Elections

Every year an election must be held to elect a new Committee who will run your Society for the coming year. This still applies if the current Committee members wish to continue their role.

Committee elections should be carried out during your Society’s AGM (see ‘Meetings’), in April to allow plenty of time for handover.

If an election is needed during the year, an EGM should be called and the same procedure should be carried out

**Before the Election**

* Ensure all members of the Society are made aware that an election is pending and are made aware of the date – a minimum of two weeks’ notice.
* The Secretary will take on the role of Returning Officer to oversee the election – this includes booking the room and announcement of election. Assistance for any returning officer is available from the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator. (Who will also stand as Returning Officer in the event the Secretary is running for election).
* An impartial observer should be present at the vote – either the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator.

**The Voting System**

The voting system for a society is very simple. There are two options when it comes to voting. These are either an ‘open vote’ or a Ballot box system.

**On the date of the Election**

**Ballet box system**

* A Ballot box and ballot papers are available on request from the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator, and blank papers can also be downloaded online. Please give at least 48 hours notice to organise this.
* If a Ballot box is being used it is the responsibility of the returning officer to ensure that the box does not get tampered with.
* Votes are made onto paper ballot forms prepared with each candidate’s name next to the position they want to run for - blank ballot slips are available from the Activities Office and a downloadable copy is available on the Resources section.
* One blank ballot form is handed to each full member.
* The election allows each candidate to stand and give a short speech (approx. 2 minutes) to the room.
* Ensure that the voters know that if they feel that the nominees are not suitable for the position they can also vote RON (Re-open nominations). If RON wins an election that post will be re-opened for candidates and will be elected at a later date.
* Members are then invited to vote and are strongly advised to do so in secrecy (this part is so students feel comfortable when voting and is their right to do so in secrecy). Give the members some time to move away from others and for the votes to be cast.
* When voters are ready they must place the ballot paper into the Ballot box themselves and not allow it to be collected up by the returning officer or any members.
* The Returning Officer must then take the box away along with an impartial observer(s) to count the votes. The impartial observer(s) must be happy with way the count is conducted for the results to stand.
* Use a simple counting sheet to show how many votes went to each candidate (any votes that are unreadable shall be marked as “SPOILT”).
* Once the votes are counted announce the election results as soon as possible whilst making the counting sheets (not ballot papers) available thus making the election transparent to all.
* The winner is determined by a majority vote. If the result is a tie where the top candidates have an equal amount of votes, a recount should take place and if the result remains the same then another vote must be carried out – this can be done immediately after the original vote.

**Open Vote system**

* The election allows each candidate to stand and give a short speech (approx. 2 minutes) to the room.
* The candidates are then asked to leave the room while a vote is conducted.
* Members are then invited to vote for who they wish to be elected by a show of hands.
* Ensure that the voters know that if they feel that the nominees are not suitable for the position they can also vote RON (Re-open nominations). If RON wins an election that post will be re-opened for candidates and will be elected at a later date.
* The Returning Officer must then count the votes. The impartial observer(s) must be happy with way the count is run for the results to stand.
* Use a simple counting sheet to show how many votes went to each candidate.
* Once the votes are counted invite the candidates back into the room and announce the election results whilst making the number of votes for each candidate available to view thus making the election transparent to all.
* The winner is determined by a majority vote. If the result is a tie where the top candidates have an equal amount of votes, a recount should take place and if the result remains the same then another vote must be carried out – this can be done immediately after the original vote.

**After the Election**

* If a Ballot box system was delivered the ballot slips and completed count sheets should be handed in to the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator.
* If an open vote system was delivered then the completed count sheet should be handed in to the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator.
* All election results should be recorded on the official minutes of the AGM.

Any new Committee members should serve hand-in-hand with any outgoing Committee members until the end of the academic year to try and aid the efficient ‘hand-over’ of responsibility. Please see handover section for more information.

AGM Election forms and blank ballot slips are available to download from the Resources Section of the UCSU website at [www.ucsu.org/societies/resources](http://www.ucsu.org/societies/resources)

**Vote of No Confidence**

* A Vote of No Confidence (VNC) can be submitted for any member of a Society’s Committee.
* A VNC can only be submitted by either a petition signed by 51% of all members of the society; or by a petition signed by two-thirds of the Society’s Committee.
* The completed petition needs to be forwarded to all the members of the Society’s Committee and the Societies Federation President.
* An EGM must then be called.
* The Societies Federation President must be invited to the EGM who shall attend as an impartial observer.
* For the VNC to be passed it should be supported by vote by 75% of the eligible voting members at the EGM.
* If passed, the Committee member shall give up their seat, but will still be a member of the Society.
* If defeated, the Committee member shall continue in their position.
* If defeated another VNC against the same person cannot be presented until 28 days after the vote, unless it is vexatious whereby the Societies Federation President can throw it out with agreement from the President of the Union.