

2025 Sabbatical Officer Election Rules and Regulations: Q&A Version

Introduction

Q: What governs the 2025 Sabbatical Officer Election?

A: The election is governed by the rules in this document, as well as supplementary documents like the Candidate Handbook, the Law, the Articles of Association, By-laws, Union policy, and University Codes of Conduct.

Q: What happens when you submit a nomination?

A: By submitting a nomination, candidates agree to follow the rules in this document and any related guidance.

You will then be expected to attend a candidate briefing, where you will learn more about the election process and how to run a campaign. Students will then be able to vote. If you are successful, you will take a year off your studies and do the role full-time.

Terms and Definitions

Q: Who is considered a candidate?

A: A candidate is a student member standing for election to a position.

Q: What is campaigning?

Campaigning involves informing students about your candidacy and encouraging them to vote for you via social media, messaging, or speaking to students.

Q: Who are campaigners?

A: Campaigners are individuals who campaign on behalf of a candidate.

Q: What is the role of the Returning Officer?

A: The Returning Officer ensures a free and fair election, interprets the Election Regulations, and prioritises the interests of the electorate.

Q: What does the Deputy Returning Officer do?

A: The Deputy Returning Officer manages the day-to-day election process, investigates complaints, and enforces rules.

Q: Who appoints the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer?

A: The Board of Trustees appoints them annually.

What authority does the Deputy Returning Officer have?

A: The Deputy Returning Officer can investigate complaints, enforce rules, delegate tasks, and issue sanctions.

Eligibility and Nominations Process

Q: Who can stand for election?

A: Only current Student Members who meet specific role criteria (e.g., Postgraduate or Undergraduate) and pass student status checks.

Q: Can someone with a suspended membership run?

A: No, students with suspended or revoked memberships cannot stand as candidates.

Q: Can you run for multiple positions?

A: No, candidates can only run for one Sabbatical Officer position.

Q: What happens if nominations are submitted late?

Late nominations are invalid.

Candidate Briefing

Q: Is attending the Candidate Briefing mandatory?

A: Yes, candidates must attend or make alternative arrangements with the Deputy Returning Officer to avoid disqualification.

Collective Campaigning

Q: Can candidates campaign together?

A: Yes, candidates may collectively campaign.

Student Group Endorsements

Q: Can student groups endorse candidates?

A: Yes, with committee approval via simple vote and confirmation from the Union.

Q: Can group funds be used for campaigns?

A: No, using group funds for campaigns is prohibited.

Publicity and Campaign Materials

Q: What materials must candidates submit?

A: Candidates must provide responses to questions in the nomination form, a photograph, and a video by the close of nominations at midnight on 2nd March, with any final edits being made before Wednesday 12th March.

Q: Can candidates use Union resources for campaigns?

A: No, Union computers, premises, or resources cannot be used for campaign purposes.

Elections Conduct

Q: Can candidates assist voters while they vote?

A: No, candidates and campaigners must not assist, supervise, or communicate with voters during voting.

Q: Where is campaigning prohibited?

A: Campaigning is prohibited near polling stations, libraries, faith spaces, and other areas designated by the Deputy Returning Officer.

Incumbent Sabbatical Officers and Community Organisers

Q: Can incumbent officers campaign while working?

A: No, incumbents must separate campaigns from their official duties and take leave during the voting period.

Candidates' Budget (Election Spending)

Q: What is the maximum spending limit?

A: The limit is £10 for Sabbatical Officer candidates.

Q: What happens if a candidate exceeds their budget?

A: Exceeding the budget may result in disqualification.

Voting and Results

Q: How will votes be counted?

A: Votes are counted using the STV system, and results are announced shortly after polls close at a results night event.

Q: Where can students vote?

A: Voting is online but at designated polling stations.

Complaints & Appeals

Q: When can complaints be submitted?

A: Complaints can be submitted until 10 am the day after voting closes. Complaints about the count can be submitted within one day of result announcements.

Q: Can you appeal a sanction?

A: Appeals can only be made on procedural grounds or if new evidence arises and must be submitted within 24 hours to the Returning Officer. Appeals based on a disagreement with a decision made by the Deputy Returning Officer without new evidence will not be accepted.

Sanctions

Q: What are the levels of sanctions?

A: Sanctions are categorised as Minor, Moderate, or Major, depending on the severity of the violation.

Q: What actions can result in disqualification?

A: Major violations that significantly impact the election's fairness can result in disqualification.