

The Durham SU Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for the good governance of Durham SU, and has prepared interim guidance for the election of student group Committees in Easter term 2020 in order to facilitate elections in the extraordinary circumstances of the Covid-19 crisis. In Michaelmas term 2020, these regulations will be discussed at Assembly and a revised proposal will then be approved by both Assembly and the Board.

### **1. Entitlement to Stand**

1.1 Students may stand for any student group committee position, providing they are a member of that group. A census of members will be taken from the student group membership records held by Durham SU on the Notice Day. The notice day will be 14 days before the opening of nominations.

1.2 Members who have not signed up to be a member of the group through the Durham SU website and paid the relevant membership fee (if applicable) will not be able to stand for a position.

1.3 Associate members (non-students) of a student group including Honorary Life Members (HLM's) are unable to stand for any elected position on the Executive Committee.

1.4 Associate members of a student group may be able to stand for Non-Executive Committee positions. Such positions must hold no voting rights at Executive Committee meetings under any circumstances.

### **2. Election Processes**

2.1 Elections are permitted via an Annual General Meeting, a General Meeting or online elections through the Durham Students' Union platform. No other methods are permitted.

In Easter term 2020, all elections will be required to be conducted online.

2.2 Certain approved groups may apply to use selection methods for their Committee members if they so wish. All other groups are not permitted to select their Committee members by another method other than election by the full membership. Selection methods must be carried out as outlined in the Student Groups Selection Processes Policy.

### **3. Nominations Processes**

3.1 The Committee must inform the Durham SU Opportunities Team of any election at least 21 days before the date they consider best to hold the election, to ensure that memberships to the group can be frozen from 14 days before nominations open.

3.2 Members should have a minimum of 7 days' notice that nominations will be opening for any election conducted by the group.

3.3 Members should have a minimum of 3 days to nominate themselves for a student group committee position.

3.4 Nominations should be checked to ensure that all nominees are members of the group and have paid the relevant membership fees.

3.5 Unless specifically permitted, nominations are made individually for each position. Role sharing or co-roles, are only permitted if expressly authorised by the student group constitution.

#### **4. Campaigning**

4.1 Candidates running for a student group committee position will not be given a campaign budget and must not use any of their own or third party funds to campaign.

4.2 Campaigning must be lawful, fair and positive. Candidates and campaigners must consider the safety and welfare of themselves and others whilst campaigning.

4.3 Candidates must also comply with the policies, rules and regulations in the Durham SU governing documents; note that these regulations are appropriate for student group elections and not Standing Order C.

4.4 Candidates and campaigners may not influence a student whilst they are voting.

4.5 Candidates cannot be sponsored or endorsed by any external organisation.

#### **5. Voting**

5.1 Re-Open Nominations will be a candidate in all student group elections and this option should be advertised alongside the other candidates.

5.2 The vote count should be overseen by the chair of the AGM or GM who must not be running for a position themselves. In such circumstances an independent chair should be nominated by the attendees.

5.3 All candidates should be notified of the results of an election within 72 hours of the vote count taking place.

5.4 All members of the student group should be notified of the results of an election within 5 working days of the vote count taking place but this should not happen before all the candidates have been notified.

#### **6. Disputes, complaints and breaches of the rules**

6.1 The Deputy Returning Officer for these elections is the Durham SU Chief Executive. For day-to-day purposes, the Opportunities Manager has been delegated authority to manage elections related questions and disputes

Any disputes concerning your elections should be referred to the Opportunities Team in the first instance via email to [dsu.engagement@durham.ac.uk](mailto:dsu.engagement@durham.ac.uk)

6.2 Any complaints must specify the following:

- The concern you are raising, including the name of any people involved.
- The Student Group your concern is related to.
- The relevant part of the regulations.
- The evidence you have that the regulations have not been followed (Please note that complaints without evidence are unlikely to be considered).

6.3 The Opportunities Manager or a delegated representative will undertake an appropriate investigation, and will decide whether to dismiss or uphold the complaint. If the complaint is upheld, an appropriate sanction may be guidance or disqualification.

6.4 If a candidate or campaigner is unsatisfied with the outcome, appeals can be submitted to the Director of Services (or their nominated representative) within 14 days. Appeals will only be accepted on the following grounds:

- Procedural irregularity in the initial investigation.
- New evidence has come to light that wasn't available in the original investigation.
- Evidence of bias.

6.5 The Director of Services (or their nominated representative) may dismiss or uphold the appeal. If the appeal is upheld, they may require the student group to re-hold the election. If the appeal is dismissed the original outcome will stand. There will be no further recourse for appeal.