



UNIVERSITY OF YORK GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE MEETING MINUTES

FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY 2009

Chaired by: Daniel Carr (Acting President)

Minuted by: Keith Gibson (Operations Assistant)

In attendance: Geng Pan (Welfare Officer), Davita Gunbay (Internal Officer), Tom Flynn (Treasurer), Richard Mitchell (Events Officer), Kitty Wicker (Events Officer), Rachel Hope (Events Officer), Jay Walker (Press and Publicity Officer), Dan Horsfall (Sports Officer), Kath Mildon (Sports Officer), Samik Datta (Sports Officer), Peng Ren (NPC Officer), Eva Fairnell (Part Time Officer), Rubab Satti (Overseas Officer), Chitvan Bochiwal (Overseas Officer), Ian Darlington (Senate Rep), Bo Liu (Alcuin GCR Chair), Sam Turner (Vanbrugh GCR Chair), Luizza Wong (James GCR Chair), Richard Rhodes (Wentworth GCR Chair)

Apologies: Jian Gao (Sports Officer)

No apologies: Ming Luo (Facilities Officer)

1. Notices

Daniel Carr informed the Executive that he had received the resignation of Helen Robinson earlier in the day, due to her concerns about combining the workload of her PGCE course and GSA activities. The Executive expressed its thanks for Helen's work, and stated its hope that she would still be involved in consultation on issues relating to PGCE students.

2. Survey Design



The GSA Executive agreed to take up membership of the website SurveyMonkey to produce a number of online surveys to gather members' thoughts on a wide range of issues. It also established a subcommittee to organise this, chaired by the President and consisting of at least two other GSA Officers, and the Academic and Welfare Coordinator.

3. Email Addresses

Tom Flynn introduced the new role of Academic and Welfare Coordinator, outlining the tasks this new member of staff will be expected to undertake. The GSA Executive then agreed to create GSA email addresses for all GCRC Chairs, and the Academic and Welfare Coordinator.

4. Report on Christmas Events

A brief report was received on the GSA events that took place over Christmas. Jay Walker gave a brief account of the Christmas Dinner on December 25th, and Rubab Satti outlined the Pizza and Drinks Party that took place on December 28th. Strong concern was expressed about the manner in which the Christmas Dinner was conducted.

5. Committee Work

Daniel Carr relinquished the Chair to speak in favour of a number of motions pertaining to representation on University and YUSU committees. Davita Gunbay took the Chair for this item.

The GSA Executive confirmed the appointments to University and YUSU committees recommended in enclosure 1 of the meeting's agenda. (See Appendix 1)

The GSA Executive confirmed the appointment of James Harbin to University Computing Committee and University Web Committee.



The GSA Executive confirmed the appointment of the GSA Internal Officer to the University Bars Strategy Group.

The GSA Executive confirmed the appointment of the GSA President to the University's Good Neighbours Group and Heslington East Co-location Working Group.

The GSA Executive resolved to invite the YUSU President, or in their absence a YUSU principal officer nominated by YUSU, to attend all future GSA Executive Meetings, and to be allowed to speak in such meetings, but not to be allowed a vote on any matters.

6. Report of the Democracy Working Group

Daniel Carr resumed the Chair.

Dan Horsfall presented the recommendations of the Democracy Working Group, suggesting a new Ordinance 2 of the GSA Constitution, and a new set of Rules and Regulations for Campaigning.

The GSA Executive approved the recommendations of the Democracy Working Group presented to the Executive, subject to the amendments proposed during this Executive Meeting. (See Appendix 2)

Daniel Carr relinquished the Chair to speak in favour of the following motions. Geng Pan assumed the Chair.

The GSA Executive agreed to the election timetable recommended by Daniel Carr for the upcoming elections for the positions of President and PGCE Officer. (See Appendix 3)

The GSA Executive agreed to approach Tom Langrish, chair of YUSU Council, to act as Returning Officer for the forthcoming elections once the changes to the GSA's Ordinances agreed at this meeting come into effect on January 23rd 2009. It also agreed to recommend Matt Beacham to the Returning Officer, to act as Election Observer for these elections.

Daniel Carr resumed the Chair.



The GSA Executive mandated the Democracy Working Group to organise and conduct focus groups with PGCE students in week 4 of this term, and with graduate students with families in week 6 of this term. This is to be done in conjunction with the GSA Academic and Welfare Coordinator.

The GSA Executive noted its thanks to the Democracy Working Group for their hard work in producing the new Electoral Regulations and Rules and Regulations for Campaigning.

7. Graduate Guide to York

The GSA Executive agreed to produce a Graduate Guide to York, and actioned Tom Flynn to lead this project, in collaboration with other officers and relevant external bodies.

The GSA Executive agreed to produce a video Graduate Guide to York to complement the written Guide, and established a subcommittee to organise this. The subcommittee will be chaired by the Internal Officer and consist of at least the Press and Publicity Officer, one other GSA Officer, and one GCR Chair. The staff member coordinating this production will be the GSA Designer.

The GSA Executive agreed to produce a termly magazine, named GradMag, published in week 8 of each academic term and once during the summer holidays. It also established a subcommittee to organise this, chaired by the Internal Officer and consisting of at least the Press and Publicity Officer, one other GSA Officer, and one GCR Chair. The staff member coordinating this production will be Keith Gibson.

8. Off Campus Events

The GSA Executive mandated the Events Committee to organise at least one off-campus event this term.



9. National Union of Students (NUS) and the National Postgraduate Committee (NPC)

Daniel Carr relinquished the Chair to speak in favour of the following motions. Geng Pan assumed the Chair.

The GSA Executive mandated the President to campaign against NUS working with the NPC, and instead to campaign for NUS to merge with the NPC so that postgraduates can have a professional organisation as their top level affiliated body. Furthermore, the GSA executive mandated the President to campaign for a full-time Postgraduate Officer within NUS.

10. Cooperation with YUSU

The GSA executive resolved to increase cooperation with YUSU, particularly with regards to seeking to arrange officer meetings to collaborate on relevant issues in University Committees.

11. Postgraduate Ombudsman Campaign

The GSA executive agreed to lobby the University for a postgraduate ombudsman, subject to approval at an Extraordinary General Meeting later this term.

12. Childcare on Campus

The GSA executive agreed to lobby the University for greater on campus provision of childcare for graduate students with dependents, subject to approval at an Extraordinary General Meeting later this term.

13. EGM

Daniel Carr resumed the Chair.

The GSA Executive resolved to call an Extraordinary General Meeting on Friday of week 5 of this term to approve the two aforementioned resolutions, and to debate affiliation to the National Postgraduate Committee.

14. Business Cards

The GSA Executive agreed to have business cards produced for all officer positions and staff.

15. Courtyard Opening

Daniel Carr informed all Executive members that they had been invited to the VIP opening of the Courtyard bar.

16. The role of Overseas Officer

The GSA Executive agreed that for the remainder of this academic year, the Overseas Officers would be invited to sit on Events Committee.

The GSA Executive actioned Daniel Carr to arrange a meeting between the Overseas Officers and officers of the International Students' Association.

17. Inventory

The GSA Executive mandated the Facilities Officer, alongside the Events Officers, to organise and produce a full inventory of all equipment in the GSA storage cupboard in Wentworth College.

18. Closed Session

Upon taking of a vote, it was agreed to go into closed session, and all non-trustees were asked to leave.



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Appendix 1 – Recommended Committee Appointments

Ian Darlington (required to attend the following meeting) - Senate

President (required to attend the following meetings) - Court; Council; Senate; Information Strategy; Policy and Resources; Student Services; Heslington East Community Forum; Student Centre Working Group; Library Committee; Campus Development Steering Group; YUSU Council

Daniel Carr (temporarily, as Acting President¹) - Board for Graduate Schools; YUSU Campaigns Committee; Catering Consultation Group

Geng Pan (required to attend the following meetings) - Student Services; Student Support Forum; Student Services Consultative Subcommittee; YUSU Equality, Welfare and Diversity Committee

Geng Pan - Equality and Diversity; Health, Safety and Welfare; Dignity at Work and Study

Davita Gunbay - Student Centre Working Group; Ethics Committee; Board for Graduate Schools

Tom Flynn - Teaching Committee; HYMS Joint Learning and Teaching Committee

Kitty Wicker - Board for Graduate Schools

Rachel Hope - Standing Committee on Assessment

Richard Mitchell - Standing Committee on Assessment; YUSU Entertainments Committee; YUSU Environment and Ethics Committee

¹ Note that these groups do not explicitly have to be reassigned to the new President after Daniel Carr's term expires. However it will be necessary to reconsider our representatives once a new President has been elected as the newly elected officer may or may not wish to sit on these committees.



Jay Walker - YUSU Communications Committee; YUSU Equality, Welfare and Diversity Committee²; YUSU LGBT Committee

Dan Horsfall - Learning and Teaching Projects; Race Equality Implementation Group

Sports Officers, in any combination - College Sports Meetings

Eva Fairnell - Forum for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

Rubab Satti - YUSU Racial Equality Committee

Chitvan Bochiwal - YUSU Equality, Welfare and Diversity Committee

² Pending confirmation from the Chair of this committee

Appendix 2 – Democracy Working Group Documents Agreed

1. Ordinance 2 – Electoral Regulations

1. These regulations apply to the conduct of elections of the GSA Officers.
2. The Executive shall appoint a suitably qualified Returning Officer for each election. Where possible this Returning Officer shall be selected from among the Ordinary Members of the GSA. Where this is not possible, the Executive shall appoint a suitably qualified independent Returning Officer who is not drawn from the ordinary membership of the GSA. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for ensuring that the election is conducted in accordance with this constitution. They shall be responsible for the good conduct and administration of the elections and shall have the sole interpretation of the election rules.
3. Where the Returning Officer is an Ordinary Member of the GSA, he or she must appoint an independent observer for the elections. Independent observers must not be Ordinary Members of the GSA. Where the Returning Officer is an independent drawn from outside the ordinary membership of the GSA, he or she must appoint an observer from within the ordinary membership of the GSA.
4. The Returning Officer may appoint Deputy Returning Officers at his or her discretion. The Deputy Returning Offices shall be instructed by the Returning Officer on their duties and shall perform these in an impartial manner.
5. The Returning Officer may remove officials that are not carrying out the Returning Officer's instructions or acting in an impartial manner.
6. The Returning Officer shall not be eligible to stand for election, nor vote, nor nominate or support any candidate in the election.
7. Any independent observer or GSA Ordinary Member appointed to observe an independent Returning Officer, or any Deputy Returning Officers appointed by the Returning Officer shall be eligible to vote, provided they are Ordinary



Members of the GSA, but they shall not be eligible to stand for election, nor nominate or support any candidate in the election.

8. The Returning Officer may seek legal advice, to be paid for by the GSA, if they believe that statements made or the contents of publicity could leave the GSA open to legal action.
9. The Returning Officer can rule out of order any statement or the contents of any publicity which in their view is in breach of the constitution, rules and equal opportunity policy of the GSA.
10. The Returning Officer is the sole election official competent to deal with complaints about the conduct and administration of the election.
11. Details of the Returning Officer and any Deputy Returning Officers shall be published in such places as deemed appropriate by the Returning Officer.
12. In considering a complaint, the Returning Officer after hearing all the appropriate evidence may not uphold the complaint; or may halt elections for specified post(s) or disqualify specified candidate(s) if, in their view, a candidate(s) has breached election rules.
13. The disqualification of a candidate bars that candidate from standing for any position at any GSA Officer election or by-election in the academic year of their disqualification and the subsequent academic year.
14. Any person who has been disqualified as a candidate for the academic year of their disqualification is prohibited from acting as an election official for that same period.
15. Only Ordinary Members of the GSA shall be entitled to vote in any GSA election.
16. Only Ordinary Members of the GSA shall be entitled to stand for election.



17. Only Ordinary Members of the GSA shall be entitled to nominate or second any candidates in an election, except that no candidate in a particular post may support any other candidate for the same post. Candidates may not act as their own proposer or seconder.
18. The elections of Officers of the GSA shall be by secret ballot.
19. Question Time/Hustings for the election of GSA Officers shall be held at the first Ordinary General Meeting of the GSA held in the Autumn term, with the exception of Sabbatical Officers.
20. Question Time/Hustings for the election of Sabbatical Officers shall be held at the second Ordinary General Meeting of the academic year preceding their term of office, unless election is necessary under the conditions described in articles 7.22(i)-(iv) of the GSA Constitution.
21. Ordinary Members of the GSA, with the exception of the Returning Officer, may vote online from the opening of voting until the close of the election.
22. Notice of election shall be given at least fourteen days before the closing date for nominations.
23. Nominations shall close at midday eight days before voting opens.
24. The Returning Officer shall produce an Election Timetable, which shall include the dates and times for the notification and completion of the following. This will, where practicable reflect the conditions described in ordinances 2.16 and 2.17:
 - Nomination process
 - Candidates briefing
 - Publicity
 - Question Time/Hustings
 - Voting
 - The count.



25. The Election Timetable shall be published and adequately circulated with materials promoting the election.
26. In the event that no nominations are received for an Office of the GSA, then candidates may stand from the floor at Question Time/Hustings.
27. Any candidate for an election of a post of GSA officer must be nominated by three other Ordinary Members of the GSA, with the exception of candidates standing from the floor.
28. The following nomination regulations apply:
 - (i) Nominations shall be on a standard nomination form approved by the Returning Officer.
 - (ii) The candidate and the nominators shall sign the nomination form.
 - (iii) Nominations shall be submitted to the Returning Officer or any Deputy Returning Officer.
29. The Returning Officer shall have the sole responsibility of declaring a submitted nomination form valid. In the event of two or more candidates having the same proposer in an election for a single position, the Returning Officer may allow up to 24 hours for the candidate(s) to find fresh proposers.
30. When the Returning Officer is satisfied all valid nominations will be confirmed with the candidates. The Returning Officer shall ensure that nomination forms, or copies thereof, are posted in such places as deemed appropriate.
31. After nominations close, The Returning Officer shall arrange for a briefing to be provided to which all candidates will be expected to attend. This briefing will include:
 - Briefing on general behavior of candidates
 - Briefing on the rules surrounding publicity
 - Briefing on the rules for campaigning
 - Briefing on the electoral regulations
 - Briefing on the role of trustees
 - Briefing about Question Time/Hustings



32. The Returning Officer is responsible for arranging the candidates' briefing but may choose not to deliver any part of the briefing where they feel someone else may be more suitable. The Returning Officer will be present throughout the candidates' briefing.
33. Prior to the election the Returning Officer may amend the Rules and Regulations for Campaigning as they see fit and their decision is final. Any breach of these rules may lead to disqualification.
34. The Returning Officer will decide whether the actions of any candidate represent a breach of Electoral Regulations or the Rules and Regulations for Campaigning. If the Returning Officer decides that a candidate has breached the Electoral Regulations or the Rules and Regulations for campaigning, the Returning Officer is empowered to sanction the candidate however the Returning Officer sees fit. The decision to sanction a candidate and the form any sanction takes is the decision of the Returning Officer and the Returning Officer's decision is final.
35. The Returning Officer shall publicise the arrangements for voting, together with a list of candidates and manifestos, and shall make arrangements whereby provision is made for Ordinary Members of the GSA to vote. The Returning Officer may demand help from the GSA for the costs incurred in producing such publicity, help with the design of any publicity, and provision of the necessary manpower to distribute publicity. The Returning Officer will also be made an administrator of the GSA Facebook group for the duration of the election process, so that he or she may use the group to publicise elections.
36. The order of candidates on ballots and official notice boards will be based on lots drawn at the candidates' briefing. There will be a facility for voting for 'Re-Open Nominations' as an alternative to the candidates standing (this is not necessary in cases where there are no candidates). For the purpose of counting the votes, 'Re-Open Nominations' shall be treated as another candidate.
37. If the 'Re-Open Nominations' candidate is elected, the vacancy should be declared unfilled.



38. For elections held by secret ballot the counting of the votes shall be conducted by the Returning Officer and the Deputy Returning Officers. Each candidate shall be entitled to observe the count.
39. The count will commence only if the Returning Officer is satisfied that all complaints relating to the conduct and administration of the election have been resolved. Complaints after the count has commenced may only relate to the conduct of the count.
40. The count will be conducted according to the rules laid down by the Electoral Reform Society for running elections by the Alternative Transferable Vote, or where more than one position is being elected, by Single Transferable Vote.
41. Voters shall be able to express preferences for as few or as many candidates in an election.
42. Election results shall be declared by the Returning Officer when the count for each post has been successfully completed. Notice of results shall be made available to the general membership within twenty-four hours of the results being certified by the Returning Officer.
43. The Returning Officer, in association with the observer, shall produce a report after the election on any such issues that arose during the election. This document will be made available to the membership.
44. The governing body should satisfy themselves that all elections are fairly and properly conducted.

2. Elections Booklet, including Rules and Regulations for Campaigning

Welcome to elections



If you are reading this, the chances are you have just had your nomination form validated and are standing for election to a GSA Office. First and foremost, congratulations!

The following booklet contains all the dos and don'ts of elections, along with key information such as dates for campaigning and how much you can spend on publicity. It is important that you read and re-read all the rules for campaigning, as well as the Electoral Regulations (which are an ordinance to the GSA constitution and have been attached as appendix a.v to this document), as ignorance of any election rule will not be accepted as an excuse.

Some of the rules laid down in this booklet may seem overly restrictive and we apologise for that; it is important that we strike the correct balance between promoting lively, creative debate and ensuring fair and transparent elections. Indeed, when the elections are over we would appreciate any comments you have regarding the rules for campaigning.

You should familiarise yourself with the Rules and Regulations for Campaigning as any transgression of these rules will result in disciplinary action. The decision to take any action rests with the Returning Officer and it is the Returning Officer who will decide the form any sanction takes. If he or she feels it warranted, the Returning Officer may even disqualify a candidate from the election. We hope of course, that this will not be necessary and believe that if candidates follow the rules presented in this booklet we will be able to enjoy a lively, fair, and high-spirited election.

Nominations close:

Candidates meeting:

Campaigning begins:

Voting begins:



Voting closes:

The results are announced:

Rules and Regulations for Campaigning

The Candidate

1. The word “candidate” refers to any person who has had a valid nomination form accepted by the Returning Officer.
2. A list of all accepted nomination forms will be available from the Returning Officer to any registered postgraduate student. Candidates are encouraged to leave contact details with the Returning Officer or a Deputy Returning Officer.
3. All candidates must attend the candidates’ briefing.
4. Candidates must not engage in any negative campaigning (for a definition of negative campaigning see the appendix a.i).
5. Any and all forms of bribery, blackmail and personal harassment are banned.
6. Candidates must behave in a manner that does not bring themselves, the elections, the GSA, or the University of York into disrepute.
7. Candidates must not refer to other candidates standing for any position during the campaign period. However they may engage in debate regarding another candidate’s policies.

Campaigning



8. Candidates and their supporters may only campaign in the allotted campaign period, which runs from the end of the candidates briefing, until the close of voting.
9. Candidates must not campaign within the same room as any computer capable of being used to vote in the electronic voting system while voting is open.
10. Candidates may not campaign within campaign free zones, as determined by the Returning Officer.
11. Candidates are responsible for those campaigning on their behalf. Candidates should be aware that in the event that they fail to give adequate warning to their supporters and a complaint is brought against them, their failure to warn their supporters will not constitute an acceptable explanation.
12. Candidates may not engage in door-to-door campaigning within residential blocks. Candidates may, upon invitation, enter communal kitchen/living areas for the purpose of campaigning.
13. For the purpose of campaigning, candidates may supply a campaign manifesto of no more than 500 words for sabbatical positions and 250 words for non-sabbatical positions. This manifesto will be displayed on notice boards as deemed appropriate by the Returning Officer, as well as on the GSA Facebook group and the GSA website.
14. Manifestos may be submitted at any stage during the campaign period, however the Returning Officer will only update the GSA notice boards, website and Facebook group once-a-day (see appendix a.ii for clarification).
15. Manifestoes, as with all campaign material, shall not contain any statement that, in the opinion of the Returning Officer, is libellous, offensive, factually inaccurate, wilfully misleading, or which if published could result in legal action being taken against the GSA.

Publicity



16. Election publicity shall be anything that, on the balance of probabilities, is believed to have been produced, published, communicated or distributed with the intention of affecting the outcome of a GSA election, or in the knowledge that it would be likely to influence the outcome of a GSA election. It need not be produced, published or distributed by or on behalf of a candidate to be election publicity. The Returning Officer makes all decisions and decisions are final.
17. Candidates shall not be allowed to display publicity in the same room as any computer capable of being used to vote in the electronic voting system.
18. Candidates may not refer to any of their opponents in any of the publicity that they produce.
19. Candidates must prepare their publicity so that it is factually accurate and inoffensive. In case of foreign language based publicity, the Returning Officer reserves the right to find a suitable translator to ensure this rule is adhered to.
20. The following shall be acceptable forms of election publicity:
 - (a) Posters (or similar paper-based publication types approved by the Returning Officer)
 - (b) Electronic versions of campaign posters and manifestos to be situated on the GSA Facebook page and the GSA website.
21. The following shall not be acceptable forms of election publicity.
 - (a) Advertising in any commercial media including Recognised Media Organisations (as defined in appendix a.iii).
 - (b) Telephone or fax-based campaigning
 - (c) Stickers (unless attached to the candidate or their supporters)
 - (d) Shouting or artificially magnified voice production
 - (e) Door-to-door canvassing of the electorate
 - (f) Practices deemed to invade the privacy of or cause undue inconvenience to members of the university.
 - (g) Any publicity distributed or communicated before the close of nominations, even if it would otherwise be an acceptable item of publicity.
 - (h) Any publicity found 'online', with the exception of approved publicity found on the GSA website or the GSA Facebook group.



22. Any candidate wishing to have their manifesto and/or campaign posters on the GSA website and/or Facebook group must provide an electronic copy for approval by the Returning Officer.
23. Interviews conducted by Recognised Media Organisations (see appendix a.iii) during an election campaign shall not be treated as election publicity, provided that they are conducted in a fair and impartial manner. In particular, all candidates standing for a particular post shall be asked identical questions, and shall be given an equal opportunity to answer all questions. Any interview with a Recognised Media Organisation must be arranged by the GSA Executive and authorised by the Returning Officer.
24. All publicity must be authorised by the Returning Officer or a Deputy Returning Officer.
25. Candidates are not permitted to use the GSA logo or any of its affiliated brands on their individual publicity.
26. Candidates will have access to a budget of £20 for publicity, which may not be exceeded by the candidate and cannot be supplemented by supporters. This will be held by the GSA Office and must be used in the GSA Office (see appendix a.iv for the full range of services offered by the GSA and their related costs).
27. No third party shall be paid to produce or design election publicity or to assist in the distribution of election publicity.
28. All publicity must bear a stamp of authorisation, the declared name of the candidate, the GSA Office sought by the candidate, the time and location of Question Time/Hustings, and the date and time at which voting opens. In the case of manifestos, such information does not count towards the word limit.
29. No person may remove, deface or destroy any item of election publicity before the close of voting without the permission of the candidate, unless mandated by the Returning Officer.
30. The Returning Officer, or those empowered by the Returning Officer, will be responsible for placing publicity in official GSA display cabinets. Candidates are responsible for displaying any other hard copies of their campaign publicity.



31. Candidates may display copies of their publicity on any designated display board. The GSA bears no responsibility for publicity that is removed from walls by members of the university staff.
32. Publicity may be displayed on campus only. In this instance, 'on campus' includes university buildings such as Constantine House, Fairfax House, and the King's Manor.
33. Publicity must not be placed over any official university notice. This includes, but is not limited to, health and safety notices, fire safety notices, Registrar's notices, Chaplain's notices, GSA notices, YUSU notices, ISA notices, and Library notices. Candidates must also not cover another candidate's publicity.

Electronic communication for the purposes of campaigning and/or publicity

34. Candidates may not use any form of electronic communication to solicit support for their campaign. This includes but is not limited to mass emails or the use of forwarding emails. Emails may be used for the purpose of coordinating GSA Ordinary Members whose support was confirmed during face-to-face communication between the candidate and the Ordinary Member.
35. Any email sent by the candidate for the purpose of coordinating their supporters must carry the following strap line: "If you have received this email without giving permission to the sender please contact election@yorkgsa.org." Where there is a disagreement regarding permission to send an email between the recipient of the email and the sender, the view of the recipient will be final, unless the recipient has signed a recognised permission form that has been authorised by the Returning Officer (see appendix a.vi for an example of a recognised permission form).
36. The use of Facebook or other social networking sites for individual/political group (slate) campaigns is banned. This includes 'Facebook groups', renting poster/banner space on these websites or advertising of candidacy within the candidate's profile. The advertising of any individual's candidacy within any person's profile is also prohibited. The exception shall be the election page administered by the GSA as part of the GSA Facebook group, on which all candidates shall be registered equally.



37. Candidates may invite any GSA Ordinary Member to the GSA Facebook group, or supply any Ordinary Member with a web link to GSA website. Such invites must not involve any reference to the elections or any individual's candidacy.

38. After the elections, candidates must remove and where possible, recycle their publicity.

Question Time/Hustings

39. A Question Time/Hustings session shall consist of an initial speech by each candidate, up to a maximum length specified by the Returning Officer followed by the putting of questions, as selected by the Chair, to each of the candidates in turn. The chair may also question candidates. The Chair will be appointed by the Returning Officer.

40. Attendance at all questions sessions is compulsory for all candidates in all elections. Where a candidate is unable to attend, he or she must submit a written apology to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer may rule out of order any candidate failing to attend questions sessions without good reason.

41. If a candidate is unable to attend then the candidate may submit a statement, which reflects the content and does not exceed the word limit of their manifesto, to the Returning Officer to be read out by the Chair of the questions session in place of the candidates' initial speech.

Breaches of Electoral Regulations and/or the Rules and Regulations for Campaigning

42. Any complaint about the conduct of a candidate or their supporters must be registered with the Returning Officer before commencement of the count

43. Any candidate found to have breached any of the Electoral Regulations or Rules and Regulations for Campaigning will face disciplinary action.



44. It is for the Returning Officer to decide whether a candidate's actions represent a breach of any rules.
45. If the Returning Officer rules that a candidate's actions do represent a breach of any election or campaigning rules, it is the responsibility of the Returning Officer to sanction the candidate as the Returning Officer sees fit.
46. Disciplinary action could include, but is not limited to any of the following sanction or combination of sanctions:
 - (a) A formal, verbal warning issued by the Returning Officer to the Candidate.
 - (b) A written warning issued by the Returning Officer and displayed in any GSA controlled display cabinets, as well as on the GSA website and GSA Facebook group.
 - (c) Docking of a candidate's publicity budget.
 - (d) Removal of a Candidate's publicity.
 - (e) A temporary ban on campaigning.
 - (f) A permanent ban on campaigning for the duration of the elections.
 - (g) Disqualification from the elections.
47. A candidate will usually face disqualification only if their actions represent a serious breach of the Electoral Regulations or Rules and Regulations for Campaigning, or if a candidate is ruled to have committed multiple breaches of the Electoral Regulations or Rules and Regulations for Campaigning.
48. With regards to the conduct of a candidate, any decision taken by the Returning Officer is final.
49. Where a complaint is to be made regarding the actions of the Returning Officer, it should be directed to the governing body (see appendix a.vi).

Appendices

(a.i) Negative Campaigning.

Negative campaigning includes making any reference to another candidate, their supporters, or their campaign. Candidates may only make statements of fact that



pertain to another candidate's published manifesto, posters, or answers given at Question time/Hustings. Candidates can disagree with the policies of their opponent. Candidates can also question subjective statements presented as facts. Below are some examples of acceptable campaigning and some examples of negative campaigning. These examples are not exhaustive and are presented for illustrative purposes only.

Scenario 1 – an example of acceptable campaigning.

Jack has pledged to build a spaceship with GSA funds. At Question time/Hustings, Jill suggests that money would be better spent on a voyage to the centre of the earth and as such, while respecting Jack's opinion, fundamentally disagrees with it.

Scenario 2 – an example of acceptable campaigning.

Jill states in her manifesto that she has lots of experience when it comes to planning voyages to the centre of the earth. When questioned at Question time/Hustings she reaffirms this claim. Jack points out that Jill is referring to the time she fell into a well, having unsuccessfully attempted to fetch a pail of water.

Scenario 3 – an example of negative campaigning.

Jack, while handing out flyers, informs people that Jill is a bit of an idiot who keeps dropping things and as such, cannot be trusted.

Scenario 4 – an example of negative campaigning.

Jill believes that Jack has not got the strength to confront tough issues or even debate them. To illustrate her point she sends a friend dressed as a giant chicken to follow Jack throughout the day.

Scenario 5 – an example of negative campaigning.

Jill believes that Jack should not be trusted because he plays for the Dodgeball team and states on her posters that a “vote for me is a vote against Dodgeballers”.

(a.ii) Candidates, who before the end of the candidate’s briefing, supply the Returning Officer with their manifesto and posters, plus electronic copies thereof, will have their publicity displayed in appropriate places by the Returning Officer as soon as the campaign period begins. Candidates can supply these documents at any stage during the campaign period. However, candidates should note that documents will only be displayed in the appropriate cabinets or uploaded to the GSA website or GSA Facebook group at or after 5pm each day. To ensure that any documents are uploaded the candidate must ensure that their hard copies/electronic copies reach the Returning Officer before 4pm. Documents that reach the Returning Officer after 4pm will be uploaded or displayed the following day at or after 5pm.

(a.iii) Recognised Media Organisations

Recognised Media Organisations include all campus based media organisations such as The Yorker, Nouse, YorkVision, YSTV, and URY.

(a.iv) The following services are available at the GSA Office:

Black and White Photocopy

White A4 4p

Pastel A4 5p



Intense A4	6p
White A3	6p
Pastel A3	8p
Intense A3	10p
Full Colour Photocopy	
White A4	30p
White A3	50p

(a.v) The Governing Body.

At the date of publication, the Governing Body refers to the University of York. The relevant contact for the purpose of elections is the University Registrar.

(a.vi) Recognised permission form

All recognised permission forms should contain details of where and when the election will be held, the Office sought, the candidates name, and an email link to elections@yorkgsa.org. The form should also carry the statement: “by signing this form and providing my email address, I give the candidate [INSERT CANDIDATE’S NAME], permission to contact me via email.

Name	Email address	Signature



(a.vii) Ordinance 2 – Electoral Regulations

45. These regulations apply to the conduct of elections of the GSA Officers.
46. The Executive shall appoint a suitably qualified Returning Officer for each election. Where possible this Returning Officer shall be selected from among the Ordinary Members of the GSA. Where this is not possible, the Executive shall appoint a suitably qualified independent Returning Officer who is not drawn from the ordinary membership of the GSA. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for ensuring that the election is conducted in accordance with this constitution. They shall be responsible for the good conduct and administration of the elections and shall have the sole interpretation of the election rules.
47. Where the Returning Officer is an Ordinary Member of the GSA, he or she must appoint an independent observer for the elections. Independent observers must not be Ordinary Members of the GSA. Where the Returning Officer is an independent drawn from outside the ordinary membership of the GSA, he or she must appoint an observer from within the ordinary membership of the GSA.
48. The Returning Officer may appoint Deputy Returning Officers at his or her discretion. The Deputy Returning Offices shall be instructed by the Returning Officer on their duties and shall perform these in an impartial manner.
49. The Returning Officer may remove officials that are not carrying out the Returning Officer's instructions or acting in an impartial manner.
50. The Returning Officer shall not be eligible to stand for election, nor vote, nor nominate or support any candidate in the election.
51. Any independent observer or GSA Ordinary Member appointed to observe an independent Returning Officer, or any Deputy Returning Officers appointed by the Returning Officer shall be eligible to vote, provided they are Ordinary Members of the GSA, but they shall not be eligible to stand for election, nor nominate or support any candidate in the election.



52. The Returning Officer may seek legal advice, to be paid for by the GSA, if they believe that statements made or the contents of publicity could leave the GSA open to legal action.
53. The Returning Officer can rule out of order any statement or the contents of any publicity which in their view is in breach of the constitution, rules and equal opportunity policy of the GSA.
54. The Returning Officer is the sole election official competent to deal with complaints about the conduct and administration of the election.
55. Details of the Returning Officer and any Deputy Returning Officers shall be published in such places as deemed appropriate by the Returning Officer.
56. In considering a complaint, the Returning Officer after hearing all the appropriate evidence may not uphold the complaint; or may halt elections for specified post(s) or disqualify specified candidate(s) if, in their view, a candidate(s) has breached election rules.
57. The disqualification of a candidate bars that candidate from standing for any position at any GSA Officer election or by-election in the academic year of their disqualification and the subsequent academic year.
58. Any person who has been disqualified as a candidate for the academic year of their disqualification is prohibited from acting as an election official for that same period.
59. Only Ordinary Members of the GSA shall be entitled to vote in any GSA election.
60. Only Ordinary Members of the GSA shall be entitled to stand for election.
61. Only Ordinary Members of the GSA shall be entitled to nominate or second any candidates in an election, except that no candidate in a particular post may support any other candidate for the same post. Candidates may not act as their own proposer or seconder.
62. The elections of Officers of the GSA shall be by secret ballot.



63. Question Time/Hustings for the election of GSA Officers shall be held at the first Ordinary General Meeting of the GSA held in the Autumn term, with the exception of Sabbatical Officers.
64. Question Time/Hustings for the election of Sabbatical Officers shall be held at the second Ordinary General Meeting of the academic year preceding their term of office, unless election is necessary under the conditions described in articles 7.22(i)-(iv) of the GSA Constitution.
65. Ordinary Members of the GSA, with the exception of the Returning Officer, may vote online from the opening of voting until the close of the election.
66. Notice of election shall be given at least fourteen days before the closing date for nominations.
67. Nominations shall close at midday eight days before voting opens.
68. The Returning Officer shall produce an Election Timetable, which shall include the dates and times for the notification and completion of the following. This will, where practicable reflect the conditions described in ordinances 2.16 and 2.17:
 - Nomination process
 - Candidates briefing
 - Publicity
 - Question Time/Hustings
 - Voting
 - The count.
69. The Election Timetable shall be published and adequately circulated with materials promoting the election.
70. In the event that no nominations are received for an Office of the GSA, then candidates may stand from the floor at Question Time/Hustings.
71. Any candidate for an election of a post of GSA officer must be nominated by three other Ordinary Members of the GSA, with the exception of candidates standing from the floor.



72. The following nomination regulations apply:

- (i) Nominations shall be on a standard nomination form approved by the Returning Officer.
- (ii) The candidate and the nominators shall sign the nomination form.
- (iii) Nominations shall be submitted to the Returning Officer or any Deputy Returning Officer.

73. The Returning Officer shall have the sole responsibility of declaring a submitted nomination form valid. In the event of two or more candidates having the same proposer in an election for a single position, the Returning Officer may allow up to 24 hours for the candidate(s) to find fresh proposers.

74. When the Returning Officer is satisfied all valid nominations will be confirmed with the candidates. The Returning Officer shall ensure that nomination forms, or copies thereof, are posted in such places as deemed appropriate.

75. After nominations close, The Returning Officer shall arrange for a briefing to be provided to which all candidates will be expected to attend. This briefing will include:

- Briefing on general behavior of candidates
- Briefing on the rules surrounding publicity
- Briefing on the rules for campaigning
- Briefing on the electoral regulations
- Briefing on the role of trustees
- Briefing about Question Time/Hustings

76. The Returning Officer is responsible for arranging the candidates' briefing but may choose not to deliver any part of the briefing where they feel someone else may be more suitable. The Returning Officer will be present throughout the candidates' briefing.

77. Prior to the election the Returning Officer may amend the Rules and Regulations for Campaigning as they see fit and their decision is final. Any breach of these rules may lead to disqualification.

78. The Returning Officer will decide whether the actions of any candidate represent a breach of Electoral Regulations or the Rules and Regulations for



Campaigning. If the Returning Officer decides that a candidate has breached the Electoral Regulations or the Rules and Regulations for campaigning, the Returning Officer is empowered to sanction the candidate however the Returning Officer sees fit. The decision to sanction a candidate and the form any sanction takes is the decision of the Returning Officer and the Returning Officer's decision is final.

79. The Returning Officer shall publicise the arrangements for voting, together with a list of candidates and manifestos, and shall make arrangements whereby provision is made for Ordinary Members of the GSA to vote. The Returning Officer may demand help from the GSA for the costs incurred in producing such publicity, help with the design of any publicity, and provision of the necessary manpower to distribute publicity. The Returning Officer will also be made an administrator of the GSA Facebook group for the duration of the election process, so that he or she may use the group to publicise elections.
80. The order of candidates on ballots and official notice boards will be based on lots drawn at the candidates' briefing. There will be a facility for voting for 'Re-Open Nominations' as an alternative to the candidates standing (this is not necessary in cases where there are no candidates). For the purpose of counting the votes, 'Re-Open Nominations' shall be treated as another candidate.
81. If the 'Re-Open Nominations' candidate is elected, the vacancy should be declared unfilled.
82. For elections held by secret ballot the counting of the votes shall be conducted by the Returning Officer and the Deputy Returning Officers. Each candidate shall be entitled to observe the count.
83. The count will commence only if the Returning Officer is satisfied that all complaints relating to the conduct and administration of the election have been resolved. Complaints after the count has commenced may only relate to the conduct of the count.
84. The count will be conducted according to the rules laid down by the Electoral Reform Society for running elections by the Alternative Transferable Vote, or where more than one position is being elected, by Single Transferable Vote.



85. Voters shall be able to express preferences for as few or as many candidates in an election.
86. Election results shall be declared by the Returning Officer when the count for each post has been successfully completed. Notice of results shall be made available to the general membership within twenty-four hours of the results being certified by the Returning Officer.
87. The Returning Officer, in association with the observer, shall produce a report after the election on any such issues that arose during the election. This document will be made available to the membership.
88. The governing body should satisfy themselves that all elections are fairly and properly conducted.

Appendix 3 – Election Timetable

- 23rd Jan – Appoint Returning Officer
- 26th Jan – Nominations open 10am
- 6th Feb – Nominations close 4pm
- 9th Feb – Compulsory candidate briefing 10am
- 9th Feb - Campaigning starts after the briefing
- 13th Feb – Candidate Question time 7pm (Wentworth Edge)
- 14th Feb – Voting opens 12am
- 20th Feb – Voting closes 4pm
- 20th Feb – Results 8pm (Wentworth Edge)