

**NATIONAL
CONFERENCE
n u s 2011**

CD11



Election Rules and Schedules

If you need this document in another format
contact NUS on 0871 221 8221 or email
events@nus.org.uk



national union of students

Introduction from Chair of Elections

National Conference has 3 main roles, to scrutinise the organisation, to set the direction for the year ahead and to elect those leaders who will steer it and most accurately represent the voice and thoughts of students. These election schedules and rules will explain the processes of elections and allow you to choose your student leaders or take on the opportunity to run yourself.

The next few pages will give you the boundaries of the election processes, but you will need to bring the policies in your manifestos, the excitement to the debates and the voters to the ballots. I especially want to say that if you think that 'someone like you' will never be on the NEC or in a specific position because of your background, your identity or the mode of study then please consider running. With an NEC this year containing student parents, apprentices and international postgraduates you can prove those perceptions wrong.

Matt Robinson
NUS Chief Returning Officer

Note: These rules are the property of the Chief Returning Officer and they alone will be the interpreter of them. Nothing in this guidance will supersede the NUS Constitution or rules. The Chief Returning officer is the interpreter of the Constitution in relation to issues of elections.

Note: Within this document references to the Chief Returning Officer may also apply to any deputy that they have designated.

Purpose of this document

This document outlines the rules and timetables for the positions elected at National Conference 2011. There are a number of positions available at the National Conference that you can stand for. These are split into full time positions, NEC positions (block of 15) and committee positions.

The **full time positions** are National President, Vice President (Further Education), Vice President (Higher Education), Vice President (Society and Citizenship), Vice President (Union Development) and Vice President (Welfare). Candidates for election to the full-time positions on the National Executive Council are required to sign a contract of employment with the National Union, the terms of which are agreed from time to time by the National Executive Council. Full time positions are paid.

There are 15 **National Executive Council** (NEC) representatives who will be expected to attend the 6 meetings of the NEC between July 1st 2011 and July 1st 2012. 5 positions are reserved for Further Education candidates.

There are 2 types of **committee positions**, for student trustees and for the Democratic Procedures Committee.

Student trustees sit on the Trustee Board and have collective responsibility with the officer and lay trustees for the finance and legal aspects of the National Union.

Democratic Procedures Committee ensures the smooth running of Conference and the policy process. National Conference will elect four members this year.

What you need to do

Before National Conference: You should read through this document and, if you want to run for election, make sure that your nomination meets the requirements set out and that any campaigning work that you do is within the parameters of the rules and schedules.

Are printed copies of this document available at conference?

No

1. The process for elections

This section outlines the process for election, including how many nominations you require, the deadlines for nominations and the rules for submitting nominations forms.

How to stand for National Conference

Any student at a Constituent Member (CM) of NUS may stand for election. A CM is any union affiliated to NUS or a committee of the NUS (including the National Executive Council).

Nomination Forms

These will be available for the full time position by emailing elections@nus.org.uk and available at the conference for the other positions or from the Conference event page on officeronline.

Nominations for National Conference

To stand for election you will need a number of students to nominate you. For the full time position you will need 10 nominations. These nominations must come from at least 10 Constituent members (CMs). You may not nominate yourself. We recommend you gather more than 10 nominations in case of errors.

Full time positions

Anyone who is a student at an affiliated union of the NUS or one of its committees (including the National Executive Council) can nominate you for election. They may only nominate one person per position.

To nominate you they must send you a letter headed with the logo of their union or signed by the chair of their committee declaring the following:

“I, (full name), of (name of constituent member), nominate (candidate’s name) for election to the full time officer position of (position name).”

You should submit these in hard copy, along with a hard copy nomination form by the close of nominations deadline which is **5pm 25th February 2011**. These should be delivered to:

The Chief Returning Officer
National Union of Students,
4th Floor, 184-192 Drummond Street
LONDON NW1 3HP

They should be either delivered by hand or by recorded post.

Any nominations received after this deadline will not be accepted unless a valid reason is approved by the Chief Returning Officer.

NEC positions (Block of 15)

Anyone who is a student at an affiliated union of the NUS or one of its committees (including the National Executive Council) can nominate you for election. They may nominate up to 15 people. For the Block of 15 positions you will need 5 nominations. These nominations must come from at least 5 Constituent members (CMs). You may not nominate yourself. We recommend you gather more than 5 nominations in case of errors.

To nominate you they must send you a letter headed with the logo of their union or signed by the chair of their committee declaring the following:

“I, (full name), of (name of constituent member), nominate (candidate’s name) for election to the position of block of fifteen member.”

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You should submit these in hard copy, along with a hard copy nomination form by the close of nominations deadline which is **5pm 18th March 2011**. These should be delivered to:

The Chief Returning Officer
National Union of Students,
4th Floor, 184-192 Drummond Street
LONDON NW1 3HP

They should be either delivered by hand or by recorded post.

Any nominations received after this deadline will not be accepted unless a valid reason is approved by the Chief Returning Officer.

Committee positions

Voting delegates at the National Conference can nominate you for election. For Committee positions you will need 5 nominations. These nominations must come from at least 5 Constituent members (CMs). You may not nominate yourself. We recommend you gather more than 5 nominations in case of errors. The closing for committee positions will be the 13th April and further details will be announced at Conference.

To nominate you they must sign your nomination form which will be available at National Conference.

2. The publication of accepted nominations

The manifestos and a list showing names and CMs of nominators for full time positions and the Block of 15 will be put online and a link circulated by email to all delegates at the close of registration for the conference.

There will be provision to publicise the nomination forms of all candidates for elections at National Conference for at least 4 hours before voting.

3. Objections to the eligibility of candidates

Any member of NUS may object to the eligibility of candidates or their nominators. For the full time position they may do this by contacting the chief returning officer in writing via elections@nus.org.uk no later than the 31st March 2010. For other positions they should contact the chief returning officer or their designate at National Conference no later than 1 hour before the vote for that election.

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Schedule of Elections for National Conference

Each position will have close of nominations. For the full time position this will be 5pm on Friday 26th February, for block of 15 this will be 5pm on Friday 18th March and for the other positions this will be on 13th April at a time announced by the Chief Returning Officer at the start of conference.

Full time position	Who can stand?	Nominations open	Number of Nominations	Close of Nominations
National President	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	10 from 10 CMs	5pm Friday 25 th February 2011
Vice President (Further Education)	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	10 from 10 CMs	5pm Friday 25 th February 2011
Vice President (Higher Education)	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	10 from 10 CMs	
Vice President (Society and Citizenship)	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	10 from 10 CMs	
Vice President (Union Development)	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	10 from 10 CMs	
Vice President (Welfare)	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	10 from 10 CMs	
National Executive Council (15 positions; 5 FE, 10 open)	Any student in membership	1 st January 2011	5 nominations from 5 CMs	5pm Friday 18 th March 2011
Student Trustee (3 positions)	Any student in membership	12 th April 2011	5 delegates	13 th April 2011
Democratic Procedures Committee (3 positions)	Any student in membership	12 th April 2011	5 delegates	

4. Manifestos

Candidates will have the opportunity to submit a manifesto to support your nomination. This will be circulated to all constituent members of NUS in the Manifesto Document.

If you do wish to submit a manifesto, this *must* be received in as a PDF document and mailed to: nominations@nus.org.uk by the close of nominations. Full time positions have 2 A4 pages, block of fifteen positions have 1 A4 page. You can convert your file to .pdf using a range of free software programmes available online.

Manifestos received without a nomination will not count as a valid entry into the elections.

5. Question Time

All candidates in all positions will be given the opportunity to deliver an election speech at the National Conference. The Chief Returning Officer shall make arrangements with the Democratic Procedures Committee to allow for a candidates question time for the full time position.

Other contested positions will be given the opportunity for a question time if the business of the conference allows it. This decision shall rest with the Democratic Procedures Committee and the Chief Returning Officer.

6. The Ballot

For each election, the Chief Returning Officer will announce the method of voting. Ballots will display the chosen name of each candidate, the position they are standing for and any declared affiliations of each candidate. Voting will be conducted by secret ballot and there will be clear ballot boxes and times to cast your vote advertised at the start of National Conference.

All students will be able to vote for all positions save that the vice-president (Higher Education) shall be reserved solely to Higher Education delegates and the vice-president (Further Education) shall be reserved solely to Further Education delegates.

7. The Count

The Chief Returning Officer will arrange for the count for the full time position to take place at National Conference. He will endeavour for the counts for the committee and NEC positions to also take place at the event, but if this is not possible for them to occur within one week of the close of Conference.

5 positions on the block of 15 are reserved for Further Education places. This means that a count will take place for these positions where only FE candidates may be elected followed by a further count with all remaining candidates for the 10 open places.

8. Campaigning rules for National Conference

The Chief Returning Officer has set out the following rules for the National Conference. It should be noted that these rules are the property of the Chief Returning Officer and their designates and they alone will be the interpreter of them.

In considering the rules candidates should be aware that they are responsible for the conduct of their campaign and supporters. Candidates for elections are governed by the NUS Code of Conduct (available on NUS Connect and from nick.smith@nus.org.uk) and a breach of this code by a candidate or their supporters may lead to disqualification, as may any breach of these campaigning rules (see 10 below).

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Expenditure

Candidates in all elections have a maximum amount they can spend on their campaigns notified once the nomination has been confirmed, for all campaign publicity materials that can be worn, given or handed to delegates. Campaign materials are anything that promote your candidature or discourages others from voting for your opponents. These include, but are not limited to, flyers, posters, banners, T-shirts and bags. Candidates may be asked to produce receipts of their expenditure and may be asked to ensure that any good/services received are available to all candidates and not only a result of special relationships with suppliers.

For example: Your father owns a printing firm and gives you 500 leaflets for free. You would have to declare a cost equivalent to 500 leaflets at a commercial rate within your expenditure.

For example: You and 3 other candidates share printing for leaflets and therefore get a bulk buy discount for 2,000. Your cost declared would be the cost of 500 copies *without* the bulk buy discount rather than a quarter cost of 2,000 copies.

Receipts must be produced by all candidates for an election an hour before a count for that election. The count will not take place before receipts for current candidates are received.

Maximum expenditure for elections at National Conference are as follows:

Full time officers	No more than £375
Block of Fifteen	No more than £125
Democratic Procedures Committee	No more than £35
Student Trustees	No more than £35

Note: If you are unsure whether your expenditure counts within these boundaries you should check with the Chief Returning officer before spending any money. You cannot plead ignorance on this issue following the event.

Emails and Facebook

The use of any official NUS, AMSU, NUSSL or NUS Area email list to gain nominations or advertise one candidate over another is strictly prohibited. This includes any official email networks or social networking groups and events both formal or informal that students use for another purpose, for example to discuss a type of student activity, community or political grouping.

Individual emails and the general use of social networking sites and message boards is considered word of mouth communication, and beyond the need to be respectful of their opponents, candidates are free to use these as they see fit.

Leaflets

Leaflets may be distributed to delegates at any point over the conference, but not on conference floor or in the area designated for ballot boxes. Leaflet distributors may be asked to disperse from an area by the Chief Returning officer or asked to desist entirely if their actions cause the event to become inaccessible.

Audio Debate

There will be a series of recorded debates on Thursday 3rd March between candidates for the National President and Vice President positions. Candidates will be given the timings of these debates after the close of nominations.

9. Accessible Campaigning

The Disabled students' Campaign created guidelines for accessible campaigning that candidates are encouraged to read. <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/disabled/Accessible-Campaigning-in-NUS/>

10. Code of Conduct

Candidates are reminder that as members of NUS they are subject to the NUS Code of Conduct which is available online <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/pageassets/about/democraticprocess>

The code of conduct sets out the protocol to be followed given any breach of discipline. A breach of discipline can include (but is not limited to, threatening or harassing any other person, assaulting any other person, damaging any property, acting in contravention of the NUS Equal Opportunities Policies; acting without due regard for the safety of others, acting with dishonesty or with intent to defraud and infringement of equal opportunities, safe space, safeguarding, no platform or staff.

The Chief Returning Officer has the right, at any point, to suspend a candidate to be investigated under the Code of Conduct which may cause them to be withdrawn from the election.

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NUS RULES | ELECTIONS

600 Application

601 These rules will apply for all elections to positions in NUS except where these rules are varied in the schedules for Nations, Liberation Campaigns or Student Sections. These rules may also be further defined in schedules for Nations, Liberation Campaigns or Student Sections. Variations or further definitions shall require approval of the Chief Returning Officer.

605 Chief Returning Officer

606 The Chief Returning Officer will report annually to the National Conference on elections held under the auspices of these rules. They will keep under review measures to enable and maximise participation in elections and measures to restrict activity of candidates and campaigns to ensure fairness and make recommendations to this effect in their Annual Report to the National Conference.

607 The Chief Returning Officer in conjunction with their deputies will have the power to interpret all election regulations and issue rulings and interpretations to this effect to all members and appointed election officials.

610 The Chief Returning Officer (RO)

611 The Chief Returning Officer shall, for each election or appropriate set of elections, appoint one of their deputies or any other person to act as the Returning Officer.

612 The RO will:

- a. Be the interpreter of the Elections Rules for that election, subject to any rulings from the CRO.
- b. Appoint (and dismiss if necessary) election officials to ensure the good conduct and administration of the elections.
- c. Ensure oversight of the count and declare the results of the elections.
- d. Set rules, regulations and guidelines other than these election rules to govern the conduct of the election.
- e. Seek legal advice by referring the matter to the Board if he/she believes that statements made or the contents of publicity could leave NUS open to legal action.
- f. Rule out of order any statement or the content of any publicity, which in their view is in breach of the constitution, the law or any other appropriate rules and guidelines.
- g. Be empowered to issue warnings to candidates or remove candidates from the election at any point in accordance with these election rules and any rules and regulations issued under the above provision
- h. Be empowered to order recounts, or declare election processes null and void.
- i. Deliver, or ensure the delivery of, appropriate support and guidance to all election candidates.
- j. Make available information to potential candidates for each election outlining relevant rules and procedures.

615 Complaints

616 For each election the CRO is the ultimate official competent to deal with complaints regarding the conduct of candidates, their supporters and campaigns, and the administration of elections.

617 Complaints regarding the conduct of an RO must be sent to the CRO and cannot affect the outcome of an election unless National Conference rules that it should using the removal from office procedures

620 The Process of Elections

621 For each election or set of elections the RO will produce an election timetable, which will outline:

- a. The process for nomination
- b. Arrangements for the publication of accepted nominations
- c. Arrangements for objections to the eligibility of candidates
- d. Details for the submission of manifestos (if appropriate)
- e. Details of a question time (if appropriate)
- f. Arrangements for the ballot
- g. Arrangements for the count

622 The RO will produce details of the arrangements for balloting and for complaints procedures, and ensure that they are publicised to all constituent members or delegates as appropriate.

623 The RO will ensure that any additional details, or amendments to the arrangements, are publicised to all constituent members or delegates as appropriate in a timely fashion.

625 Nominations

626 Nomination forms will be available to all constituent members or delegates as appropriate.

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- 627 It will be the responsibility of nominees to ensure that nomination forms are completed accurately and submitted before the deadline.
- 628 All nomination forms will require a minimum number of individual member proposers from minimum number of different constituent members as outlined in the annual schedule of elections published by the CRO each September. In setting the numbers, the CRO will pay due regard to the need to balance ease of involvement demonstrating support; and consistency on the previous year.
- 629 The RO will have the sole responsibility for declaring a submitted nomination form valid.
- 630 In the event of two or more candidates having the same proposer in an election for a single position, the RO may allow up to twenty-four (24) hours for the candidates to find fresh proposers.
- 631 When the RO is satisfied, all valid nominations will be confirmed with the candidates and published.
- 632 Any candidate completing as nomination form for Full Time Office will also be required sign to accept any terms and conditions of employment relating to the post at the point of nomination
- 635 Manifestos**
- 636 Where appropriate manifestos must be submitted by the date laid down in the election timetable and must comply with any format requirements stipulated by the RO.
- 637 The RO will ensure that manifestos are made available to voters.
- 640 Campaign Publicity**
- 641 Where appropriate the RO may stipulate an amount that candidates may spend on their own election campaign.
- 642 The RO may draw up regulations for the conduct of candidates' campaigns. Any breach of these regulations could lead to disqualification from the election.
- 645 Question Time**
- 646 The RO may arrange a question time for the candidates in an election.
- 650 Withdrawal**
- 651 Any candidate may withdraw from an election at any point before the start of the count by informing the RO.
- 652 If a candidate withdraws during the ballot, or after a point at which the ballots cannot be amended, the RO will ensure that voters' next preferences are counted.
- 655 Voting**
- 656 The RO will ensure that eligible delegates at a given event are enabled to vote.
- 657 The RO will decide the method of voting and publicise it appropriately.
- 658 The voters will be able to express preferences for as few or as many candidates as they wish in any election.
- 659 Ballots will bear the chosen name of each candidate, the position being contested, and any declared affiliations of each candidate
- 660 The order of names on the ballot will be decided alphabetically by surname.
- 661 There will be a facility for voting for "Re Open Nominations". For the purpose of counting the votes, 're-open nominations' box shall be treated as if a candidate. This means that re-open nomination may be excluded and the votes transferred in accordance with the rules. Voters can express a preference for a candidate after re-open nominations. In elections with one vacancy to be filled, the counting shall be alternative vote system. If the 're-opens nominations' candidate is elected, the returning officer shall declare the vacancy unfilled. In elections with more than one vacancy the counting shall be by the single transferable vote system. If at any stage of the count 're-open nominations' candidate gains the required number of votes to be elected, it shall be deemed to have been elected and any surplus and any further votes, transferred to a further 're-open nominations' candidate. This stage shall be repeated as often as required. The returning officer shall declare unfilled the number of vacancies equal to the number of 're-open nominations' candidates deemed to have been elected, if any.
- 662 Voting will be by secret ballot.
- 665 The Count**
- 666 Candidates or their appointed representative may, if they wish, attend the counting of the votes, as observers only.
- 667 The count will commence only after the RO is satisfied that all complaints relating to the conduct and administration of the election have been resolved.
- 668 The count will be conducted in accordance with rules outlined by the Electoral Reform Society for running elections by Single Transferable Vote.

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669 Any candidate may request a recount within five (5) calendar days by writing to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer's decision is final in this regard.

670 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: There shall be 2 counts for this election.

a. In the first count, for the specified number of places reserved for Further Education candidates, all preferences for HE candidates will be ignored.

b. In the second count, for the number of National Executive Council members in total minus the specified number of places reserved for Further Education candidates, candidates elected in the first count will be deemed to have withdrawn for the purposes of counting.

675 Declaration

676 Results of the election will be declared by the RO in an appropriate manner when the count for each post has been successfully completed.

677 A list of successful candidates will be made available within one (1) week of the declaration of the results.