Byelaw 6 – The rules for the conduct of elections

6.1 Sabbatical and other elected officers

1. Sabbatical officers must be elected in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association and these rules.
2. Nominations for Sabbatical Candidates will only be accepted from full members of the Union.
3. The term of office for Sabbatical Officers will be a 12-month period ending on the day of the last graduation ceremony.
4. Any other Officer positions will be elected from their representative or activity group to the satisfaction of the Trustees, with reference to these rules.

6.2. Returning Officer

1. The Trustees will appoint a Returning Officer, who will at all times act independently of the electoral contest. The Returning Officer must not be a full member of the Union.
2. The Returning Officer is responsible for ensuring that elections run in accordance with these rules. They have sole and absolute discretion in interpreting these rules. The Returning Officers' decision is final.
3. The Returning Officer may appoint a Deputy Returning Officer and any other election officials they see fit. The appointment of such officials must be at the discretion of the Returning Officer.
4. The Returning Officer(s) shall undertake the following duties:
   a. The declaration and publication of the results
   b. Ensuring that all procedures governing Union elections have been properly applied
   c. Providing a report to the Board of Trustees and University Secretary on the conduct of the elections
5. The Returning Officer may declare an election null and void if:

   a. A voter has cast a vote as some other person, whether that person is living, dead or fictitious; or
   b. A voter has voted where s/he is not entitled so to do; or
   c. Any other serious misconduct is considered to have occurred

6.3 Election Officials

1. Election officials must be appointed no less than 48 hours before polling begins.
2. Candidates may object to up to two Election Officials. Where an objection is received and upheld, it is the choice of the Returning Officer whether that Election Official will be relieved of their duties.

3. Election Officials must not seek to influence voters in any way, and must abide by these rules. Election Officials will be required to sign a declaration to this effect.
4. If a complaint is lodged against any Election Official, it will be the responsibility of the Returning Officer to resolve. This may include relieving the Election Official of their duties and disqualifying a candidate if they feel the Election has been prejudiced.
5. Election Officials may not register their own vote whilst on duty.

6.4   Notice of Election

1. The notice calling an election will be issued by the Chair of the Board of Trustees at least 21 clear days before the date for the close of nominations.
2. The notice will state the following:

   a. The positions for which nominations are invited.
   b. The date and time for the opening of nominations.
   c. The date and time for the close of nominations. Nominations will close at least 14 clear days before the opening of the ballot.
   d. Details of who is eligible to vote.
   e. Details of how to submit a nomination.
   f. Details of the arrangements for Question Time.
   g. Location and opening times for polling stations.
   h. Anything else that the Returning Officer thinks is necessary.

3. A minimum of two notices of election must be posted in the Students' Union.
4. Notice of election must also be posted on the Students' Union Website.

6.5   The Process of Nomination

1. Nominations will only be accepted on receipt of a completed nomination form. Forms must be available both online and in the Students' Union from the date of nominations opening.
2. Candidates may not nominate themselves for more than one post in the same election, except in elections where one of the posts applied is as an NUS delegate. This is the only role which can be applied for in conjunction with a sabbatical or student officer post.
3. The Nomination Form must state the candidates name, course and University Card number. It must also carry the signature of the candidate.
4. The candidate should submit a copy of their manifesto.
5. On receipt of nominations the Returning Officer or the Deputy Returning Officer must check that the nomination complies with the requirements as listed above in which event the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer must declare that the nomination is valid.
6. A full list of all candidates must be published within 2 working days of the close of nominations.

6.6   Candidates Briefing

All candidates are required to attend a candidate briefing which will inform them of the responsibility of the positions and the election rules. The date of the candidates briefing will be set by the Returning Officer prior to the nominations period opening.

6.7   Candidates Conduct

1. Candidates are required to comply with the law; the University rules; The Union Code of Conduct and Elections rules.
2. Candidates may be disqualified by the Returning Officer if they or their campaign teams are found to have broken the rules or their actions are determined to have undermined the election process.
3. Candidates may also be subject to disciplinary procedures of the University or the Union.

6.8   Question Time

1. The Returning Officer shall issue a timetable for Question Time.
2. All Candidates are required to attend a Question Time. Should they be unable to attend, they must inform the Returning Officer in writing at least 24 hours before. The Returning Officer must then decide if the reason is acceptable, an unacceptable reason, or failure to inform may result in disqualification.
3. The Returning Officer must appoint a person to Chair Question Time, who must be a full member of the Union.

6.9   Voting

1. Voting must be by cross campus ballot, using a system of Alternative Transferable Voting or Single Transferable Voting. To avoid doubt, this should be operated in accordance with the procedures as recommended by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
2. Voting may be conducted online or via a paper ballot or a combination of both.
3. Paper ballots must display candidates' names alphabetically by surname (commencing with the letter randomly drawn by the Returning Officer) concluding with 'No Suitable Candidate'. The ballot paper must carry a unique, sequential reference number, and must allow for the retention of a stub with the voter's University card number.
4. The Returning Officer is responsible for the safe storage of ballot papers, and the security of ballot boxes. This includes recording numbers, locations and signatures for ballot boxes.
5. The Returning Officer will arrange for polling stations to be staffed. This includes ensuring that ballot papers and boxes are signed for, and ensuring that the number of ballot papers issued to voters is recorded.

6. Ballot papers must only be issued to voters with a valid Student number, and must be stamped with the official Union stamp prior to issue.
7. The Returning Officer must ensure that all ballot boxes and ballot papers are returned securely, and that ballot papers are not stored in the same location as ballot boxes.

6.10 The Election Count

1. The Returning Officer must ensure that at the close of polls all ballot boxes are accounted for, secure and sealed, and that all ballot papers are returned.
2. The count must be conducted in one single location and include all electronic and paper ballots cast.
3. The Count will commence when the Returning Officer is satisfied that all complaints relating to the conduct and administration of the election have been resolved.
4. The Returning Officer may appoint individuals to assist in the count. The RO must make sure that those involved in the election count have played no active part in the election.
5. Each candidate may have one scrutineer attend the count as an observer.
6. The only people in the count will be the Returning Officer, the counters and scrutineers. No one should leave or enter the room during the count.
7. Once the count for a particular post has been completed the Returning Officer shall reconcile the total number of votes recorded against the record of ballot papers issued. In the event of a discrepancy the Returning Officer must decide whether the discrepancy could materially have affected the result, and take any appropriate action.
8. Once the count has been completed for all posts the Returning Officer will sign a declaration of the results. The result must be announced within one working day of the count.
9. If No Suitable Candidate wins the Election, the Trustees will issue notice of another election and re-open nominations for the post.

6.11 Restrictions on Campaigning

1. Where a current Sabbatical Officer is a candidate in an election, they must record as annual leave any time spent campaigning during work hours.
2. Where a candidate holds temporary employment with the Union, they must not conduct their election campaign during work hours. They are able to make reference to their employment during their campaign but must not mention their campaign while working.
3. Candidates must not seek support from any member of Union staff, and staff must not show bias towards or against any candidate.

6.12 By-Election

1. If any elected position becomes vacant during the year, the decision whether to hold a by-election will be that of the Officer Committee.
2. If a Student Officer post becomes vacant, Officer Committee may appoint a member of the Union to the vacant post as a non-voting member in the interim period.

6.13 NUS Conference Elections

NUS Conference Election will be held in accordance with the NUS election rules with 2 Union NUS delegate positions being elected by a cross campus ballot, the other spot will be held for the SU President in line with their governance responsibilities.

6.14 Course Rep Elections

Only students registered on the course are entitled to stand or vote in Course rep elections.