



# Election Guide and Rules

If you need this document in another  
format contact NUS on 0845 5210 262  
or email [events@nus.org.uk](mailto:events@nus.org.uk)





## Purpose of this document

This document outlines the rules and timetables for the positions elected at National Conference. 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 begin their term of office from **July 1 2018 ending on July 1 2019**. However, these officers will also be **required** to attend two weeks of handover starting in June 2018 (official date TBC) when the contract of employment date and remuneration will start.

The **voluntary positions** are Block 15 on the NEC, Student Directors and Democratic Procedures Committee.

There are 15 **National Executive Council** (NEC) representatives (known as the Block of 15) who will be expected to attend the 5 meetings of the NEC between **July 1 2018 and July 1 2019**. Five positions are reserved for Further Education candidates and 50% of the positions (rounded down) will be reserved for candidates who self-define as women.


There are two types of **committee positions**, for student directors and for the Democratic Procedures Committee. **Student directors** 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 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 ☐
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## 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 and for issues about elections contact the Chief Returning Officer [governanceteam@nus.org.uk](mailto:governanceteam@nus.org.uk)

## Introduction from the Chief Returning Officer

The student movement is an exciting place, and the experiences it offers in terms of development, leadership and the opportunity to make a difference means it is an incredibly positive group for many. As well as the important policy and debates that occur at conferences, you will often get the chance to nominate, vote or even be a candidate in an election. This guide aims to explain the processes of elections and give you a chance to take part in choosing your student leaders.

Elections can be closely fought, but the important thing is for candidates and their supporters to approach them with a sense of respect for all students. If you're not sure whether to stand or not then remember that the electorate will always decide which candidates they want, but they can't decide if no-one runs.

Best wishes,  
Jules Mason, NUS Chief Returning Officer



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'JFMason', written over a light blue horizontal line.

**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.



# Process for standing in election

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 positions

### Eligibility

Any individual member as defined in clause 16 of the NUS Articles may stand for election. This includes students aged over 16 or sabbatical officers at a Constituent Member (CM) of NUS. A Constituent Member is a Students' Union/Association affiliated to NUS. This also includes NUS Full Time Officers. Only students or sabbatical officers on NUS Committees may stand for positions.

### Nomination Forms

The process for submitting your nomination is to fill in the online form on the National Conference Hub. We have outlined the steps you need to consider for submitting a form so please follow each of the steps and fill the form in online. We will only accept nominations filled in through the online form and submitted before the deadline.

### 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 and for voluntary positions you need 5 nominations.

## Rules

These rules are the property of the Chief Returning Officer and their designates and they alone will be the interpreter of them.

## Your eligibility and personal details

You will need to provide us with your name, address, phone number and email address. You will also need to confirm with us which union you are a member of and provide us with proof that you are a student or student officer. You will need one of the following:

- A letter from an institution confirming your student status or officer status
- A letter from a students' union confirming your student status or officer status
- A scan/clear photo of a valid student card/Union staff ID card, which clearly shows the name of institution and expiry date, and which has not yet expired
- A letter confirming that you are a Full Time Officer of NUS


## Your nominations


For full time roles you will need at least 10 people from 10 different Constituent Members to agree to nominate you to the position you wish to stand in election for. You may not nominate yourself.

You will need at least 5 people from 5 different Constituent Members to agree to nominate you to the position you wish to stand in election for. You may not nominate yourself.

We recommend you gather more than the required number of nominations in case of errors.

For each person you will need their full name, their Constituent Member and proof of their student status in one of the following ways:

- A letter from an institution confirming their student status or officer status
  - A letter from a students' union confirming their student status or officer status
  - A letter confirming that the nominator is a member of an NUS Committee
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- A scan/clear photo of a valid student card/Union staff ID card, which clearly shows the name of institution and expiry date, and which has not yet expired

Your nominator may not nominate more people than there are positions available in that election. That means each nominator may only nominate 1 person for each Full Time Officer Role.

By providing proof of their student status and consenting for you to use it on the nomination form they are declaring their nomination for you. Their name and constituent member will be published online once your nomination has been accepted. It is your responsibility to make sure the information is accurate. Providing false nominations or evidence will be investigated by the Chief Returning Officer and could potentially result in disqualification from the election. If for any reason your nominator's evidence is not valid, you will be contacted over email and have 24 hours to provide another nomination.

If you are unsure about your proof of status please contact [governanceteam@nus.org.uk](mailto:governanceteam@nus.org.uk) before the close of nominations.

## Manifesto

Submit a manifesto to support your nomination. A manifesto is a statement about why you are standing for the position. We will be publishing all manifestos and promoting them to all constituent members of NUS.

To ensure your manifesto is included in the published booklet you need to submit it in two formats:

1. The manifesto must be received as a PDF document of no more than 2 A4 pages
2. You must also submit a plain text copy in a word document for accessibility purposes

## Photo

Submit a 'head and shoulders' photo of yourself with a clear background. There must not be anyone else included in the photo and the image must be of a high quality for us to edit to the right size to upload onto our website.

## Biography

Candidates in full time positions will submit a short statement introducing yourself of **no more than 100 words**. We will be putting up this up online on the Conference Hub along with your headshot and a link to your manifesto. You may submit links to any website or social media page (e.g. facebook, twitter) where you are promoting your election. NUS and the Returning Officer cannot accept responsibility for the content of any external websites advertised by individual candidates within their manifesto or supporting statements.

## Objections to the eligibility of candidates

Any member of NUS may object to the eligibility of candidates or their nominators. You may do this by contacting the returning officer in writing via [governanceteam@nus.org.uk](mailto:governanceteam@nus.org.uk) no later than Friday 2 March 2018 at 12noon.


## Question Time


At National Conference, you may be invited to a hustings. The Chief Returning Officer shall also make arrangements with the Democratic Procedures Committee to allow for candidates' speeches for full time positions. The time allocated for each candidates and final arrangements will be communicated closer to National Conference once the agenda is set.

## The Ballot

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

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 full time positions to take place at National Conference. They will endeavor 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 seven working days of the close of Conference.

Block of 15 count - to include at least 50% women and 5 reserved places for FE

5 positions on the block of 15 are reserved for Further Education places and in addition at least 50% of the Block 15 shall be reserved for women. This means that 4 counts will take place. Firstly for FE women for 2 positions and then following that the second count will include the remaining FE candidates for the remaining 3 positions. The third count will be for all remaining women for the number of positions required to get the Block of 15 to at least 7. Then the forth count will take place for all remaining candidates for the final 8 positions.

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

## Campaigning Rules

### 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.

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. If you are unsure whether your expenditure counts within these boundaries you should check with the Chief Returning officer via [governanceteam@nus.org.uk](mailto:governanceteam@nus.org.uk) before spending any money. You cannot plead ignorance on this issue following the event.

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


### Emails and Facebook

The use of any official NUS, NUS Services or NUS Area email list to advertise one candidate over another is strictly prohibited. This includes any official email networks or social networking groups and events both formal and 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.

Candidates may **not** make use of any pre-existing facebook or other social media group/page or similar, but should create new ones for the purposes of the election they are currently standing in.

### Leaflets

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





## Code of Conduct


In considering the rules candidates should be aware that they are responsible for the conduct of themselves, their campaign and supporters. Candidates for elections are governed by the NUS Code of Conduct (<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/governance/nus-code-of-conduct>) A breach of this code by a candidate or their supporters may lead to disqualification, as may any breach of these campaigning rules.

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.

## 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.







# Election Rules and additional information

## 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.

### 602 Chief Returning Officer

603 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.

604 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.

### 605 The Chief Returning Officer (RO)

610 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.

### 611 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 RO 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

Rules:

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 with demonstrating support; and consistency on the previous year.

a) Candidates for the Vice President (Further Education) position may only be nominated by individual members of NUS who are individual members under article 16.2 or 16.4, or by individual members under article 16.1 or 16.3 if they are in particular a student or sabbatical officer at a further education constituent member, or a student studying a further education course at a higher education constituent member.

Candidates for the Vice President (Higher Education) position may only be nominated by individual members of NUS who are individual members under article 16.2 or 16.4, or by individual members under article 16.1 or 16.3 if they are in particular a student or sabbatical officer at a higher education constituent member, or a student studying a higher education course at a further education constituent member.

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.

Rules

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.





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.

