

Elections and Campaigning

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REVIEW HISTORY			
Date	Name	Signature	Notes

Elections Standing Order Statement

RSU Bye-Laws state the following:

68 Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant Elections Rules and Campaigning Standing Orders.

69 Elections shall be overseen by the nominated Returning Officer, who shall not be a Full Member of the Union, who shall be responsible for ensuring elections are free and fair, and determining the general administrative arrangements.

70 The Returning Officer shall nominate a member of Union staff to be the Deputy Returning Officer.

71 The Returning Officer shall have the power to disqualify candidates found to have broken relevant Elections Rules and Standing Orders.

72 Elections of all Officer Trustees shall be by secret cross campus ballot of all Full Members as per clause 1 of these Bye-Laws.

73 Elections of College Presidents shall be by secret ballot of all Full Members of that respective college.

74 Elections for other positions, such as NUS Delegate, shall be defined in the relevant Standing Orders.

75 Candidates running for any elected position must be a Full Member of the Union at the point voting closes.

76 Candidates may campaign to encourage other Full Members to vote in the election. This campaigning must be conducted in accordance with the campaign rules outlined in the relevant Campaigning Standing Orders.

77 Elections shall use the Alternative Vote System where there is one elected position and the Single Transferable Vote System where there are multiple elected positions.

78 The counting of votes shall take place online under the supervision of the Returning Officer or nominee.

79 Should the counting of votes result in a tie; the Returning Officer shall first order a recount. If the same result materialises, the Returning Officer shall determine the method by which the result is determined with reference to the Electoral Commission guidelines.

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NUS Delegate elections

1. Should take place in Autumn to elect the Union's delegates to attend NUS National Conference.
2. As per the Bye-Laws, the RSU President shall automatically receive the lead delegate position as *ex-officio*.
3. Nominations for NUS Delegates should be open at least two weeks.
4. Voting for NUS Delegates should be open at least two full term days.
5. The election shall be administered via the Union's website provider.
6. A member of the Union's senior management team shall be Returning Officer and a staff member responsible for student voice shall be Deputy Returning Officer.

Officer elections

1. Officer elections should take place in Spring to elect the Union's Sabbatical Officers and College Presidents for the following academic year.
2. If the Union's Sabbatical Officers role becomes vacant during the term of office, then an election shall be held at the next opportune moment, in agreement with the RO, to ensure a maximal engagement from members.
3. RSU Co-option process will be implemented where a non-sabbatical role becomes vacant outside the Spring or Autumn Election period.

Complaints

1. The RO and by delegation the DRO shall receive, process, and make determinations on all complaints which are received during the elections period.
 - 1.1. The DRO will accept and review complaints from the opening of nominations to the close of voting.
 - 1.2. Complaints must be submitted in writing via the method outlined by the DRO in the election notice and arrangements.
 - 1.3. Upon receipt of a complaint, the DRO and a member of the union's staff team shall form as a panel to investigate the complaint and obtain further evidence if required.
2. The investigatory panel will provide the subject of the complaint an opportunity to respond at a Candidate Conduct Hearing.
3. At the candidate conduct hearing, the candidate is permitted to be accompanied by another student.
4. At the hearing the investigatory panel will;
 - 4.1. Present the details of the complaint along with any evidence that has been provided or discovered
 - 4.2. Provide the candidate with an opportunity to respond and provide an explanation if necessary.
5. The investigatory panel shall then determine if the complaint is to be upheld or dismissed. In the event a complaint is upheld the panel shall;
 - 5.1. Issue a rule clarification to all candidates

- 5.2. Issue a verbal warning (limited to one before escalation to a written warning)
- 5.3. Issue a written warning (limited to two before disqualification)
- 5.4. Disqualify the candidate.
- 6. In the event of a candidate disqualification, the case will be referred to the RO.
 - 6.1. The disqualified candidate may appeal in writing to the RO no later than one-hour after the close of voting.
 - 6.2. The RO will call an Appeal Hearing to review;
 - 6.2.1. The investigation and Candidate Conduct Hearing
 - 6.2.2. Any new evidence which is related to the case
 - 6.2.3. The proportionality of the sanction applied to the candidate.
 - 6.2.4. Extenuating circumstances
 - 6.3. Following the Appeal Hearing the RO shall determine if the outcome of the Candidate Conduct Hearing is upheld or dismissed.
 - 6.3.1. In the event the outcome is upheld, the RO shall formally withdraw the candidate.
 - 6.3.2. In the event the outcome is dismissed, the disqualification shall be reversed.
- 7. Complaints submitted after the commencement of the count may only relate to the conduct of the count and must be made in writing to the RO.
- 8. Complaints regarding the administration of the election must be submitted within one-hour after close of voting. Such complaints will be considered in relation to the RSU Complaints Policy.

RSU Co-option Process

It is important all eligible members be treated alike so that the arrangements are open and fair. The co-option process shall therefore be as follows:

1. RSU will advertise the vacancies on the RSU website and via social media. The advertisements will include (or link to the ability to find out):
 - a. A contact point (elections@roehampton.ac.uk) so that people considering putting their names forward for co-option can obtain more information on the roles
 - b. The co-option process
 - c. The co-option timeline to include:
 - i. The closing date for all expressions of interest
 - ii. The date of the Presidents' Committee at which the co-option shall take place.

It is permissible for RSU Officers and Staff members to approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option.

2. The interested student will be provided a link through RSU website to submit their application.

3. A member of RSU staff will check that the individual meets the qualification requirements, that they are:
 - a. A current enrolled student at the University of Roehampton
 - b. (Where relevant) They are a student of the college they wish to represent
4. Students confirmed as eligible to stand will be contacted with the opportunity to submit a photo of themselves and up to 100 words on why they should have the position. This will be circulated to members of Presidents' Committee within the agenda.
5. Confirmed applicants will be invited to attend the Presidents' Committee
6. Co-option will be the first point on the agenda (bar for the welcome, apologies for absence and minutes of the previous meeting)
7. Confirmed Applicants will be offered up to a minute to make a speech to Presidents' Committee
8. Members of Presidents' Committee will hold a vote for co-option, where 'Re-open nominations' will remain a candidate. Voting shall take place by Single Transferrable Vote.
9. A member of RSU staff will notify the applicants of the results as soon as practical.
10. Successfully co-opted applicants take up their position immediately, therefore having voting rights for the rest of Presidents' Committee. Their term of office runs until the June of the academic year

Appendix 1: Template Elections Rules

General Rules

1. RSU Elections are subject to the law, University of Roehampton regulations, and RSU policies and byelaws. Candidates and their campaign teams must always adhere to these.
2. The Elections will be conducted in accordance with RSU byelaws and standing Orders which include the Elections Rules. The Returning Officer's interpretation of the Elections Rules is final.
3. A student is allowed to put in a nomination for a maximum of one role for either full time or part time officer role and one nomination for NUS conference delegate.
4. Candidates are responsible for the actions of their campaign teams and will be personally responsible if a member of their campaign team is subject to a complaint.
5. All students have the right to vote free from influence exerted by candidates or campaign teams.
6. Candidate manifestos must include the candidate's name, position they are standing for, a photo of the candidate, and consist of fewer than 500 words total.
7. All candidates are required to attend a candidate briefing to ensure that their campaign abides by Elections Rules. Any candidate unable to attend must inform the Deputy Returning Officer with a minimum of 24 hours' notice, to elections@roehampton.ac.uk
8. Candidates may withdraw from the Election at any point by informing the Deputy Returning Officer at elections@roehampton.ac.uk
9. The Returning Officer reserves the right to postpone or stop the Election at any time if they believe the Election is not being conducted in a free and fair manner.

Candidate Campaigning

10. The official campaigning period opens **Time** (GMT), **Full date** and will close at **Time** (GMT), on **Full date**.
11. Voting shall open at **Time** (GMT), **Full date** and will close at **Time** (GMT), **Full date**.
12. Campaigning is permitted online and on campus from the moment a candidate completes their nominations application. If candidates begin campaigning before they have attended the candidate briefing, it is their responsibility to ensure their campaign abides by the Elections Rules and any further guidance provided. Candidates and campaign teams are subject to Elections Rules and Guidelines whether they have attended the candidate briefing or not.
13. Candidates and their campaign teams must not interfere with, remove, or change other candidates' promotional materials, even if material posted is in breach of the Elections Rules and Guidelines. Candidates should notify the Elections team through elections@roehampton.ac.uk if they believe promotional material is in contravention of the Elections Rules and Guidelines.

14. Candidates and their campaign teams are prohibited from campaigning within RSU and Library spaces. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the interior of the RSU Building, Hive Café, Elm Grove, and library (including the outside of the buildings). This also includes all RSU-affiliated online and social media spaces.
15. Candidates must obtain the permission of the owner or manager of any space such as walls, windows, pillars, or doors, before posting any campaign materials. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, virtual spaces like social media pages or groups, websites, or online forums.
16. Candidates and their campaign teams must not bribe, impersonate, or harass any student throughout the elections period.
17. Candidates are encouraged to engage in discussion and debate about ideas, views, and opinions, and it is expected these are done in a constructive, respectful manner. Candidates and their campaign teams must not attack other candidates in a derogatory or inflammatory manner in person, in writing, by illustration, or online.
18. Candidates must campaign individually. Candidates are prohibited from campaigning as part of a team with the support of other candidates: publicising other candidacies, appearing together in or sharing physical or virtual resources.
19. Campaign materials are permitted to reference the RSU, University of Roehampton, and the Colleges, but must not display their logos. Candidates and their campaign teams are encouraged to use #Roelects and the voting QR code provided by RSU across their campaign materials.
20. Candidates may seek endorsement from RSU societies and UoR sports clubs. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the candidates themselves, societies and sport clubs have read, respect and implement the ** [further guidance for endorsements](#)

Candidate Resources

21. RSU, University of Roehampton staff, and the Colleges are prohibited from endorsing any candidates.
22. Candidates and their campaign teams are prohibited from dressing up in any of the official college mascot costumes.
23. All candidates will be provided with a ** [support package](#) on the Candidate Hub, the contents of which will be outlined by the Elections Committee.
24. Candidates and their campaign teams will be provided with a campaign budget. Candidates are prohibited from exceeding the expenditure limit of £Amount for Sabbatical Officer candidates and £Amount for College President candidates. *

*** Budget amount subject to change based on candidate numbers and the subsequent cost to RSU. The exact amount will be confirmed during the candidate briefing.**

25. Candidates are expected to create their own publicity. The cost of printed publicity must be accounted for within the candidate budget.

26. Candidates must submit [election budget form](#), including receipts for any item purchased for campaigning, by filling out the ** [Candidate's expense request form](#) before **Time** (GMT), **Full date**. Candidates are required to provide a list denoting all items purchased, quantity, cost, and receipts. Candidates are eligible to claim back up to 50% of their total expenses.

Incumbent Officers

27. Candidates who already hold an elected or appointed position at RSU may not use the Students' Union's time, funds, resources, or official social media to enhance their own campaign or that of another candidate for the duration of the Election period.

Environmental Guidance

28. RSU holds values relating to environmental awareness, and all students are encouraged to consider the environmental impact of campaigning. For any questions about ensuring your campaign is environmentally conscious, please contact the Elections Committee by emailing elections@roehampton.ac.uk

Complaints

29. All students have the right to vote free from influence exerted by candidates or campaign teams.
30. All students enrolled at the University of Roehampton (or partner college or institutions) are eligible to vote, unless they have opted-out of the Students' Union membership as outlined in the Byelaws, if they have student status on the opening day of voting.
31. Voting will be held online through the ** [Roehampton SU website](#). Any electronic device which can be used to vote will be classified as a polling station. Candidates and their campaign teams are prohibited from interfering with any polling station and cannot give their own or a hired device to another student to vote from.
32. Voting will be by secret ballot, with all votes being cast in confidence.
33. The votes will be counted by the 'Alternative Transferable Vote' system as defined by the Electoral Reform Society. This system will be explained online when students go and cast their vote and at the ballot stations.
34. Re-open nominations (RON) shall be a candidate for all positions.
35. The Elections voting counts will be conducted through an automated software using our membership system.
36. Any challenge or complaint concerning the administration and good conduct of the Election shall be received in writing by the Deputy returning Officer before **Time** (GMT), **Full date**, via the provided ** [complaints form](#). This includes any complaints about another candidate's campaign.
37. Any challenge or complaint shall be heard and determined by the Returning Officer within two working days (where possible) of a written complaint being lodged by any full voting member or a standing candidate.

38. Any standing candidate who is the subject of a complaint shall be notified of the complaint lodged against them at the earliest convenience. After being notified, the candidate who is subject to the complaint has two working days to submit an appeal in writing to the Elections Committee, at elections@roehampton.ac.uk
39. From **Time** (GMT), **Full date**, a challenge or complaint can only relate to the conduct of the count and must be lodged in writing to the Elections Committee at elections@roehampton.ac.uk. The Election Committee shall resolve the complaint within two working days of the complaint being lodged.
40. The Deputy Returning Officer under the Guidance of the Returning Officer shall decide on the penalty of a candidate complaint. This may range from a verbal warning to disqualification from the Election.
41. The Returning Officer is responsible for the final interpretation of the Elections Rules, and the final decision on the matters sits with them.

Pre-term Agreements

42. All prospective candidates standing for a Sabbatical Officer position are required to meet one-to-one with the RSU Chief Executive or their nominee for a Pre-Term meeting. Such candidates are expected to organise this meeting by emailing elections@roehampton.ac.uk. You can read a copy of the ** [RSU Pre-Term agreement here](#) .
43. All prospective candidates standing for a College President position is required to meet one-to-one with their respective Head of College for a Pre-Term meeting. Please email the Head of College directly to book the Pre-Term Meeting.
44. As part of this Pre-Term meeting, prospective candidates will enter into an agreement signifying their understanding of the nature of the role, any prerequisites, and expectations. The candidate needs to ensure that the Pre-Term meeting with RSU or the College has taken place before **Time** (GMT), **Full date**.

If you have any questions about or require clarification of these Rules and Regulations, please do not hesitate to contact elections@roehampton.ac.uk.

** All embedded links will need to be updated on an annual basis.

Appendix 2: Template Endorsement Rules and Guidance for SU Elections

Endorsement rules and guidance

As an affiliated Society with the Students' Union or Sports Club of the University, you can have a significant influence on the Roehampton community. The Officer endorsement process is the perfect opportunity to get your group involved in the running of the Students' Union and wider university life.

If a group officially endorses a candidate, it means they want that person to win and will therefore promote their campaign materials.

If your Society or Sports Club chooses to endorse a candidate, we ask you to follow a few simple rules.

1. The Society or Sports Club Committee must hold a meeting and approve the decision to nominate a candidate(s). This meeting must be minuted by the Secretary (or equivalent), and the minutes of the meeting, with the decision included, sent to elections@roehampton.ac.uk
2. You are allowed to endorse the candidate as soon as you have received confirmation from the RSU elections team
3. The deadline for RSU to receive endorsements is before **Time** (GMT), **Full date**

All endorsements posts must reference the Elections. This can include our provided voting QR code or stating that the voting link is in your Society's / Sports Club's bio. We also recommend using #RoElects on any of your posts

You are not allowed to spend any money on the endorsement – for instance, printing costs or boosting a post on social media

There is a maximum of one endorsement allowed per Society or Sports Club per Officer position

You must abide by all Elections Rules, which you can find [here](#).

Some specific rules to remember:

- You must not delete or remove the campaign materials of other candidates
- You must not coerce or force members of your Society or Sports Club to vote for a particular candidate(s)
- You must not fund any candidate's campaign
- Your Society or Sports Club must not provide any electronic devices for members to vote on. When someone starts to vote, step away and let them get on with voting
- Your Society or Sports Club must not vote on behalf of other students
- The election is a secret ballot and all students have the freedom of choice