

Student Voice Guide to Elections 2017/18

**Officer By-Election, Guild Policy Development
Group, Chair of Officer Question Time & Guild
Committee Elections**

October 2017

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1. Introduction

This guide will give you further information on the various Guild Committee positions available for election in the Autumn Term 2017. These positions include:

- The Mature and Part-Time Students Officer
- The Home Students' Officers
- Guild Policy Development Group Member
- Chair of Officer Question Time
- Student Equality and Diversity Committee Member
- Ethical and Environmental Committee Member
- Appointments Panel Member

Further information about what these committees do, is provided later in this guide.

In this election period we will also be electing delegates to NUS Liberation, Section and National Conferences held in 2018. There is a separate guide for that election which is available on the Elections webpages of the Guild of Students website.

Information regarding the election of the Officer Team will be released in Term 2.

Whether you take part as a voter or stand as a candidate, getting involved in Guild elections is your chance to make a real difference.

For further information please email: elections@guild.bham.ac.uk.

2. Responsibility of the Guide

The Student Voice Team shall be responsible for the review and seeking approval of these guidelines.

3. Returning Officer

The Returning Officer is the Registrar and Secretary of the University of Birmingham, or nominee. The nominated Returning Officer for this election is the Representation and Resources Officer 2017/18.

The Returning Officer is responsible for the good conduct and administration of the elections and has final interpretation of the Election Regulations.

4. 2017-18 Election Dates

All positions elected during this election period run along the same schedule – below you can find the various deadlines which you will need to follow as a candidate:

Election	Nominations Open	Nominations Close	Nominations Re-Opened For Unfilled Positions	Election Candidate Training	Campaigning & Voting	Results
Autumn Term and NUS Delegate Elections	Monday 2 nd October 10am	Friday 13 th October 12pm	Monday 16 th October, 12pm – Wednesday 18 th October, 4pm	19 th October, 6-8pm	Monday 23 rd October, 10am - Friday 27 th October, 4pm	Monday 30 th October

You can nominate yourself for a position from the opening date provided above by visiting www.guildofstudents.com/elections and submitting your nomination online.

5. Elections

5.1 Officer By-Election

The Guild Officer Team are the student leaders of the students' union (the Guild). They represent students to the University, ensuring that students get the best possible education. They also work with Guild services to ensure that students get value for money and have a great time within the Guild of Students, whilst maximising their time at University through extracurricular activities.

5.1.1 Officer positions

There are **2** Part-Time Officer positions available in this by-election. Part-Time Officers volunteer on the Guild Officer Team and do so whilst continuing their University studies. Each position has a specific policy remit and related responsibilities:

Commuter Students Officer – formerly the Home Students' Officer

The Commuter Students' Officer supports those students who have chosen to live at home whilst they study at the University of Birmingham. You'll ensure that home students do not miss out on the full University of Birmingham experience. You'll work with other Guild Officers and the University to encourage more local residents to attend university and so widen participation in higher education.

Candidates for Commuter Students' Officer are expected to be a Full Member normally a resident in or around Birmingham.

Mature & Part Time Students' Officer

The Mature and Part-time Students' Officer campaigns on issues related to Mature and Part-time Students, promoting the interests of these students to the University of Birmingham, the Guild and the wider community. They ensure that the Guild is actively promoting initiatives to ensure that the welfare and interests of Mature and Part-time students are protected.

If you wish to nominate yourself for this role, it is expected that you are a part-time student, or a mature student. A mature student is someone who is 21 or over at the beginning of undergraduate study or 25 or over at the beginning of postgraduate study.

5.2 Guild Policy Development Group (formerly the Assessment Group) Elections

In a change this year, the Assessment will be now be known as the Guild Policy Development Group.

This group will play a key role in the development and approval of Guild Policy, and will continue to support the “Your Ideas” platform, by reviewing all submissions to it.

Idea submissions are monitored for legal, financial or reputational concerns.

Policy being decided at each meeting will be placed online for a week for all members to view. Policy that is agreed will be placed online; members will have the option to reject it. Voting will take place at the same time as “Your Ideas” submissions.

All students will then have the opportunity to comment and vote on all ideas over a 2 week period.

All ideas have to be voted on at least 0.5% of the student population, around 200 students. Ideas then pass on a simple majority basis.

If an idea passes successfully, the Officer Team have responsibility to implement the idea, and keep students up to date with its progress.

5.2.1 Guild Policy Development Group Positions

The Assessment Group will be made up of the 4 Full Officers and 10 elected students. The elected students shall be:

- 1 x LGBTQ student (reserved position for students who self-define as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer)
- 1 x Trans student (reserved position for students who self-define as Trans)
- 1 x woman student (reserved position for students who self-define and live as a woman)
- 1 x BME student (reserved position for students who self-define as black or ethnic minority students)
- 1 x disabled student (reserved position for disabled students)
- 1 x postgraduate student (reserved position for postgraduate students)
- 1 x International student (reserved for international students)
- 3 x open place positions (positions open to any registered student at University of Birmingham)

Chair of Officer Question Time (1 position available)

The Chair of Officer Question Time presides over all meetings of Officer Question Time – open meetings where students can hold their Officer Team to account for the things they do.

They will play a key role in setting the agenda for each meeting, being a key decision maker at the heart of the Guild's democratic process and helping to ensure that the Guild plays an effective role in the lives of the wider student population.

5.3 Guild Committee Roles

Student Equality and Diversity Committee Member (2 positions available)

The Student Equality and Diversity Group will work on a broad range of issues relating to equality and diversity on campus and develop the Guild's strategy for addressing them. This will bring together the work being done by different groups around the University such as accessibility on campus, gender-neutral toilets, the BME attainment gap, student parents and carers, LGBTQ-inclusive curricula and more.

These positions are open places, open to any student registered student at the University of Birmingham.

Ethical and Environmental Committee Member (2 positions available)

The Ethical and Environmental Committee does exactly what is says on the tin – it is responsible for overseeing the Guild's response to environmental issues from recycling to power consumption. This Committee was instrumental to the Guild's receipt of the NUS' Green Impact Gold Award in 2016.

Members of this committee will help make the Guild a sustainable place, where the environment remains at the forefront of the organisation's vision and strategy.

These positions are open places, open to any student registered student at the University of Birmingham.

Appointments Panel Member (2 positions available)

The Appointments Panel is responsible for recruiting and selecting new Trustees for the Guild of Students. The Trustees have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Guild is legally and financially compliant and for monitoring the overall organisational strategy.

Members of the Appointments Panel can ensure the needs of students are represented during this process, and will continue to remain at the heart of the student experience.

These positions are open places, open to any student registered student at the University of Birmingham.

6. Notice of Elections

The Guild shall aim to give at least 1 weeks' notice of an election wherever possible.

Such notices shall state:

- The date(s) and times of ballot
- The earliest and latest times of receipt of nomination
- The substance of any regulations governing the election
- The type and number of vacancies

7. Nominations Process

The Guild shall aim to provide 10 working days nomination period wherever possible. Please refer to the election schedule (section 4) for more information. Nominations should be submitted online at www.guildofstudents.com/elections.

When nominating yourself, you will need to be logged into the Guild website via the my.bham portal.

When on the elections page, click on the position you wish to nominate yourself for making sure you have checked you meet the requirements for that post.

You will be asked to provide your contact information.

This is also where you can upload your written statement, although you do not have to do this at the time of submitting a nomination. However, you must submit your manifesto and written statement before the close of nominations.

After your nomination has been submitted, you will be contacted by the Student Voice Team and asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

By submitting a nomination form the student is giving permission for the Guild of Students to:

- Include their name in publicity and press releases for the Elections
- Display their manifesto/written statement in publicity for the Elections
- Display their name and contact details on its website should they be successfully elected
- Forward their name, email address and Student ID Number to the University to verify that the information they provided is correct
- Use the contact details provided to contact them regarding any other Guild of Students business.

Students who submit a nomination form should receive receipt of acknowledgement. If nomination forms are submitted electronically this can be in the form of an email confirmation/automated response from a website submission.

All nominations should be confirmed with the candidates within 48 hours after the close of nominations for that election. A list of confirmed candidates is then published by the Guild of Students (normally online)

7.1 Manifestos & Written Statements

All candidates in all elections should submit a written statement and in some cases a visual manifesto. Student Voice shall set the guidelines for these (word limit, image size, etc.). These must be submitted by close of nominations for that election.

The following manifesto requirements are set for the Autumn Elections:

Election	Written Statement	Visual Manifesto
Officer By-Elections	YES - 200 words max	YES

Assessment Group Elections	YES - 200 words max	NO
Chair of Officer Question Time	YES - 200 words max	NO
Guild Committee Roles	YES – 200 words max	NO

7.1.1 Visual Manifestos

An Officer campaign starts with a visual manifesto which candidates will submit before nominations close. A visual manifesto is one of the most important pieces of publicity and is widely disseminated amongst the student body, normally via the Guild of Students' website and posters. Therefore, it's crucial that visual manifestos properly sets the tone for campaigns and are consistent with the candidates' message to voters.

There's no 'right way' to create a manifesto but below is a list of musts:

- A visual manifesto must be A4 in size, and be designed in landscape orientation. If it's not the Guild may have to resize it and that may impact its legibility
- It must have the Guild of Students logo in the design
- Ensure the candidate name and the position is very prominent
- If there is a background design/image, make sure that it isn't obscuring any text
- Make sure the layout is coherent and encourages people to read all of the information

If a candidate is having trouble creating a manifesto of the right size then there are examples from previous candidates available online. Alternatively, candidates are advised to email elections@guild.bham.ac.uk for further help with designing a manifesto.

Top Tips on how to create a visual manifesto:

- Be concise and use clear language
- Include key policies but keep them as short as possible, trying to use as few words as possible
- Use an easy to read font, like Arial or Times New Roman; text should be readable and no smaller than font size 14
- Ask what friends and supporters think about the manifesto
- And above all....make sure to check for typos!

7.1.2 Written Statements

A Written Statement should be used to declare why a candidate is running for a position, what they hope to achieve if elected, detail their main policies and why students should vote for them. Depending on the position there is a word limit on Written Statements (please refer to section 7.1). To assist with writing a written statement, candidates can use the following questions as a guide:

- What do you want to achieve in this role to benefit your constituents?

- What has inspired you to run for this role?
- What do you think is the Guild's key function and why?

7.2 Re-Opening Nominations

If no nominations are received for a position by the close of nominations, nominations can be reopened for that position normally for at least three working days.

8. Guild Support

The Guild of Students wants to ensure that all students can stand in the elections. Therefore the Guild offers the following support to all candidates running in elections:

- The Guild shall provide an Elections Budget so no candidate is out of pocket.
- The Guild shall provide a full, comprehensive training schedule to all candidates to prepare them for the elections to follow.
- The Guild shall enforce strict election rules and regulations to ensure that no candidate has an unfair advantage (please refer to Appendix A & B).
- The Guild offers support to candidates with disabilities via its Elections support for disabled students' policy (detailed below).

Candidates, where possible, will have the opportunity to complete a post-election questionnaire at the conclusion of the elections where feedback is welcomed and suggestions for future support of candidates can be given.

8.1 Elections support for disabled students

Introduction

The purpose of this process is to make Guild elections more accessible to disabled students by offering the support of a member of student staff to assist in election activities.

Scope

This policy relates to Guild of Students elections including but not limited to Officer Team, Assessment Group, Chair of Officer Question Time, Residents' Associations and NUS Delegate Elections, and any other election deemed appropriate by Representation & Resources Officer or nominee.

Purpose

The objective of this policy is to ensure that candidates with disabilities receive practical support during campaigning periods so that no candidate, as far as is reasonably possible, is disadvantaged during the campaigning process due to their disability.

Request Process

If a candidate with a disability feels they will require additional support during the set campaigning period they must state this as soon as is reasonably possible following their nomination. This will give Student Voice enough time to make sure arrangements can be put in place. . Please note any requests made after the nominations deadline may not be

accepted, however, Student Voice shall endeavour to make every effort to put in place the relevant and reasonable arrangements once a request has been submitted.

Candidates must complete an Additional Election Support Request form (which is available online or can be requested from Student Voice department by emailing elections@guild.bham.ac.uk). If a candidate finds it difficult to use a computer as a result of a disability, then requests can be made in person. In such cases written records of the meeting will be kept, and followed up with the candidate.

When completing the Additional Election Support Request form, candidates will be asked to provide information about their disability and how they might use the support to stand in the election.

All information submitted shall be kept confidential and stored in accordance with Guild of Students' data protection policy.

Student Voice shall then contact the candidate to clarify what support is required and confirm the exact details of the work to be carried out. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the information is provided by the agreed deadline. In cases where information is provided after the deadline, we will aim to meet requests but this is not guaranteed,

Student Staff Support Process

The candidate will be contacted by Student Voice to ascertain preferred dates/times for the student staff support as well as to confirm the duties which will be carried out remain the same as those confirmed in the initial request form. This will then form a rota which will be emailed to all student staff.

The support may not be offered as one period of time, but may be various times depending on the candidate's needs and/or student staff availability. Support will be offered in no less than 1 hour time slots.

To ensure candidates gain the maximum benefit from the support offered, a detailed schedule of tasks shall be agreed with the candidate and student staff member prior to any work commencing via a rota.

Student Staff Training

Student Staff shall receive training from the Guild of Students prior to any work commencing. This shall consist of;

- Guild of Students overview
 - Election Rules and Regulations
 - Equality Act
 - Diversity training
 - Briefing on how to complete a time sheet, staff attire and what duties the student staff members may be asked to complete
- Student Staff Support - Responsibilities*

Student Staff will have the following responsibilities:-

- Student Staff may campaign on the candidates' behalf by carrying out pre-agreed duties such as putting up posters and giving lecture shout outs where they will be delivering the candidates' campaign message.
 - Student Staff are not active supporters.
 - Student Staff will provide neutral, practical support.
 - Student Staff will not carry out any additional tasks which were not agreed prior to the work commencing.
 - If a candidate requires assistance with the use of a computer as a result of a disability. This support will match that already provided by the university. The candidate will need to provide confirmation of this support from their welfare tutor
 - If a candidate requires support which involves a computer this will be made available within the Guild of Students' building. Student Staff are not permitted to visit a candidate's home.
 - Candidates are asked to be mindful of these responsibilities when pre-agreeing the campaigning duties required.
- Candidate Feedback*

Candidates may be contacted by the Guild of Students after the election has ended for their feedback.

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed in August 2018 by Student Voice.

9. Election Training & Events

Elections Training, Hustings and all other election events shall be organised by Student Voice department.

Training for all candidates on the election regulations will take place on 19th October 6-8pm in G05 University House (Business School)

Candidates will be sent further information on the role of each committee via email, and will have the opportunity to ask questions in the session.

If you are aware that you are not able to make any of these times, please contact the Student Voice Team: elections@guild.bham.ac.uk and they will work with you to make alternative arrangements.

10. Campaigning

During campaigning candidates may critique each other's policies but may not engage in personal attacks or negative campaigning. This activity may be referred to the Guild's Harassment & Bullying Policy and Membership Disciplinary Procedure.

10.1. Locations/Estates Guidance

Candidates will be provided with guidance from University Estates regarding putting out publicity on campus. No material that will damage an interior or external surface may be used in the display of publicity.

Candidates are permitted to campaign within the Guild, but must not interfere with any student who is voting.

10.2 Developing an Election Platform

This section offers some advice about how to develop an election platform i.e. the arguments that candidates use to convince students to vote for them. It will concentrate on how candidates can develop a robust and relevant set of policies and how to highlight any prior experience.

What is a Policy?

Policies are the beliefs and ideas that candidates would seek to implement should they be successfully elected. They are there to show the voters what a candidate would do with the position.

There are roughly two types of policies: statements of belief and pledges of action. They differ in what the candidate is promising the voters. In the 'statement of belief' the candidate is promising to believe certain things or advocate certain stances. If the candidate were to have a policy such as 'I am committed to furthering equality' they wouldn't be advocating anything specific but informing people that their general commitment to equality would guide their actions as an Officer.

'A pledge of action' is different in that it's a promise to undertake an action during the candidate's term of office i.e. promising to run a campaign. Such policies are good because they give students an idea of what the candidate would actually do if they were elected. However, it's important to remember that these types of policy have to be achievable, because should the candidate win, they will be expected to fulfil their manifesto pledges. And of course, a blatantly unachievable manifesto policy could undermine a candidate's credibility during the campaign and lose them votes.

Both types of policy are useful and send different messages to the voters. Usually it's wise to have a mixture of the two types of policy, so that voters know what you believe in and what you would do with the role.

Evidence Based Policies

It's important that policies are backed up with a firm evidence base, so that a candidate can convincingly explain to students how they would make a positive impact. This evidence can be firmly rooted in the candidate's own experience as a student and a member of the Guild of Students, if they have direct personal experience of a problem then it makes sense to directly refer to those experiences when proposing the solution.

However, it also helps to look beyond personal experiences and look at the bigger picture. Over the past five years the Guild of Students has done a significant amount of market research to build a clearer idea about what students feel the Guild should focus on and what their personal priorities are. These can be found in the Guild of Students' Strategic Plan.

Students increasingly see their higher education as an investment in their future and so expect the Guild of Students to help them ensure that they get the best possible return on their investment. When developing policies you should be thinking about what proposals you can put forward to ensure that students are getting the best possible experience at the University of Birmingham.

Presenting Policies

Policies are primarily presented in a manifesto and/or written statement. When writing policies it's wise to use as concise and direct language as possible. Concisely written policies are easier for voters to read.

It is generally a good idea to limit the amount of policies a candidate puts forward to ensure that students can focus and understand all of them and ensure that the candidate is not promising more than they can deliver.

11. Campaigning Materials

11.1 Printing

Candidates are permitted to choose their printing vendor.

Candidates must submit receipts or proof of purchase of all printing to Student Voice along with a completed Personal Expense Claim Form (yellow form which can be collected from the Student Groups Counter). Once all receipts and forms have been received and approved, candidates shall be reimbursed for their election expenditure.

Candidates must not exceed their candidate budget, this includes all printing.

Candidates are prohibited from printing publicity on a personal printer.

11.2 Noise

Electronic sound and loud-hailing equipment are prohibited by University of Birmingham. Candidates may be subject to disciplinary action by the University if they use this equipment.

11.3 List of Freely Available Items

Below you will find the list of Freely Available Items. These are items that can be used in your election campaign that do not need to be claimed for in your elections budget. If you wish to use any item not on this list, you must make a claim for them out of your allocated budget.

Item	Note/Examples
Materials used to affix publicity (please remember that in putting up publicity you must not cause any damage)	Blue Tac, Drawing Pins, Rope, Safety Pins, Bamboo Sticks
Items used for cutting fabric	Scissors/Craft knives
Transport solely for the purpose of moving items or people	Journeys by Car or Public Transport

Other General Items	Candidates may use their personal social media accounts instead of creating campaign-specific ones, however you may not use 'corporate' ones that you have set up in a non-personal capacity
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11.4 Emails/Electronic Messaging

No candidate or supporter shall use electronic messaging systems (including but not limited to email, mailing lists, instant messaging, social networking, mobile phone text messaging) to send unsolicited bulk messages regarding the elections or their candidacy. This is a breach of the law (data protection).

12. Nicknames

Candidates are permitted to campaign under a nickname. The chosen nickname must be submitted at the point of nomination. The nickname will be used on the ballot paper for that candidate.

13. Supporters

All candidates may appoint a 'campaign manager' to act as a point of contact between the Guild of Students and their campaign.

All supporters must be Full Members of the Guild of Students. No Full-Time Guild Officer shall endorse a candidate. Candidates are not permitted to seek support from organisations external to the Guild or the University of Birmingham.

Guild Media Groups are not allowed to support a candidate as a student group.

Candidates are reminded that they are responsible for the conduct of their supporters throughout the election period.

14. Budgets and Scrutiny of accounts

The candidate budget for the Officer Team by-election is £50.

The candidate budget for Guild Policy Development Group members, Chair of Officer Question Time and Guild Committee positions is £10.

Candidate budgets can only be spent on campaign materials for the election or which the budget has been allocated.

All personal expenditure must be declared to the Guild of Students and shall be reimbursed on the presentation of itemised receipts.

Candidates will be asked to submit their campaign expenditure the day before the end of the campaigning and voting period. It is strongly advised that you submit expense claims as soon as possible after the amount has been spent and keep the Student Voice Team regularly informed of any spending.

Public Scrutiny of Candidate Spending

Candidates and students will be given the opportunity to scrutinise each candidate's spending in an election and make a complaint if they feel a candidate has breached the rules surrounding candidate budgets. The following procedure shall be followed:

- All candidates shall be encouraged to provide full details of their campaign expenses (including free and fair use items) prior to the opening of campaigning. Candidates should update their expenses throughout the election by emailing elections@guild.bham.ac.uk
- Student Voice shall make candidate budgets available for public scrutiny as soon as this information is received.
- All candidates are required to have completed spending and submitted all expense claims (with receipts) to Student Voice department the day before the close of voting.
- Students are given a period of 2 hours after the close of voting to scrutinise candidate spending and submit a complaint to the Returning Officer if it is felt that a candidate has breached regulations.
- The Returning Officer shall not accept complaints made after 2 hours of close of ballot.
- All complaints shall be reviewed and resolved within 1 day of the deadline for complaints.
- Results shall remain provisional until the Returning Officer has resolved any outstanding complaints.

15. Election Complaint Procedure

The following procedure must be followed by students or candidates submitting an election complaint during a Guild of Students election and by Guild of Students investigating an election complaint:

A student or candidate wishing to submit a complaint must do so using the Guild of Students Election Complaint Form:

- a) All fields (excluding 'For staff use only' section) on the Election Complaint Form are required from the student making the complaint.
- b) The student making the complaint may use additional pages to continue with the 'Details of Complaint' section.
- c) The completed Election Complaint Form must be emailed to elections@guild.bham.ac.uk – hard copy versions of this form shall not be accepted.
- d) On receipt of an Election Complaint Form, Student Voice shall respond by email to the student making the complaint to confirm it has been received and accepted.

In most cases evidence shall be requested (if not already provided) in support of the complaint. Evidence can be (but is not limited to) video recordings, photographs, computer screen shots and emails. Students making an election complaint should try to ensure they provide evidence which clearly supports their complaint – e.g. if a student is providing a screen shot of a website, the student should try to include the date & time stamp in the bottom right-hand side of a computer screen to show the screen shot was taken at the appropriate time.

Once the complaint has been reviewed, the complaint shall be sent to the Returning Officer or their nominated person for a ruling.

Complaints may be received up to 2 hours after the close of voting. Complaints received after this time will not be considered.

This procedure must be used in conjunction with Election Regulations, Guild of Students Bye Laws, Guild of Students governing documents, University Legislation, or any Laws of the Land.

When a complaint is made, Student Voice staff will log the complaint and follow up with the complainant if it is deemed that further information is required. All complaints shall be referred to the Returning Officer for a decision.

16. Appeals Process

If a student wishes to appeal a decision made by the Returning Officer as an outcome of a complaint they may do so by emailing the details of their appeal to elections@guild.bham.ac.uk

The appeal details shall then be referred onto the Returning Officer or nominee.

Students may be asked to provide evidence in support of their appeal.

Appeals may be submitted up to 48 hours from the notification of the original outcome of the complaint. Appeals submitted after this time may not be considered.

17. Guild Membership Discipline and Appeals Policy

Should an election complaint be deemed a membership disciplinary issue (e.g. complaint about harassment) then the complaint shall be referred to this policy (full policy are details available at www.guildofstudents.com).

Complaints that a student feels should be dealt with under this policy should be submitted in writing, and should contain as much information as possible about the nature of the complaint. This should be sent via email to: complaints@guild.bham.ac.uk

You may also speak to the Welfare Officer, or any other member of the Officer Team if you wish to.

18. Voting

Polling should be held for at least one day for a set number of hours, as determined by Guild of Students. In all Autumn Term Elections polling shall be open for 5 days. Voting will be conducted online.

No candidate or supporter shall attempt to influence voters whilst they are voting. This means once a student has begun to complete their ballot. Candidates are permitted to campaign in sight of a ballot station such as a computer but are not allowed to interrupt a vote.

19. Paper Ballot Procedure

In the event of an online voting system not being available the following procedure must be followed by Guild of Students to conduct a paper ballot:

Check eligibility to vote

- a) Only Full Members may vote in a Guild of Students election (unless otherwise stated). Restrictions on which Full Members may vote shall apply in the following elections; Residence Association Elections, Assessment Group, Chair of Officer Question Time, Guild Committee & Officer Elections (please refer to the election regulations)
- b) When a voter approaches a ballot station, ask them to declare their full name and Student ID. They must then present their University ID card as proof of ID. This must be checked against the voter register and the photograph should be checked to ensure the voter is in possession of their own ID card.
- c) Once you are satisfied the voter is eligible to vote, mark their name on the register and update this on other registers to ensure they may only vote once.

Issue ballot paper

- a) Once the voter's eligibility to vote has been confirmed, ballot papers may then be issued.
- b) Ensure that the ballot paper to be issued bears an official mark.
- c) A separate ballot paper for each election (if multiple elections are being run at the same time e.g. Officer Team Elections) must be issued.

Voting

- a) Voting shall be carried out by STV or ATV. This means voters shall place a number against each candidate's name in order of preference. Advise them that they vote by preference and that they should mark the box that corresponds to their preference. They do not have to use all their preferences.
- b) The voter marks the ballot paper in the privacy of a polling booth.
- c) Ask the voter to then show you the ballot paper number and unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper before they place it in the ballot box to ensure they have not issued a fake ballot paper. The student should place their ballot paper into the ballot box (you should not handle the paper for them).
- d) All ballot boxes shall be fully secured, locked and monitored by a member of staff for the duration of the voting period.

Counting

- a) Counting shall take place at the earliest possible time after the close of ballot.
- b) Counting for each election shall be done separately – ballot papers should be divided into each election and counted.

- c) Where possible, results shall be inputted into 'OpenSTV' programme which will then calculate the final results using ATV/STV.
- d) Once counting has been concluded, if the number counted does not tally with the verification figure, then the votes will be counted again in full.
- e) If a voter spoils their ballot paper (e.g. by placing an 'X' next to a candidate's name instead of numbering their preference) the spoilt ballot paper shall be declared invalid. Place it in the appropriate envelope (for spoilt votes) and retain until at least 5 days after the close of voting.

After the Election

- a) Voter identification details will be retained for several weeks after the declaration of results (This is proof of who voted in case an election result is contested).
- b) The register will not be brought into contact with the ballot papers unless there is an investigation about the conduct of the election. This is the same procedure used for UK General Elections.

20. Results

All results shall be provisional until confirmed by the Returning Officer following the closure of any complaints – this should be no longer than 1 day following the close of voting. However, results shall only be announced once the Returning Officer is satisfied with the conduct of the election and after any outstanding complaints have been resolved.

Appendix A

Elections FAQ

- ***Who runs the Elections?***

Arrangements for the Elections are made by Representation and Resources Officer with the Student Voice team, and overseen by the Guild's Returning Officer or nominee.

- **Are there any rules?**

Yes, the Election Regulations and Bye Law 8 can be found at the end of this guide (Appendix A & B). If you are proven to have broken any of these you could be subject to removal from the election.

- **Can I support my friend who is standing for another position?**

Yes. Candidates in different elections can endorse each other. This is called a Slate. However, if you are running in the same election e.g. a multi seat election such as the RA Elections you are prohibited from supporting each other.

- **Can my friends help?**

Of course! The more people who get involved in your campaign the better.

- **What if I change my mind and don't want to be a candidate anymore?**

You are free to withdraw as a candidate from the election at any time. You will be asked to provide your wish to withdraw in writing to elections@guild.bham.ac.uk.

- **The website says I am not eligible to run for a post, why is this?**

If you are registered student then you should be able to nominate yourself for a role you want. Some roles have additional criteria, where you would need to self-define. Instructions on how to do this are provided in this guide on page.... If you are still having problems please email us with screenshots and we will be able to help you.

- **Where can I go to for advice?**

This depends on the information being sought – please find a directory below:

Student Voice

The Guild's Student Voice Department is there to support candidates with election issues such as having problems completing their nomination forms, understanding the election regulations, providing candidates with election dates and designing their manifesto.



elections@guild.bham.ac.uk



0121 251 2428

Representation and Resources Officer – Jess Levy

The RRO oversees the running of elections as part of their remit and will be happy to answer any questions about the election process.



representation@guild.bham.ac.uk

Officer Team

If you're interested in standing for a position but want to find out more about what is involved in doing the role, then feel free to approach the current Officer. They'll be more than happy

to answer any questions you have and give you a true picture about what you could achieve should you be elected. You can find their contact details at guildofstudents.com.

Appendix B

Election Regulations 2017-18

1. Interpretation

- 1.1 These Regulations are written with the intent of ensuring free and fair elections at the Guild of Students.
- 1.2 These Regulations are in conjunction with Byelaw 8 (Elections) of the Guild of Students. Please refer to this Byelaw in addition to these regulations.
- 1.3 The Returning Officer of the Guild of Students shall have the final say over the interpretation of these Regulations.
- 1.4 These Election Regulations shall apply to all Guild of Students elections.
- 1.5 In addition to these Regulations, all other Guild of Students governing documents, University Legislation, and all Laws of the Land shall apply.

2. Notice and Nominations

- 2.1 All nominees must be Full Members of the Guild of Students. In some elections further restrictions apply (as stated in these regulations).
- 2.2 Full Members may not stand for two positions on the same committee.
- 2.3 The procedure for return of nominations is outlined in Byelaw 8, Section 4.
 - 2.3.1 In Residents' Associations elections, only Full Members who are resident in a specific University accommodation may stand in the election for that University accommodation.
 - 2.3.2 In Officer Team elections, Full Members may only stand in elections for liberation positions who self-define as belonging to that liberation group.
 - 2.3.3 In Officer Team elections, it is expected that only Full Members from relevant representation groups may stand for representation positions e.g. a home student may stand for Home Students' Officer.
 - 2.3.4 In Assessment Group Elections, all Full Members may stand for the Open Place positions.
 - 2.3.5 In Assessment Group Elections, Full Members may only stand in elections for liberation positions who self-define as belonging to that liberation group.
 - 2.3.6 In Assessment Group Elections, it is expected that only Full Members who are Postgraduate Students may stand for the position reserved for Postgraduates.
 - 2.3.7 In NUS Delegate Elections for National Conference, the Guild of Students shall ensure annual delegations will consist of at least 50% self-defining women (rounded down) in accordance with the 'Fair Representation' NUS motion.
 - 2.3.8 In NUS Delegate Election for all other NUS liberation and representation conferences, Full Members may only stand in elections for positions in which they self-define as belonging to that group.
 - 2.3.9 If no nominations are received for a position by the close of nominations, nominations may be reopened for that position.
- 2.4 Re-open Nominations (R.O.N.) shall be a candidate in every election. R.O.N. shall not be depicted in any Guild promotional material as a person or character.

3. Supporters

- 3.1 The Returning Officer or Nominee shall have the absolute discretion in determining a supporter of a candidate.
- 3.2 All supporters must be Full Members of the Guild of Students. No Full-Time Guild Officer shall support a candidate.
- 3.3 If a Student Group or Part-Time Guild Officer wishes to endorse a candidate in an election, they and the candidate must adhere to the Guild's endorsement guidelines
- 3.4 No candidate shall seek support from a body external to the Guild of Students or the University of Birmingham.
- 3.5 Slates are permitted in single seat elections.
- 3.6 Candidates may be held responsible for fellow slate members and campaigners.
- 3.7 Slates are not permitted in multi-member elections.

4. Publicity

- 4.1 All candidates in all elections should submit a manifesto outlining why they are standing, their election wishes, pledges and any other relevant information. These should be submitted by close of nominations for that election.
- 4.2 Candidates must adhere to Guild and University regulations when displaying election publicity
- 4.3 Candidates can only cover, move or alter their own publicity.
- 4.4 Candidates shall be responsible for removing all of their own publicity.
 - 4.4.1 Publicity may not be attached to trees or buildings without the permission of the owner, or in contravention of UoB regulations

5. Budget

- 5.1 A budget will be provided by the Guild to every candidate. The budget amount for individual elections shall be clearly stated in candidate training.
- 5.2 Candidates cannot spend more than the budget given to them by the Guild of Students.
- 5.3 Candidates are required to have completed spending their budget and submitted receipts for all personal expenditure claims 1 day prior to the close of voting.
- 5.4 The Guild of Students shall make all candidate campaign budgets available for public scrutiny.

6. Campaigning

- 6.1 No candidate or supporter shall attempt to influence voters whilst they are voting.

7. Elections Training, Hustings and Candidate Meeting

- 7.1 Every candidate is expected to attend Elections Training and Hustings. If they are unable to attend then they must send apologies for their absence at least 1 hour before the event and make alternative arrangements with the Guild of Students.
- 7.2 Nominees
Candidates may appoint nominees to attend Hustings. Nominees must be Full Members and shall make a speech.
- 7.3 If, in the opinion of the Chairperson, a speaker is deliberately breaching or flaunting the Regulations, the Chairperson shall have the authority to remove the speaker from that round of speeches, the remainder of the Hustings, and, on subsequent approval by the Returning Officer, from all further Hustings.

8. Voting

- 8.1 Wherever possible, voting shall be online (e-voting).
- 8.2 Where E-voting is not possible in cross-campus elections, or where the E-voting system becomes inoperable, a paper ballot shall be conducted in accordance with the Guild of Students' Paper Ballot Procedure.
- 8.3 Restrictions on which Full Members may vote shall apply in the following elections. All other elections shall be cross campus and open to all Full Members.
 - Residents' Associations – only Full Members living in a University accommodation may vote in the election for that accommodation.
- 8.4 In elections for Liberation Officers, liberation Assessment Group Members and NUS Liberation Conference Delegates it is expected that only Full Members who self-define as belonging to the particular demographic that the position represents shall vote in that election.
 - 8.4.1. For the removal of doubt, non-binary students are eligible to vote in the election of the Women's Officer.
- 8.5 In elections for Representation Officers, Assessment Group Members (Postgraduate Student) and NUS Representation Conference Delegates it is expected that only Full Members who belong to that specific group shall vote in that election e.g. home students vote in the Home Students' Officer Election.

9. Results

- 9.1 All results shall remain provisional until the Returning Officer is satisfied with the conduct of the election and following the closure of any complaints.

10. Enforcement of Regulations

- 10.1 The Returning Officer
 - 10.1.1 The Returning Officer shall be the Registrar and Secretary of the University of Birmingham
 - 10.1.2. The Returning Officer may delegate the management of complaints, appeals, and other appropriate business to a nominee (or nominees).
 - 10.1.3. For the purpose of all Guild Elections during 2016/17, the following Returning Officer structure shall be in place:
 - Complaints about a candidate having possibly broken these regulations shall be determined by the Representation & Resources Officer 2016/17 as nominee for the Returning Officer; and
 - Appeals against decisions made by the Representation & Resources Officer 2016/17 shall be determined by a representative from National Union of Students (NUS) as nominee for the Returning Officer; save that
 - Appeals against decisions made by the Representation & Resources Officer 2016/17 which, in the reasonable opinion of the representative from National Union of Students (NUS), relate to material issues affecting whether or not the election was free and fair shall be referred for determination by the Registrar and Secretary as appropriate
 - 10.1.4. In the case where the Representation & Resources Officer declares a conflict of interest, or wishes to run in an election, their responsibilities as Nominee shall be delegated to another member of the Full-Time Officer Team.

- 10.1.5. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the good conduct and administration of the elections and shall have final interpretation of the Election Regulations and Bye-Law 8. However, the nominee(s) shall be responsible for the day to day good conduct and administration of the elections.
- 10.2 All complaints about a candidate having possibly broken these regulations shall be subject to the Guild of Students' Election Complaints Procedure.
- 10.3 If a candidate is found to have broken these regulations, as deemed by the Returning Officer or Nominee, the candidate may be removed from the election.
- 10.4 Candidates in breach of these regulations may also be subject to Guild, and/or University discipline procedures, and/or legal proceedings.
- 10.5 Candidates shall be held responsible for their own actions in elections and the actions of their supporters, which are proven to the reasonable belief of the Nominee or Returning Officer as appropriate.
11. By-Elections and Co-Option
- 11.1 If a post becomes vacant following the close of an election, a by-election may be run during the next election period.
- 11.2 If a position remains unfilled following both an ordinary election and a by-election, the position may be filled by co-option.
- 11.3 A vacant position may also be filled by co-option if it is deemed to be a time-sensitive role following a request submitted to Returning Officer (or nominee).
- 11.4 Co-option may only be used for Guild Committees, Residents' Associations Committees and Assessment Group
- 11.5 Co-option may not be used for Guild Officer Group, NUS Delegates or Appointments Panel.
- 11.6 The process of co-option shall be as follows:
- 11.6.1 The relevant chair responsible for the position should approve the use of co-option, issue a notice of co-option, inviting members to stand for the position.
- 11.6.2 Candidates shall be invited to the next relevant committee meeting to give a speech and answer questions.
- 11.6.3 The relevant committee shall then vote to co-opt their new member.
- 11.6.4 Any co-option must be agreed by simple majority.
- 11.6.5 A co-opted member will remain in position until the next full election for that position

Appendix C

BYE-LAW 8 – Elections

1. Scope

- 1.1. This Bye-Law shall apply to all Guild elections.

2. Returning Officer

- 2.1. The Returning Officer shall be the Registrar and Secretary of the University of Birmingham.
- 2.2. The Returning Officer may delegate the management of complaints, appeals, and other appropriate business to a nominee (or nominees), as agreed between the Guild and University, and described in the Guild Election Regulations.
- 2.3. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the good conduct and administration of the elections and shall have final interpretation of the Election Regulations. However, the nominee(s) shall be responsible for the day to day good conduct and administration of the elections. The powers and responsibilities of the Returning Officer and their nominee(s) shall be as described in the Guild Elections Regulations.

3. Notice

- 3.1. The Guild of Students shall publish notice of every election.
- 3.2. Such notices shall state:
 - 3.2.1. The date(s) and times of ballot
 - 3.2.2. The earliest and latest times of receipt of nominations
 - 3.2.3. The substance of any regulations governing the election
 - 3.2.4. The type and number of vacancies

4. Nominations

- 4.1. Nominations shall be accepted by the Nominee until the close of nominations.
- 4.2. Re-open Nominations (RON) shall be a candidate in every election.

5. Voting

- 5.1. All Full Members eligible to vote, as specified in the Election Regulations, shall be allowed to vote.
- 5.2. The method of voting shall be outlined in the Election Regulations Documents.
- 5.3. Voting shall be by the Single Transferable Voting System for all multi-seat elections, and by the Alternative Transferable Voting System for all single-seat elections.
- 5.4. Polling shall be held on at least one day for no less than the advertised number of hours.

6. Provision for Secrecy of the Ballot

- 6.1. At the time of closing the ballot the voting register shall be sealed. Under no circumstances shall it come together with the ballot papers unless the validity or conduct of the election is questioned.

- 6.2. The voting register and ballot papers shall be kept for three months after the declaration of the result after which time they will be destroyed unless the validity or conduct of the elections is questioned.

7. Ties

- 7.1. In the event of a tie, the Returning Officer or his representative shall decide the issue by drawing lots, having given the candidates prior notification.

8. Election of Re-open Nominations

- 8.1. The election of Re-open Nominations shall result in nominations being re-opened as soon as possible, and a By-election being held.
- 8.2. This shall not affect the return of any candidate elected before Re-open Nominations in a multi-member election.

9. Complaints

- 9.1. Any complaints regarding the conduct of the election shall be dealt with in accordance with the Guild of Students' Elections Complaint Procedure.
- 9.2. Complaints may be received up to two hours after the close of the ballot.

10. Declaration

- 10.1. Results of the elections shall be declared by the Returning Officer or nominee when the count for each post has been successfully completed.
- 10.2. Results shall be provisional until confirmed by the Returning Officer, which will normally be not less than 5 working days after the close of the ballot.
- 10.3. Results of the elections shall be announced as soon as possible after the completion of the count.