



Bye-law 7

Elections

Warwick SU is student led. Its leaders are students, and these are chosen by a democratic process by its student members. This Bye-Law sets out how this process will occur.

Last updated January 2025

- Accessible and open to all as possible
- Free, fair and transparent
- Elections held with good conduct from all participants

The **President** shall have lead interpretation of this Bye-law (in accordance with Article 1 of the Articles of Association) except for when one is not in position, when it shall be the **Vice President for Democracy and Development**. The President (or Vice President, where applicable) shall consult with the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer on the meaning of this Bye-law where necessary.

- 700 A Returning Officer will be appointed annually, from an external organisation, most likely the NUS Charity, no matter the Union's affiliation status with NUS. The Returning Officer's decision is final.
- 701 One or more Deputy Returning Officers must be appointed and approved by the Board of Trustees. A Deputy Returning Officer may fulfil any of the responsibilities of the Returning Officer as required. Where practicable, the Deputy Returning Officer role shall be taken up by the Director of Membership. If not possible, a replacement shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees.
- 702 Responsibility for all decision making on candidate complaints and regulatory questions rests with the Deputy Returning Officer who may consult with the Returning Officer and Student Voice Team as they require.
- 703 The responsibility of the delivery of SU elections rests with the Returning Officer with the support of the Deputy Returning Officer(s), Vice President for Democracy and Development and the Student Voice Team.
- 704 If the Vice President for Democracy and Development is a candidate or has declared a conflict-of-interest that would make them unable to deliver their duties, the Deputy Returning Officer will appoint an appropriate replacement. An appropriate replacement should be a Full-Time Officer with no conflict of interest. The Vice President for Democracy and Development should declare any conflict of interest they have before the start of each term where an Election is held.
- a) If all Full-Time Officers are candidates or declare conflicts of interest that would make them unable to deliver their duties, the Deputy Returning Officer shall decide on an appropriate replacement from the remainder of the SU's elected positions.
 - b) Students who are employed by the Union as Democracy Assistants are unable to stand for elected positions.

- 705 The Student Voice Team will give notice of an election period at least seven days before the opening of nominations and follow the public timings for the Autumn, Spring and Summer Elections.
- 706 The Vice President for Democracy and Development may appoint Democracy Assistants to help the promotion of SU elections. No Democracy Assistant may be a candidate or a part of a candidate's campaign team. All Democracy Assistants must agree to an Impartiality and Confidentiality Agreement.

Voting in Elections

- 707 Voting in all SU wide Elections will take place online. All SU wide Elections will be conducted by the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system. This should be clearly stated and explained to the electorate.
- 708 The ballot will include the name of the relevant positions, followed by: The name of all candidates including Re Open Nominations (R.O.N) who shall be considered a candidate.
- 709 Full Members of the SU will have one vote in each election for which they are entitled to vote and voting will be by secret ballot
- 710 The Returning Officer may facilitate postal or proxy votes at their discretion.

The Count

- 711 The running of the count will be at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer and will be held as soon as practically possible after the close of voting.
- 712 After the provisional results have been announced and before the objections deadline (48 hours after the count), any candidate may ask for and observe a recount of any election. A recount will be granted under the following conditions:
- a) Evidence of a procedural irregularity
 - b) An upheld complaint
 - c) Issues with the online voting system such as outages or evidence of misallocated votes
- 713 If an election is declared null and void, or the position was unfilled, for any reason, vacancies will be filled by a Bye-Election.

Election Complaints

- 714 Any student or staff member of Warwick SU may submit an election complaint if they believe that any of Warwick SU's election regulations or Bye-Laws have been broken. Guidance on where to submit an election complaint shall be provided on the SU website in advance of each election.
- 715 Any candidate affected by an election complaint will receive timely notice of the decision and submission of any submitted complaint.
- 716 The final deadline that election complaints will be accepted will be 1 hour after the close of voting.
- 717 The Deputy Returning Officer (with consultation from the Adjudication Panel and Student Voice Team), has the ability to:
- a. reject election complaints if they are deemed to be vexatious (a breach of the Elections Rules and Regulations).
 - b. refer election complaints to relevant Warwick SU disciplinary processes if relevant, and signpost to relevant other structures, including but not limited to the Advice Centre, Wellbeing Services, the People

Team and Report and Support, as relevant.

c. issue sanctions against candidates, or other parties found to have breached the Elections Rules and Regulations.

718 If a candidate is found to have breached the Election Rules and Regulations, the Deputy Returning Officer has the power to issue sanctions with agreement from the Adjudication Panel. These sanctions can include (but are not limited to):

- An informal warning
- A formal warning
- A temporary ban on campaigning
- A ban on campaigning for the remainder of that election
- Disqualification from the election

719 The Deputy Returning Officer and the rest of the Student Voice Team shall deal with any election complaints made by residents of halls or the local community in relation to the conduct of candidates during canvassing or campaigning.

720 Any candidate may appeal the decision taken by the Deputy Returning Officer to the Returning Officer.

721 This election appeal must be submitted within 24 hours of the Deputy Returning Officer issuing their original decision to the candidates involved.

722 The appeal must state on which of the following grounds it is sought.

a. The candidate believes there were procedural irregularities.

b. The candidate is in possession of evidence that was not provided or available in the original process.

723 An appeal must contain statements concerning which post the candidate was running for, the candidate's role within the original complaint, the nature of the decision to be appealed, and the outcome that is sought by the candidate.

724 The appeal process must be done by the Returning Officer and the Adjudication Panel, and the final decision rests with the Returning Officer. The election will be provisional until the Returning Officer has approved the results.

Election Rules (for all elections)

Nominations

725 Students that wish to nominate and vote for an SU elected position can view the criteria for eligibility in 726

726 Eligible posts:

Posts	Who can nominate & vote
Women's Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as a Women
LGBTQUA+ Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as LGBTQUA+
Trans Students' Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as Trans
Disabled Students' Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as disabled
Widening Participation (WP) Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as WP

Ethnic Minorities Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as ethnic minorities
Part-Time & Mature Students' Officer	All members of the Union who self-define as Part-Time & Mature
International Students' Officers (EU & Non-EU)	All members of the Union who pay overseas fees (EU & Non-EU respectively)
Full-Time Officers (with the exception of the Vice President for Postgraduate Students) & Environment & Ethics Officer	All members of the Union
Faculty Reps – Open posts	All members of the Union within the membership of that particular University faculty
Faculty Reps – Postgraduate Taught posts	All members of the Union who are registered as Postgraduate Taught within the membership of that particular University faculty
Faculty Reps – Postgraduate Research posts	All members of the Union who are registered as Postgraduate Research within the membership of that particular University faculty

- 727 Elections of delegates to affiliated organisations (organisations to which the Union sends money in an official capacity to another organisation) must follow all rules that the organisation specifies for their elections.
- 728 Spring, Summer & Autumn SU Elections will be treated separately (e.g. a candidate in one election can be a campaign manager for a candidate in a different set of elections). For the avoidance of doubt, any role within the same election cannot have the same campaign manager across candidacies.
- 729 In the event that no nominations are received for a position, the Deputy Returning Officer will have discretion to either:
- Extend the deadline for nominations, or
 - Treat the election as if Re-Open Nominations had been elected and hold a new election at a later date.

Expenditure

- 730 Reimbursement costs are only eligible for campaigns for in Spring Officer Elections and associated bye-elections.
- 731 Spending and Reimbursement Caps:
- Full-Time Officer candidates can spend a total of £50.00 per candidate
 - Part-Time Officer candidates can spend a total of £35.00 per candidate
- 732 Any candidates on a joint ticket (two students nominating as one candidate) are only allowed to spend and be reimbursed for the amount of one candidate.
- 733 You cannot overspend on this budget and will be disqualified if you are found to have overspent. This is to make the election affordable and fair for all candidates. Items will be able to be reclaimed at a cost.
- 734 If you are using items you already own, apply a reasonable cost to the item for you to declare, we will ensure that it matches and will make a final call on that price. This will not be able to be reimbursed but will count towards your election expenses.
- 735 Candidates are responsible for keeping receipts of all election expenses. The deadline for

reimbursements is one hour after voting closes.

- 736 Any spending on social media advertisements must be clearly declared, with exact costings.
- 737 Items/Activities you cannot use
- You must not use any private vehicle to promote your campaign, or have any publicity posted on or within a vehicle so that it is on display.
 - You must not spend money on alcohol, drugs or tobacco to promote your campaign.

Publicity, Slates, Endorsements & Social Media

- 738 These rules are applied to all Spring, Autumn & Summer Elections
- 739 Publicity, including any social media content and posts in group chats, as well as all physical campaigning, must not violate the Students' Union's policies, the SU and University code of conduct or supporting documents.
- 740 Guidance will be on the website for SU Clubs and Societies regarding allowing candidates to post in groups.
- 741 Candidates can post in any group chats on social media that allow candidates to post in them. Groups must allow equal opportunity for all candidates to post/advertise - this does not extend to advertising said opportunity.
- 742 Candidates must create brand new social media accounts to use in each election they stand in (this does not include Club or Society Elections). These accounts must not be used in any capacity before campaigning begins.
- 743 Candidates cannot use pages affiliated to the Students' Union to promote their candidacy or others. This includes official SU or University social media accounts
- 744 No publicity is allowed on or directly next to Voting Booths. No campaigning is allowed to individuals at or going to Voting Booths. The SU Student Voice Team will make Candidates aware of where they can campaign, but campaigners should not pressurise students when students are near booths.
- 745 Slates (A slate is a group of candidates running together on the same platform of ideas, e.g the same manifesto) are NOT allowed.
- This means candidates are not allowed to pool their resources, appear in each other's publicity, have identical or almost identical publicity/manifesto content, or endorse other candidates.
 - Individuals can be a member of multiple campaigns teams and are allowed to endorse multiple candidates if they wish as long as they are not a campaign manager. Students who are campaign managers can only be a campaign manager for one candidate.
- 746 Societies and Clubs cannot endorse candidates. In the event that this regulation is breached, the Deputy Returning Officer can (in consultation with relevant teams within the Students' Union), sanction the relevant group according to the Clubs and Societies Sanctions list. This list can be found in Bye-law 526.
- 747 If this endorsement was deemed to have been solicited by a candidate(s) the Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to sanction the candidate(s).
- 748 SU representatives (including Course and Faculty Reps, and Part-Time Officers) cannot endorse candidates in their capacity as their roles. SU representatives may endorse candidates in a personal capacity. Full-Time Officers and Student Trustees cannot endorse candidates in the capacity of their roles.
- 749 Students Union and University of Warwick staff cannot endorse candidates.

- 750 Candidates and their campaign teams cannot campaign inside the library or in halls of residences.
- 751 External campaigners are not allowed on campus. Only SU members can form part of campaign teams and campaign on your behalf. It is reasonable to have “likes” on social media from people outside the SU (e.g – friends & family), but they cannot be solicited.
- 752 People can only stand for 1 position out of the Full-Time-Officers and Part-Time-Officers.
- 753 Campaign materials should be accessible and in the English Language.

Conduct

- 754 The Student Voice Team, subject to the approval of the Deputy Returning Officer, will provide candidates with guidelines on acceptable conduct during elections. Candidates must act in accordance with these guidelines.
- 755 Public scrutiny of candidates is allowed, but only when facts can be reasonably believed to be true. For example, criticism of an officer’s record in their role, or statements they have made, is valid, but baseless claims about candidates are strictly prohibited. If campaigns teams are judged to have broken this conduct, then candidates are encouraged to submit a complaint to the Adjudication Panel.
- 756 Students can publicly endorse and encourage their peers to vote for RON.
- 757 The Student Voice Team will provide training sessions in the rules of this Bye-law and any issued guidelines to all candidates. Training sessions must also be run on what duties and responsibilities each elected position has.
- 758 Throughout an election, all candidates must adhere to the following principles of acceptable conduct:
- a. Do only what other candidates have an equal opportunity to do;
 - b. Treat all students, candidates and staff members with respect.
- 759 Unacceptable conduct during elections includes but is not limited to any of the following practices:
- a. The defacement of or interference with a candidate’s publicity;
 - b. Bribery of voters or election officials;
 - c. Threatening behaviour or harassment of voters or election officials;
 - d. Producing offensive or defamatory publicity;
 - e. Preventing the free and confidential exercise of a vote by voters, including the improper use of mobile devices;
 - f. Compromising or interfering with the integrity of the election.