



Graduate Union Michaelmas 2016 Election Rules

1. Status of the Rules

The Michaelmas 2016 Elections are to be run in accordance with the GU Constitution and Schedules. Under the provisions of these, the GU Council convened an Elections Committee at their meeting of 22 September 2016. Further, this Elections Committee establishes these Rules for the conduct of the election under Schedule E paragraph 7. Under the same provision these Rules therefore have the force of Schedules in so far that they do not conflict with the GU Constitution and Schedules.

Candidates are responsible for understanding these rules and communicating them to their campaigners, if any. Candidates are, to the fullest reasonable extent, fully responsible for all the actions taken on their behalf by their campaigners.

These rules take effect from their approval by the Elections Committee on 30 September.

2. Notice on Election Rules

Candidates should note that all rules and deadlines concerning the Elections will be strictly enforced, and they are advised to refer to these rules and the GU Elections webpage frequently during the campaign.

If in any doubt regarding the meaning or application of the rules, candidates are advised to contact the Returning Officer in the first instance.

The Elections Committee reserve the right to issues interpretations of the Rules, which will be published alongside these Rules on the GU website. All reasonable steps will be taken to inform candidates of any such interpretations, but it is the responsibility of candidates to ensure they are aware of them.

In any dispute over the rules, the ruling of the Elections Committee will be final – subject to the GU's complaints procedure.

3. Timetable

In accordance with the Electoral Scheme approved by GU Council¹, the timetable of the Elections will be:

- Nominations open: 00:01 Tuesday, 4 October
- Nominations close: 23:59 on Sunday, 9 October
- Online voting opens: 00:01 on Sunday 16 October
- Online voting closes (and provisional results declared): 23:59 on Monday 17 October
- Full results confirmed and published: 17:00 on Tuesday 18 October

4. Virtual hustings

For the role of the Vice-President, all candidates will be invited by the Elections Committee to be filmed answering the same set of questions to be determined by the committee. A video of their responses will be made available on the GU website before voting opens.

Candidates for part-time roles will be invited to respond to a set of written questions for publication on the GU website.

5. Voting system

Voting will be by Single Transferable Vote, as per Electoral Reform Society rules, and will be run as an online ballot only. The Elections Committee will use CUSU's secure online voting system (<http://www.vote.cusu.cam.ac.uk>).

6. Eligibility for election

Vice-President

Any candidate for the role of Vice-President must be a student who is formally matriculated and registered for an approved graduate or postgraduate programme provided by the University of Cambridge (as at 26 September 2016), who has not opted-out of membership of the GU in accordance with the Education Act 1994.

Any candidate for the role of Vice-President and intends to intermit to take office must have the prior permission of their supervisor and/or faculty etc.

Part-Time Officers

Any candidate for the role of a Part-Time Officer must be either:

- a student who is formally matriculated and registered for an approved graduate or postgraduate programme provided by the University of Cambridge (as at 26 September 2016),

¹ Paper C.160922.C, available on the GU website.

- an undergraduate student of the University who was 21 years of age or over at the commencement of their course of study,
- an undergraduate student of the University in their fourth-or-higher year of residence,
- a student who is a member of one of the institutions belonging to the Cambridge Theological Federation,
- a post-doctoral researcher working within the University who is a member of the University, or
- a spouse or civil partner of any of the above;

and must not have opted-out of membership of the GU in accordance with the Education Act 1994.

No member of the Elections Committee is eligible to run for office in this election.

7. Eligibility to vote

Vice-President

All those eligible to stand for election to the role of the Vice-President (ignoring the criteria of securing permission to intermit) will be eligible to vote in the election to that post.

Part-Time Officers

All those eligible to stand for election to the role of a Part-Time Officer will be eligible to vote in the elections to those posts.

Members of the GU by virtue of being a post-doctoral researcher or the spouses or civil partner of another member will only be able to vote if they register by notice to the Returning Officer before the close of nominations. Only members with a CRSid will be able to vote.

Inspection of the Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll will be available for inspection on the CUSU online voting platform by 6pm on Monday, 10 October 2016 until the opening of the ballot.

Anyone who believes that they should be eligible to vote but is not on the Electoral Roll should contact the Returning Officer before 6pm on Thursday, 13 October 2016.

8. Declarations of candidacy

Candidates must make a reasonable attempt to keep their candidacy private before the close of nominations. Immediately following the close of nominations, candidates are free to declare their candidacy.

9. Nomination

The Elections Committee will provide an online form for the submission of nominations, available via the GU website. Accepted nominations will be confirmed by the Returning Officer via email. Nominations *must* be submitted by the deadline.

All candidates must also submit a Manifesto to the Returning Officer via email by 24 hours after the close of nominations. This may comprise either:

- An A4 document (in PDF, word, jpeg or png form), or
- A written statement no longer than 500 words.

There will be no formal candidate briefing. Any candidate who wishes to be briefed on the rules is welcome to arrange a meeting with the Returning Officer.

10. Campaigning

Timing

Campaigning may only take place after the close of nominations.

Campaigning as a group

Candidates may not campaign for one another, nor may they campaign together as a slate of candidates.

Flyposting

Flyposting is illegal in Cambridge, along with other forms of defacement such as the use of stickers or graffiti. Campaigning in this way not only makes you liable to prosecution; it damages the relationship between the student body and the community. As such, it will also make you subject to sanctions from the Elections Committee. The committee would like to draw your attention to the Proctorial Notice on Flyposting available on the Proctors' website.

Referring to other candidates

Referring directly to your opponents or other candidates is only permissible if:

- they are present and able to respond to your remarks; or
- your remarks represent a legitimate and proportional response to or criticism of their manifesto.

If concerned about the content of a written comment on social media or otherwise, candidates are encouraged to contact the Returning Officer.

Email and other electronic communication

Campaigning via mass-audience email is banned. This means that campaigning via pre-existing email lists (such as MCR lists) is also banned. Compiling new mailing lists of active supporters is permissible for the purposes of campaigning. Spamming, ie sending individual messages to individuals who are not familiar to the sender, is banned.

The same rules apply to other forms of electronic communication.

Campaign websites and social media

Campaign websites are permitted, so long as these abide by the spirit of the other rules.

A public-facing Facebook event will be set up for all candidates by the Elections Committee. Candidates may also have a Facebook page set up for them by the Elections Committee, on request. Campaigning on pre-existing groups, pages, etc. is not permitted. Campaigning on other social media is not permitted.

Hate speech

Hate speech is, obviously, banned in all contexts and if proved will likely result in disqualification and University sanction.

Spending

- Candidates for the role of Vice-President are entitled to spend £100 on their campaign.
- Candidates for the role of a Part-Time Officer are entitled to spend £20 on their campaign.
- Candidates must declare the total cost of their campaign to the Returning Officer by 48 hours after the ballot closes. All legitimate campaign expenses will be reimbursed by the GU.

11. Penalties and complaints

The Elections Committee reserves the right to impose penalties on any candidate up to and including disqualification. Such penalties may include vote docking and campaign bans. In the first instance, however, the Elections Committee will seek to redress any inadvertent rule breaking behaviour without resort to the imposition of penalties.

Complaints on the conduct of any individual involved in the election should be addressed to the Returning Officer. Complaints must be received in writing or by email, together with a statement setting out the nature of the objection, before the final result is declared.

Complaints about the conduct of the Returning Officer should be addressed to the Junior Proctor.

12. Useful contacts

The Elections Committee comprises:

- Chad Allen, as Returning Officer (president@gradunion.cam.ac.uk)
- Amatey Doku
- Fatima Baldo
- Mark Driver

All elections enquiries should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Returning Officer. Failing resolution, the other members of the Elections Committee may be contacted via the GU Manager (manager@gradunion.cam.ac.uk)

If dissatisfied with the Returning Officer or the Elections Committee, the Junior Proctor may be contacted via junior.proctor@cam.ac.uk.