



Students' Union Elections – Spring 2010

City University London Students' Union

Election Regulations
Spring 2010



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Returning Officer & Deputy Returning Officer

1. The Returning Officer (RO) ensures that the election is run as smoothly and fairly as possible in accordance with the Election Regulations. The RO is nominated by the University Secretary and is currently the Dean of Students, Dr Malcolm Cross.
2. The RO has sole responsibility to interpret the Election Regulations and in the case of any disputes or complaints his decision is final.
3. The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) is nominated by the Returning Officer and is currently Aidan McDonald, the General Manager of the Students' Union and Secretary to the Students' Union Trustee Board



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Eligibility to stand

All students currently registered on a City University course are normally eligible to stand and vote in the election.

The following exceptions apply:

For all elected posts:

- Students who have decided to opt out of Union membership are **not** eligible to stand or vote in any Students' Union election.
- Students who are at validated, partnership institutions or on study abroad or exchange programmes **not** eligible to stand or vote in any Students' Union election.
- You cannot stand for more than one FTO or SRO post, but can stand for NUS delegate regardless of any other posts.

For Full Time Officer positions only:

In addition to the above, all students who stand for one of the Full time positions must be eligible to be a trustee under Charity Law. This will not affect most students, however you **cannot** be a trustee in the unlikely event that:

- a. You have an unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty;
- b. You are an undischarged bankrupt;
- c. You have been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the Court or the Commissioners for misconduct or mismanagement; and
- d. You are under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.



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Conditions of Office

1. The Students' Union has adopted a Constitution so that it meets legislative requirements as outlined by the Charity Commission. It is a condition that all candidates agree to be bound by the Constitution as approved by University Council in consultation with the Students' Union.
2. The Constitution can be found at <http://www.city.ac.uk/studentcentre/studentsunion/dps/New%20Constitution%202008.pdf> This constitution is currently under review and all officers will be bound by the new constitution once in office.
3. Further information will be given at the Candidates' Training.
4. Sabbatical Full Time Officers are also required to sign a contract of employment for their year in post which outlines their core responsibilities.



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Candidate Registration

To stand in the election all candidates must:

1. Decide which post(s) you want to stand for. Role descriptions are available online via www.culsu.co.uk/elections
2. Complete an elections registration form.
3. The form requires you to be nominated (supported) by 5 current City University students.
4. Registration forms must be submitted by the candidate to the Students' Union either
 - **In person** together with all the additional materials listed below.
 - Or **electronically** via email to uss@city.ac.uk. Please note these would have to be scanned in as we need signatures of the nominations of students for your candidacy. Incomplete form will not be accepted.
5. All forms will be checked against University records.
6. Submission will close at 12pm on 15th March 2010.
7. Any late submissions will not be considered
8. The Students' Union recommends you submit your form and information as soon as possible. This will enable you to meet the SU staff and begin planning your campaign.



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For all posts

You must provide

- An **individual** manifesto for the post you are standing for. This is a written submission of why students should vote for you. This should be a maximum of 800 words.
- An electronic copy of the manifesto by email to uss@city.ac.uk
- One individual electronic passport style (headshot) photograph by email to: uss@city.ac.uk

For Sabbatical Full Time Officer posts

You must also provide

- A completed declaration of interests form (available online)
- A confirmation that the Sabbatical Officer contract will be signed if they are elected.

Failure to complete any of the above, or unsatisfactory outcome, can result in withdrawal from elections or your post at any time.

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Manifestos

A manifesto consists of a candidate's intentions, promises and reasons why people should vote for them.

1. It is compulsory for all candidates to provide an individual manifesto
2. The manifesto must be typed in black text on a white background as a Microsoft Word document. It is signed as accurate by the candidate at the candidates training.
3. The manifesto can be a maximum of 800 words. Any words over the 800 word limit will be omitted in published materials.
4. Each candidate's manifesto will be made available on www.culsu.co.uk
5. The RO/DRO will check all manifestos before they are published to ensure that they abide by the Regulations and do not defame or libel any other candidate or individual.

Video messages / manifestos

1. Candidates may make brief video messages to support their campaign
2. Video messages must be no longer than 2 mins.
3. Videos over this length will not be used.
4. Content must be in line with general campaigning guidelines
5. Video messages will be approved by the RO/DRO before being made live online.
6. Once approved, the candidate needs to provide the address link so the video message can be linked to the City University London Students' Union website
7. Videos will not be posted on CitySpace or MiVoice

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Candidates' Training

1. Training is **compulsory for all** candidates, held in the evening after nominations close, Monday 15th March 2010 at 6.00pm
2. At this meeting the RO, or his deputy, will explain the election process, outline campaigning guidelines and set the tone of the election.
3. At the meeting, all candidates will sign a declaration form to confirm they understand and will abide by the elections process and have submitted all required info.
4. All candidates will have the opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of the election process.
5. If you are unable to attend you must inform the Deputy Returning Officer of this in advance of the meeting.
6. If a candidate is unable to attend, they are expected to meet with the DRO by 12pm on the Wednesday after nominations close, to ensure they are completely clear about all election regulations and procedures.
7. Candidates **must not** commence campaigning until 17th March 2010 at 9.00am. Failure to abide by this will result in disciplinary action against you.
8. Candidates who do not attend training or meet with the DRO by the deadline set will be withdrawn from the election.

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Publicity and campaigning

General

1. All candidates must follow the recommendations outlined on www.culsu.co.uk and discussed at the candidates training. This includes anyone campaigning on behalf of the candidate.
2. The candidate is responsible for the behaviour of anyone campaigning on their behalf. If they are found to breach any regulations, the candidate will be liable and may be subject to sanctions.
3. No campaigning or publicity is permitted prior to 17th March 2010, 9.00am.
4. All publicity must be individual and in relation to the position you are standing for. If you wish to run as a team (or slate) you can add the name or logo of that team, but no team publicity is allowed.
5. The Students' Union will guarantee one poster per candidate to be printed and displayed in each Students' Union noticeboard, provided copy for the poster is submitted in accessible format (word, publisher, jpg) by 12.00pm 16th March 2010 by email to uss@city.ac.uk or via usb stick. After the deadline, no posters will be printed for any candidates.
6. No negative campaigning is permitted in any forum, internal or external, as determined by the RO.
7. All publicity materials must be submitted to the Students' Union **before use** to be approved by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer, by 17th March 2010.
8. Candidates must consider the health and safety of others when conducting any campaigning activity.
9. Publicity materials can include: Posters, flyers, T-shirts for candidates.
10. Candidates may not distribute anything deemed as a "free gift" or incentive.



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11. No Students' Union office, resources or facilities may be used to produce or assist in the production of any candidate's election materials, or campaign.
12. The SU will provide space for candidates' manifestos on the Student's Union page.
13. Manifestos and photographs of all candidates will also be displayed on the culsu.co.uk website
14. The RO/DRO will approve the allocation of display space to each candidate. The distribution will be based on the number of candidates running. If running as a team (or slate), this should be specified at the time of submitting the copy for the publicity. The SU will endeavour to position all publicity in SU notice boards appropriately.
15. Posters printed by the SU will only be displayed in the Students' Union notice boards. No other posters are allowed to feature in SU notice boards.
16. Any publicity fixed to walls, road signs or street furniture in the vicinity of the University will be removed and the cost of that removal charged to the candidate concerned.
17. Posters placed on walls around the University can pose a fire risk and will be removed by University staff.
18. Any damage caused by candidate's publicity to Union or University premises shall be repaired at the cost of the candidate.
19. Candidates must remove all of their own publicity materials within one week after the election. If materials are not removed, candidates will be liable for the cost of removal.
20. Campaigning is prohibited in the City University Computer rooms and libraries.
21. Any queries regarding what is or is not permitted should be raised with the RO/DRO.



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Use of social networking sites and electronic communications

22. University email mailing lists **must not** be used for canvassing purposes.
23. Candidates may use Facebook and Twitter for campaigning. Use of any other social networking site is not permitted.
24. Candidates who wish to use Facebook must set up a private group for their campaign and may invite people to join their group during the course of the campaign. Candidates may message members of their group as much as they like once campaigning begins.
25. No invitations may be made to the group until the candidate is officially campaigning.
26. Candidates must set the group up in time for the training or meetings so the RO/DRO can confirm that the group is empty at the beginning of the campaign.
27. Candidates and their group members may only post on their own wall about their own campaign and not on the walls of other candidates
28. Candidates may not set up private websites for campaigning purposes.
29. Instant messaging eg MSN is permitted

Behaviour

30. Candidates must not impede students on University premises by entrances or walkways.
31. Candidates must leave enough space for students to pass when they are campaigning in close proximity to each other.
32. Any Students' Union student staff running in an election or campaigning for a candidate cannot discuss elections while on duty. If found to be in breach of this, student staff will be suspended until the end of the election period.
33. Candidates or any supporters/ campaigners cannot discuss opinions within elections with any Students' Union staff at any point during the election period. Any queries or complaints must be directed to the RO/DRO.



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34. Any student running for election may not use any Students' Union offices, resources or facilities for any purpose during the election.
35. If standing for re election, current officers of the Students Union will not be allowed to use the Students' Union offices or resources for electoral purposes.
36. Any Full Time Officer in post and running for re-election must run his/her campaign entirely separately from their day-to-day work as an elected Officer.

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Campaign budgets

1. The Students' Union will guarantee one poster per candidate to be printed and displayed in each Students' Union noticeboard, provided copy for the poster is submitted in accessible format (word, publisher, jpg) by 12.00pm 16th March 2010 by email to uss@city.ac.uk or via usb stick. After the deadline, no posters will be printed for any candidates. This comes free of charge for all candidates.
2. Campaign budgets are available to candidates for Sabbatical FTO positions only to a maximum of £30 per candidate, provided expenditure has been pre approved by the DRO and receipts are submitted.
3. All campaign expenses for candidates for Sabbatical FTO positions must be claimed back from the Students' Union within two weeks of the end of the election. Claim forms must be submitted with valid receipts (available at the Students' Union reception).
4. We recommend no candidate to spend more than £50 (including donations in kind) on campaigning and publicity, regardless of whether they are standing for more than one post. If there is evidence that a candidate has exceeded the amount, this may be deemed as excessive expenditure and may be subject to sanctions.
5. Candidates for School Representative Officers and NUS delegates are not eligible for a campaign budget.

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Question time

Question Time

1. Two Question Time sessions will be held during the Spring election campaign.
2. Time(s) and location(s) are available on the culsu.co.uk website.
3. Candidates are strongly advised to attend
4. Question Time will be chaired by the DRO
5. Questions for candidates are submitted to the Students' Union in writing before the event.
6. All Full Time Officer candidates will have the opportunity to make a 1 minute speech. Timing will be monitored by the Chair.
7. All candidates are invited to respond to questions in random sequence by the Chair.
8. All speeches should be made in the spirit of positive campaigning. The Chair has the right to stop a candidate who is using his/her speech to campaign negatively.
9. The Chair has the authority to curtail debate on issues that are deemed to be outside the scope of the election or inappropriate or offensive.
10. Candidates also have the option of making an email address available to students to receive questions directly on the elections registration form.

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Voting

1. All elections shall be conducted by secret ballot and in keeping with the recommendations of the Electoral Reform Society. The election shall be conducted using Single Transferable Vote (STV).
2. For a more detailed description of this process please go to www.culsu.co.uk
3. City University SU will use the online electronic voting system MiVoice.
4. Campaigning is prohibited within three metres of the designated computer voting stations and inside the Students' Union Main office.
5. No candidate may apply undue influence to voters when they are casting their vote online.
6. No 'unofficial' computer ballot stations may be set up by candidates or their supporters at any location.
7. Campaigners are prohibited from using private mobile phones or laptops/notebooks as a mobile polling station.
8. Voting will close at 12.00pm on the designated date.



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The count

1. Before the count begins, the Returning Officer will ask if there are any outstanding complaints. There will be a period of 15 minutes once the ballot has closed during which time complaints may be raised in person or by email with the RO or his Deputy.
2. The count will take place at 12.15pm on the day that the elections close.
3. The result will be announced as soon as the count is ratified by the Returning Officer and will be announced at the Students' Union Main office.
4. The count and the announcement are open to all candidates and their observers.
5. The full election results will be displayed on the culsu.co.uk website.

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Complaints and appeals procedures

1. Any student with a complaint about other candidates and their canvassers or about the election process should contact the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer before the count commences.
2. Complaints raised after this point will not be entertained, except in relation to the conduct of the count.
3. Complaints may be on any of the following grounds:
 - a. failure in good conduct of the election
 - b. behaviour and activities of candidates or their supporters
 - c. the administration of the election
 - d. breaches in regulations
4. Complaints on any of these matters must be sent, in writing, to the Returning Officer.
5. Complaints will be heard and determined by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer within 2 working days of it being lodged
6. The Returning Officer will respond in writing and candidates and complainants will be informed of any action taken.
7. In responding to a complaint the Returning Officer, after hearing all the appropriate evidence, may decide to do apply any of the following:
 - a. Not uphold the complaint
 - b. Halt elections for a specified period pending an investigation(s)
 - c. Apply sanctions to specified candidates (see sanctions below)
 - d. Hold the election count and decide whether the basis of the complaint has any impact on the outcome of the vote.
 - e. Re-run the election
8. Appeals against the Returning Officer's decision should be made to the University Secretary in writing.



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9. Any such appeal must be made within one working day of the Returning Officer's decision. The University Secretary's contact details are available from the Returning Officer.

10. The University Secretary's decision will be final.

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Sanctions

1. Any student found in breach of the regulations during any stage of the election may be penalised.
2. The penalty will be determined by the Returning Officer. Possible sanctions include:
 - a. Penalty to your campaign budget (if applicable)
 - b. Restriction applied to attendance at / participation in Question Time.
 - c. Restriction on campaigning in a given area and / or for a specific amount of time.
 - d. Deduction of a number of votes specified by the Returning Officer.
 - e. Disqualification from the election.
3. Any student found to be acting fraudulently may be referred for disciplinary action and reported to the police.