

Senate, Standing Committee and School Board Staff Nomination and Election Rules

These rules will apply to all elections for elected staff vacancies on Senate, its standing committees and School Boards. These rules are binding and apply to all candidates.

Returning Officer

1. The University Secretary shall be the Returning Officer for University-wide elections for Senate and its standing committees.
2. The Dean of the relevant School will be the returning officer for any School Board elections or the election of School representatives to Senate or its committees.

Nomination arrangements

3. The Department of Governance will be responsible for notifying the Returning Officer of impending vacancies on Senate and its committees which require to be filled by way of an election.
4. A notice of vacancy will be emailed to each member of the constituency by the Returning Officer (or their nominee).
5. Nominations shall be made on the nomination form issued with the notice of vacancy.
6. Nominations must be seconded by a member of staff from the relevant constituency and must be accompanied by a candidate's agreement to stand and the candidate's statement.
7. The closing date for the receipt of nominations shall be fourteen days after the issue of the notice of vacancy (the 'return date').
8. If only one nomination is received, the Returning Officer (or nominee) will declare the successful candidate by email and/or by posting a notice on the University intranet, the day after the return date.

Election arrangements

9. If more than one nomination is received an election will be held.
10. The Returning Officer (or nominee) will issue to each member of the constituency, no later than five days after the return date, a list of candidates, and accompanying statements from the candidates and details of how the constituency will be able to vote¹. Where eligible staff have no access to emails, their line managers will be responsible for ensuring that they are notified of elections within the same timescale.
11. An election will be held at least 14 days, and not more than 21 days, after the circulation of candidates' statements.
12. The voting period shall be 24 hours from when the vote is opened.
13. As a general rule, electronic voting will be used for all elections. Where staff do not have a GCU email account, arrangements will be made by the Returning Officer (or nominee) for these staff to be able to vote by paper ballot.

¹ Note: In line with School Boards terms of reference the elected membership is from the School's component departments. School Board elections may therefore be split into several different constituencies to ensure representation from each department.

14. Where eligible staff are aware that they will be on leave or otherwise unable to access their GCU account for the purposes of voting, those members of staff may contact the Returning Officer (or nominee) no later than 7 days prior to the election to discuss what arrangements could be put in place to enable that individual to participate in the vote.
15. Candidates will be listed on the ballot paper in alphabetical order.
16. Proxy voting is not allowed.
17. If there are only two candidates, the first past the post voting system will be used to determine the winner of the election. Where an election results in a draw, the winner will be decided by the drawing of lots.
18. Where there are three or more candidates, the Alternative Vote (AV) system will be used to determine the winner of the election.
19. The Returning Officer (or their nominee) will declare the result of the election by email to the voting constituency within 24 hours of confirming the vote count.

Campaigning By Candidates

20. The Returning Officer (or nominee) will make arrangement for candidates' statements to be circulated (see 9 above) when announcing the election.
21. Candidates may make reasonable use of GCU email for campaigning purposes. Reasonable use is considered to be no more than 3 emails per candidate to a recipient over the campaigning period.
22. Where a candidate does not have access to GCU email, arrangements will be made for email access for the duration of the election period.
23. Candidates must ensure that the conduct of their campaign does not contravene the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016 in respect of the use of personal data in that campaign.
24. Candidates and their supporters may use their personal social media accounts for campaigning purposes but posts must not be made to or via any GCU affiliated social media accounts.
25. Candidates may make reasonable use of GCU resources (e.g. paper, photocopying) for campaigning purposes. In the event of an incident giving rise to a complaint in this regard, the Returning Officer will determine what is considered to be reasonable use.
26. Where a candidate requires assistance accessing GCU resources (e.g. paper, photocopying) the Returning Officer will make appropriate arrangements.
27. Candidates may post campaign posters on GCU noticeboards only. Any posters must be no larger than A4 and must be removed within 24 hours of the close of the election.
28. Campaign materials that damage or deface surfaces may not be used.
29. Candidates or their supporters must not deface or remove any rival candidates' posters.
30. Campaigns and any campaign material should positively promote the candidate and what they stand for.
31. Campaign material must not use the University's logo or other Intellectual Property in such a way as to give rise to an impression that the University endorses the content of that campaign material.

32. All campaigning must be undertaken in line with the Dignity at Work and Study Policy. Negative campaigning e.g. being offensive or derogatory about other candidates, is not permitted.
33. Candidates and their supporters must take steps to ensure that no duress, coercion or undue influence is exerted on the electorate.
34. Bribes or inducements may not be offered in any form to any person.
35. Candidates must take reasonable steps to ensure that their supporters' actions comply with the election rules at all times and must be able to demonstrate this in the event of a complaint against them.
36. All active campaigning must stop after the ballot has opened.

Complaints

37. Any formal complaints regarding the conduct of any candidate or supporter should be made to the Returning Officer, including any evidence where relevant.
38. All complaints will be considered and resolved at the discretion of the Returning Officer. The outcome of a complaint may include, but is not limited to, taking no further action, re-running the election and referring particular conduct to People Services for consideration under the Conduct and Capability Policy.
39. Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint by the Returning Officer, they may request a review to be undertaken by an individual appointed by the Principal. This review must be made in writing to the Principal and include information on why they feel their complaint has been improperly handled and or what new information has come to light. Any request for a review of the handling of the complaint must be made within 24 hours of the original response to the complaint
40. No complaints will be accepted by the Returning Officer more than 14 days after the close of voting. Complaints received after this time may be considered in line with the University's Complaints Handling Procedure but will have no bearing on the outcome of an election. In cases where the Returning Officer, in their sole discretion, determines that the seriousness of a complaint under these rules and/or the surrounding circumstances justifies it, the Returning Officer may decide to suspend the requirement that the complaint be made within 14 days following the close of voting.