What is Generation Vote?
Research has found that just 55% of people aged 18-24 are registered to vote, compared to over 90% of over 65s.

This means that politicians feel able to ignore the opinions of young people and cut budgets for services that matter to them.

Students and young people have the power to swing the vote in constituencies across the UK, but first they need to be registered to vote.

That's why we are #GenerationVote in this election, because if we become a force at the ballot box, we can change the agenda in the UK.

What will we be doing?
The deadline to register to vote in the General Election is likely to be Monday 22 May, before the election on Thursday 8 June.

Until then we will be supporting students' unions to register as many students to vote as possible.

Key dates and links
Monday 22 May: Likely deadline for all those eligible to register to vote on polling day, including those people requesting a postal vote.

Thursday 8 June: Polling day! The day of the General Election when all registered voters can cast their vote.

Register to vote online: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

For further information or case studies email campaigns@nus.org.uk
Myth Busting
Registering to vote and casting your vote can seem a bit confusing. These are just a few of the things we’ve heard others say about voting. Use these when chatting to students about your registration drives!

You have to be 18 to register to vote.
Nope - you can actually register from the age of 16 but need to be 18 to vote.

I can’t vote because I wasn’t born in the UK.
Not necessarily. If you are an EU or Commonwealth citizen can register to vote. Find a list of who can vote here.

I have to register at home and I live somewhere else during term time.
You are within your right to register at both your home and term time address for certain elections. Although you are not able to vote twice in the General Election, having your name on the register both at home and at your term-time address can influence policy makers to pay attention to people like you.

My vote won’t count anyway.
There are a lot of areas and constituencies in which students have the potential to be a powerful force. Before you even set foot in a polling station you can have a big impact on policy by campaigning to the candidates on the issues that matter to you whilst being registered to vote.

If I register to vote my details will get passed on.
When you first register to vote, unless you’ve opted out your details will go onto two registers: an electoral register and an open register. With the open register, which includes all of your contact details including name and address, anyone can buy this off your local authority and use your details. If you want to avoid this then you can easily tick a box during the registration process to opt out or once you are registered ring up your local council and ask them to take you off.

I don’t know my National Insurance number, so I can’t register.
First, are you sure there’s no way of finding out? If you work, or have worked, your NI number should appear on your payslips. Otherwise you can find it here, or send alternative ID alongside your form with a note to say you don’t know your NI number.

I don’t have time to fill in a form and put it in the post.
You’re in luck, if you live in England, Scotland or Wales then you can register online. Just go to http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. If you can register online then do it! It’s much quicker and easier!
**Jargon Buster**

We know that the world of voter registration can seem quite complicated and technical. So, we have put together some definitions to make sure you get the most out of your voter registration work!

**Electoral Commission**

The Electoral Commission is the independent body which oversees the running of elections. The body regulates the amount of money that parties and individuals spend during the election. They are also responsible for the implementation of the Lobbying Act, a piece of legislation which regulates the campaigning work of charities and other organisations.

**Electoral Register**

The Electoral Register is the list of registered voters in a particular constituency or area. If you are not on the electoral register you are not eligible to vote.

**ERO**

ERO stands for Electoral Registration Officer, an appointed individual who is responsible for putting together and maintaining the electoral register.

**IER**

IER stands for Individual Electoral Registration. This new system came into place in June 2014 and means that everyone must register themselves to vote individually, rather than the old system where one ‘head of household’ would register everyone at a property. The transition to full IER was completed in December 2015.

**Local authority**

A local authority is the administrative body in local government. The affairs of your local area are managed by your local authority. The local authority is your nearest town or city council. You may want to check what areas they cover to determine who to get in contact with about voter registration.

**National Insurance (NI) Number**

If you were born or live in the UK then before your 16th birthday you will have received your NI number. This number is used to administer national insurance contributions and as a form of identification. Under the new system of individual electoral registration your national insurance number is used in the validation process to get registered.

**Open Register**

When your registration to vote has gone through your information will be put on to the open register, which lists all ‘electors’ or residents within your local area that are registered. This open register can be sold on to businesses and charities which could result in you being contacted. To get your name off the register ring up your local authority, or tick the box to opt out whilst registering.

**Tick box enrolment**

Tick box enrolment is a process that NUS advocates within institutions. At the start of the academic year your university or college will ask for your address and other details to confirm you have started the year. This is often so they can get your up to date contact details or to confirm your attendance with the student loan company. We are encouraging institutions to team up with their local authority to include a tick box that allows all data you share with your university or college with the council so they can register you to vote!

#GenerationVote
A note on National Insurance Numbers

Following previous #GenerationVote campaigns, many SUs have identified student uncertainty around National Insurance Numbers as one of the biggest barriers to getting students on the register.

It can be frustrating to see students who might otherwise have registered on the spot be prevented from doing so because they don’t know or don’t have easy access to finding out what their NI number is.

Some things SUs have found helpful with this include:

- Having a briefing sheet for any volunteers about how to find out what your National Insurance number is, and ways to access it quickly (e.g. some people can access payslips through their phone).
- Noting emails of students who missed out because of their NI number to follow up with steps to help them either find it or send alternative ID.
- Adding notes onto paper forms explaining the lack of NI number
- Having stations to scan or photograph IDs to be sent in place of an NI number
- Specifically publicising the need to know your NI number as a major part of your voter registration campaign

How to work with EROs

The world of voter registration can be confusing and you will need to engage with your local council for help. Just like a students’ union, each local authority is different. Here’s a brief guide to get you started!

What’s happened?
The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 brought about a key change in the way voter registration happens. Previously, one person in every household was responsible for registering everyone else who lives at that address. Under individual electoral registration, each person is now required to register to vote individually, rather than by household.

What students’ unions can do

1. Get in touch with your regional ERO networks, and with your local EROs. Ask them what plans they have for getting students registered to vote, and how they plan to prevent students dropping off the register. Ask them what you can do to help them with their plans.

2. Talk with your institution about integrating voter registration into general enrolment. This presents a key opportunity for institutions to support their students to become full active citizens, and should be seen as a key priority. Whilst this may be too late for the General Election, this is one way that you can make sure you have a sustainable model for getting students registered.

3. Talk to your ERO about what else you can do to support voter turnout – can you get a polling station on your campus for example?