

## Conference Document 11: Elections

### 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.

Candidates elected to full-time positions will be employed from July 1 2014 to July 1 2015. However, these officers will also be required to attend two weeks of handover starting from June 16 2014.

There are 15 **National Executive Council** (NEC) representatives who will be expected to attend the 6 meetings of the NEC between July 1 2014 and July 1 2015. Five positions are reserved for Further Education candidates.

There are two 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.

### Checklist

- I have read these rules in full
- I have noted the deadlines for nominations
- I have noted the requirements of eligibility to stand
- I have noted the requirements for number of nominations
- I have noted the manifesto requirements and deadline
- I have noted the requirements on expenditure
- I have noted the dates of the elections podcast and student media questions
- I have noted the rules on accessible campaigning
- I understand that I am subject to the policies of NUS including the code of conduct



I have noted the dates of training for successful candidates □

## If you require additional information please contact the following people:

For issues relating to the administration of conference, including registration, access needs, room bookings and stalls contact the Events Team through

[events@nus.org.uk](mailto:events@nus.org.uk)

For issues about delegate entitlement, zone committees, reports and policy, amendments to zone policy proposals & Cross Campus Ballots contact the Chair of the Democratic Procedures Committee through

[executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk)

For issues about elections contact Chief Returning Office through [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk)

## Introduction from the Chief Returning Officer

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, Higher Education students from a Further Education college and international postgraduates you can prove those perceptions wrong.

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.

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## 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 or sabbatical officer at a Constituent Member (CM) of NUS may stand for election. A CM is any union affiliated to NUS or an NUS Full time Officer on a committee of the NUS (including the National Executive Council).

### Nomination Forms

These will be available for the full time position by emailing [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk). Nomination forms are also available on the National Conference hub at <http://conference.unioncloud.org/nav/elections/stand-for-election>

## 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 include proof of their student status, valid on the day of nominations, and a letter 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).

If anyone is unsure as to what is acceptable proof of student status, they should contact [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk)

You should submit these in hard copy, along with a hard copy nomination form by the close of nominations deadline, which is **12pm Wednesday 12 February 2014**. These should be delivered to:

The Chief Returning Officer  
National Union of Students  
Macadam House  
275 Gray's Inn Road  
London  
WC1X 8QB

They should be either delivered by hand or by recorded post. Proof of postage is not proof of receipt.

**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 five nominations. These nominations must come from at least five Constituent members (CMs). You may not nominate yourself. We recommend you gather more than five nominations in case of errors.

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 include proof of their student status, valid on the day of nominations, and a letter declaring the following:

“I, (full name), of (name of constituent member), nominate (candidate’s name) for election to the position of Block of 15 Member.”

If anyone is unsure as to what is acceptable proof of student status, they should contact [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk).

Nomination forms are available from [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk). Nomination forms are also available on the National Conference hub at <http://conference.unioncloud.org/nav/elections/stand-for-election>

You should submit these in hard copy, along with a hard copy nomination form by the close of nominations deadline, which is **12pm Wednesday 19 February 2014**. These should be delivered to:

The Chief Returning Officer  
National Union of Students  
Macadam House  
275 Gray’s Inn Road  
London  
WC1X 8QB

They should be either delivered by hand or by recorded post. Proof of postage is not proof of receipt.

**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 2pm on 9 April 2014 and further details will be announced at Conference.

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



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### **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.

### **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 [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk) no later than Wednesday 26 February 2014. 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.

### **Schedule of Elections for National Conference**

Each position will have close of nominations. For the full time positions, this will be 12pm Wednesday 12 February 2014. For block of 15 this will be 12pm Wednesday 19 February 2014 and for the other positions this will be on 9<sup>th</sup> April at a time announced by the Chief Returning Officer at the start of conference.

<b>Full time position</b>	<b>Who can stand?</b>	<b>Nominations open</b>	<b>Number of Nominations</b>	<b>Close of Nominations</b>
National President	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of NUS	16 December 2013	10 from 10 CMs	12pm Wednesday 12 February 2014
Vice President (Further Education)	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of NUS	16 December 2013	10 from 10 CMs	12pm Wednesday 12 February 2014
Vice President (Higher Education)	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of NUS	16 December 2013	10 from 10 CMs	
Vice President (Society and Citizenship)	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of NUS	16 December 2013	10 from 10 CMs	
Vice President (Union Development)	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of	16 December 2013	10 from 10 CMs	

	NUS			
Vice President (Welfare)	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of NUS	16 December 2013	10 from 10 CMs	
National Executive Council (15 positions; 5 FE, 10 open)	Any student or sabbatical officer in membership or a Full Time Officer of NUS	16 December 2013	5 nominations from 5 CMs	12pm Wednesday 19 February 2014

## 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: [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@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.

Candidates must also submit a plain text copy of their manifesto in a Word document for accessibility purposes.

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

## Speeches

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' speeches for full time positions.

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.

## 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.

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All delegates 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.

## **The Count**

The Chief Returning Officer will arrange for the count for the full time position to take place at National Conference. They 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.

Candidates may send one observer to the count for their election but cannot attend the election count themselves.

## **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 [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@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.

Further rulings can be sought by candidates after nominations have closed. Rulings shall be circulated to all candidates at the same point.

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## Expenditure

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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 £400
Block of Fifteen	No more than £150
Democratic Procedures Committee	No more than £45
Student Trustees	No more than £45

**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 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 and student media questions**

There will be a series of recorded debates on Wednesday 26 February between candidates for Full Time Officer positions. Candidates will be given the specific timings of these debates after the close of nominations.

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After each debate candidates will be able to attend an optional session where they will be asked questions by members of the student media from across the UK. This session will be facilitated but note that the Chief Returning Officer has no jurisdiction over the reporting of student media outlets.

Candidates will be able to attend one, both or neither of these opportunities to promote themselves.

### **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/>

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## Code of Conduct

Candidates are reminded 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> or from [executiveoffice@nus.org.uk](mailto:executiveoffice@nus.org.uk)

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.

## Training for successful candidates

NUS believes in supporting its officers and volunteers. As such we will provide a range of training and induction processes for successful candidates. All candidates should make these dates available as soon as possible.

### Full Time Officers

Full Time Officers **must** ensure that they are available from 16 June 2014 for their FTO training and formal induction. This will most likely be at the NUS HQ office in London and another venue near to London and will be paid.

As such, the formal start date for newly elected officers is 16 June 2014. Following two weeks of training, officers will take up their new posts on July 1 2014.

### Councillors

Training for the newly elected councillors (the 'Block of 15' elected at this Conference) will be held at the first NEC meeting 2013/4, exact date to be confirmed.

### Democratic Procedures Committee and Steering Training

The newly elected members of the Democratic Procedures Committee will be invited to attend a meeting following National Conference 2013 to discuss what occurred there. In addition there will be a training session on the skills and knowledge required for steering a conference open to all steering committees and DPC, exact date to be confirmed.

### Trustee Board

The Trustee Board will be trained at a residential induction during summer 2014. This will be for student trustees, lay trustees and officer trustees from the NEC.

## Diversity monitoring

The Chief Returning Officer wants to ensure that these election processes are as open as possible to the full diversity of our membership. If your nomination is successful you will be contacted to fill in an optional Diversity Monitoring Form.

## 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.

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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.

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**

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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.







