

Schedule 1: Election Regulations

What are the elections?

Elections are a democratic process in which individuals are chosen by a population to represent them through an established role.

Appointment to all student officer positions within the Students' Association will be by election unless explicitly stated elsewhere in the constitution.

All Students' Association elections will be conducted by secret ballot using Single Transferable Vote (STV) or Alternative Transferable Vote (ATV), as appropriate to the number of vacancies, as laid out by the Electoral Reform Society.

Who oversees the running of elections?

In any election there will be a Returning Officer, appointed by the Elections Committee and in consultation with the College in terms of Section 22 of the Education Act 1994. The Returning Officer will be responsible for overseeing the efficient, fair and correct running of the election and for verifying the outcome of the election.

The Returning Officer may appoint deputies to support them in their duties alongside the Elections Committee. The Returning Officer's decision will be final.

What is the Elections Committee?

The Elections Committee are a group of individuals made up of College staff members who support the Returning Officer with providing an efficient, fair and correct election.

No member of the Elections Committee will openly express any opinion about a candidate during an election. Members of the Elections Committee must inform the Committee and outline in writing the nature of any conflict of interest they deem themselves to have in any election. If the Committee is satisfied with the basis for resignation, then the member will be deemed to have resigned. In addition to this, where a simple majority of the Committee deems there to be a conflict of interest, a member may be asked to resign temporarily for all business related to that election.

What positions are elected?

The student Presidential team are elected during the Big Student Election. This includes 4 paid posts; 1 full-time Student President and 3 part-time Vice Presidents.

The College Board of Management will determine the hours of the paid posts. Postholders in paid positions are employees of the College and will be bound by the College's staff policies and procedures.

The Student Parliament membership is elected during Parliament elections. This includes Faculty reps and student officer positions deemed necessary to support the work of the SA by the current Presidential team. These are voluntary posts that should be elected by October 31st.

Notice of elections will be posted in line with best practice. E.g., for paid roles 20 days' notice is offered.

Who can stand in an election?

General Eligibility:

Only Ordinary Members of the Association are eligible to stand in any election. Further eligibility criteria are set out in the Election Rules Document which is annually reviewed by the Students' Association Elections Committee. Election Rules are available on election webpages during the duration of an election period. Out with an election period, please contact the Students' Association if you wish to review the latest version of the Election Rules.

Should a paid officer of the Students' Association circumstances change whereby they no longer fit the eligibility criteria outlined in the Election Rules, their ongoing employment with the City of Glasgow College may be reviewed and become untenable.

Further Eligibility Considerations:

Individuals with current disciplinary sanctions under any of the College's disciplinary procedures will not be eligible for election to any Students' Association post. Students with pending or in the process of disciplinary investigations will be vetted on a case by case basis by the Deputy Returning Officer. Decisions in these instances will be final to allow normal timeline of elections to proceed.

All successful candidates for paid positions (including President and Vice President) will be required to complete a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) submission. College may refuse the appointment of any individual who does not have a satisfactory PVG record.

The College recognises that the Students' Association's Executive Officers, especially the President and Vice Presidents, have an important leadership role and act as important role models for the students they lead and represent. For this reason, the College will exercise particular care over any PVG notification that involves theft, violence, substance misuse and possession of banned substances. In these cases, a candidate may be considered ineligible to stand for election or for appointment to a paid role.

Some roles will require students to self-identify to stand or will be associated with their course. For example, to run for an LGBT Officer role, a student must self-identify as a member of the LGBT community, and only students studying within the Creative Industries can stand for the Creative Industries Faculty Ambassador role.

How do students run in election?

Eligible students can nominate themselves for roles they are eligible to run for.

All nominations must include their name, student number, appropriate personal statement, and candidate photo. Nominations are submitted via the CitySA website; Students' Association staff can provide tech literacy support for nominations but cannot advise or influence the content of a nomination.

During the nomination period, nominations will be checked to ensure the above requirements are met and that the nominations are eligible. If amendments are required candidates will be advised. If candidates are deemed not to be eligible, they will be notified.

The Election Committee will have final oversight on the approval of nominations before publication. The list of candidates will be announced within 48 hours of the close of nominations.

No nomination may be accepted after the close of nominations except in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Returning Officer.

What is expected of candidates?

In order for a student's candidacy to be approved ahead of polls opening, they must engage with a candidate briefing session. At these briefings an overview of the Elections Rules is provided, and expectations of behaviours and responsibilities is shared. For a copy of the most recent Elections Rules document please contact us.

How are candidates supported?

During the nomination period, a candidate information pack is made available on the elections webpage. This is issued by the Elections Committee. This includes written documentation of the Election Rules, information relating to the structure of the Association and each position being elected and any further information deemed necessary by the Elections Committee.

All candidates attend the Elections briefing where further information and support is shared. Further support and training sessions may be organised by the Elections Committee to support candidates, if deemed necessary.

How do student vote?

Only Ordinary Members of the Association may vote in any election.

All elections run by the Students' Association are facilitated through our website, through a specialised election system provided by our website provider (MSL). This election system is integrated with live student data from the College, meaning online enrolled students with a matriculation number and student log-in will be able to access the voting system.

Voting is open 24/7 through our website during the polling period to increase accessibility. The online voting system will automatically randomise the order in which the candidates' names appear for each position, thus negating any alphabetical advantage.

To promote accessibility, the Elections Committee may arrange for paper ballots to be available during polling periods. These ballots are input into the same digital system which prevents duplication of votes. These are stored securely for an appropriate duration of time following the closing of polls for any verification. Various versions of paper ballots are printed for use to randomise the order in which candidates' names appear on the ballot.

How are votes kept secure?

The systems described above ensures that students can cast their secret ballot, however, it does track when a student has completed their voting, therefore stopping the occurrence of any double voting. All votes cast online will be recorded and processed anonymously.

Once a vote is cast for a position in a ballot, voters will be unable to cast a vote for that position again. The Returning Officer will have the power to know who has cast a vote but not the content of that vote. The personal details of those who have voted will be covered by GDPR regulations.

Any situations that arise regarding online elections that have not been addressed in this schedule will be dealt with in the first instance by the Elections Committee. The decision of the Elections Committee may be appealed within 24 hours to the Returning Officer whose decision will be final.

How are students encouraged to vote?

The Students' Association is responsible for the promotion of all stages of the elections period including nominations, candidate support and voting. The Students' Association has a robust communication plan for this and implements a variety of methods of engagement, including online comms, in-person voting stations and classroom-based workshops.

The guidance on what candidates can and cannot do to encourage voting is outlined in the Election Rules shared with them at their candidate briefing session.

No candidate, supporter or College staff member may aid or influence a student in the process of voting.

College staff members should also refrain from endorsing any candidate, but rather encourage students to engage freely in the elections process.

How are the votes counted?

The count will be undertaken using either the Single Transferable Voting system (STV) or Alternative Transferable Voting System (ATV) counting software, as appropriate to the number of vacancies and as previously agreed by the Returning Officer. Both systems will be operated following the most recent counting procedures as prescribed by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

What if the system fails?

In the event of data corruption, loss of data or intentional alteration in an Online Election, the Elections Committee will be required to investigate the situation and determine the validity of the election data and will submit all findings to the Returning Officer, who will make a decision on how to proceed.

Other parties may also be involved in this investigation, for example our website provider.

How are the results announced?

The results will be communicated with all candidates directly before any publication of results. This can be via an in-person announcement event or via email.

Results will then be shared through the Students' Association's communication channels, including social media and our website.

After verification and sign-off from the Returning Officer, the College Secretary will be notified of the successful candidates.

Who do I speak to if I'm unhappy about the way an election is being ran?

For any concerns, please speak to the Students' Association in the first instance. If your concern cannot be mutually resolved at this stage, the Students' Association will direct you to the complaints process through the Returning Officer.

Any complaint must be submitted within 1 hour of polls closing. Appeals about any decision of the Elections Committee should be made within 24 hours of the decision being notified to the complainant and submitted via the Standard Appeals Form to the Returning Officer. The decision of the Returning Officer will be final.

