasonable steps to ensure that their supporter's actions comply with the campaign rules at all times and must be able to demonstrate this in the event of a complaint against them. This includes all activity by supporters online. In the event of a dispute as to whether an individual was under the control of a candidate, the Election Returning Officer's ruling will be final.
- Candidates and their Campaigners may only promote, share, alter, move or remove their own campaign materials.
- Candidates and their Campaigners may use email lists or other contact lists but only where lawful to do so. In most cases, this will require the consent of the members on the list to use their details in line with GDPR law. For example, if you manage a mailing list or a what's app group on behalf of your sports club, you cannot use that list or group to promote your campaign as you only have access to those contact details for the specific purpose of promoting the sports club.
- The SU's bye-laws outlaw bullying or intimidating a member into voting for a particular candidate or preference. As a result Candidates and their Campaigners must allow voters to cast their ballot freely and must not communicate with voters in any way once they have begun to complete their ballot. If Candidates and their Campaigners can see how a voter is expressing preferences and voting, they are in breach of this rule.
- Whereas candidates may well adopt similar policy stances and use similar publicity materials to other candidates, no candidate shall use publicity to promote another candidate, in the same or other election.
- In order to ensure adherence to the principles outlined in bye-law 5.9:
 - No elected officer of uea(su) may endorse a specific candidate in any union election in any verbal or written fashion.
 - Elected Officers remain permitted to encourage other students to run in the leadership elections.
 - No electoral candidate may accept and subsequently publish an endorsement by an individual who is not a member of uea(su). This means that you could not get a celebrity to endorse you on Instagram or your local MP to give you a statement of support.
 - No elected Union Officer may offer a specific electoral candidate advice on an individual level on any matters regarding manifesto realisation or manifesto construction, which goes beyond providing general, universal guidance

Online Campaigning Guidance

- It is important to remember that any online campaigning for SU elections is an official part of the election process and governed by the same rules. So any behaviour that would be considered unacceptable at a physical event, is equally as unacceptable in any online campaigning space. All users interacting with the Students' Union, or a representative of the Students' Union (including student leaders), should have an expectation of feeling safe.
- Live streaming will be considered publishing and therefore all the same campaigning rules apply during a live stream
- Due to the difficult nature of keeping a record of candidate campaigning on Snapchat, we will not be allowing the use of Snapchat as a platform for campaigning.
- No external endorsements – this includes no use of celebrities, social media influencers etc who are not members of uea(su).
- Consider your digital footprint when creating your campaign assets. If you use your personal social media accounts bear in mind what your friends, family and future employers will see.
- Consider your privacy – you might prefer to create an account specifically for campaigning, but this must still be visible to election officials so that we can ensure it is compliant with election rules. When campaigning with supporters, do not give them passwords and access to your social media accounts.
- Be aware also that some groups you post in may include alumni, not just current students
- Consider the purpose of the online spaces you are campaigning in – a closed Facebook group or a dating site might be considered a private space where people may not welcome campaigning.
- Keep in mind copyright and ownership of images and content when creating or sharing campaign materials.
- Some platforms allow for anonymity and some users take this an opportunity to behave inappropriately. The Students' Union has a zero tolerance approach to conduct that could legitimately be perceived by its recipients as:
 - Cyber Bullying/Stalking
 - Trolling / Online Impersonation
 - Excluding
 - Sexual harassment
 - Discriminatory comments and behaviour

- Abuse and unwanted attention
- Threatening or violent behaviour or language
- Any inappropriate behaviour will be treated seriously and could have repercussions not only for someone's candidacy in the election, but could also potentially result in a university disciplinary investigation or a uea(SU) code of conduct investigation. Remember, candidates are also responsible for the actions of their supporters when campaigning on their behalf.
- If you are concerned about the online conduct of a candidate or one of their supporters, email union.opportunities@uea.ac.uk, with **Election Complaint** as the email subject, detailing the allegation(s), the rules broken and any evidence. See How to Make a Complaint below for details of deadlines.

Complaints

- Complaints about the conduct of Candidates and their Campaigners must be sent to the Deputy Returning Officer detailing the allegation(s), as well as any evidence.
- All complaints regarding the conduct of Candidates and their Campaigners must be received within an hour of the close of polling (4pm).
- All complaints must be resolved to the satisfaction of the Returning Officer before the count on that student group can commence