



Elections Rules

General Rules

- GR01 The Returning Officer may delegate any aspect of the implementation of these regulations to one or more Deputy Returning Officer(s).
- GR02 The Election Rules will be interpreted and enforced by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer is responsible for the good conduct and administration of elections and has the power to govern and interpret all matters relating to elections in accordance with the Rules. The Returning Officer will appoint Deputy Returning Officers to assist in their administration of the elections. Rulings of the Returning Officer are final and will be clearly communicated to all candidates.
- GR03 Candidates will be held responsible for the actions of any member of their campaign team. This includes both campaigning activity and campaigns expenditure.
- GR04 Any activity that is illegal or against the schedules and/or regulations of the University of Highlands & Islands (UHI) or Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA) is deemed to be in breach of the election rules. As such candidates and campaign team members may be subject to action from the Returning Officer in addition to any disciplinary or legal action within and outside of HISA. Examples, which are by no means exclusive, include aggressive behaviour, damaging private property, and affixing materials to lamp posts, sign posts, and bus stops/ shelters.
- GR05 Any candidates who are found to be in breach of the Election Rules will;
- In the first instance, be issued with a written warning from either the Returning Officer or the Deputy Returning Officers.
 - In the instance of continual breaches, be issued a second and final written warning from either the Returning Officer or the Deputy Returning Officers
 - In the instance of continual breaches after a second and final written warning will be disqualified from the election
- GR06 Cross-Campus Officers
- .1 Cannot hold a Cross-Campus Officer role for more than two academic years in total at UHI.
 - .2 Can campaign for and/ or endorse candidates for both Cross-Campus and Local Officer roles.
 - .3 Will need to take either annual leave or special leave during the physical campaigning and voting period if they are running as a candidate (they may still attend UHI and HISA meetings where necessary).
 - .4 Will need to take annual leave during the physical campaigning and voting period if they are campaigning for a candidate(s) (they may still attend UHI and HISA meetings where necessary).
 - .5 Cannot use HISA facilities (i.e. computers, printers, offices, parking permits/ spaces ect...) whilst campaigning in elections.
 - .6 Continue to have the same voting rights as they would as a lay student.
- GR07 Local Officers
- .1 Cannot hold Local Officer roles for more than two academic years in total at their academic partner.
 - .2 Can campaign for and/ or endorse candidates for both Cross-Campus and Local Officer roles.
 - .3 Will need to take either annual leave or special leave during the physical campaigning and voting period if they are running as a candidate (they may still attend UHI and HISA meetings where necessary).
 - .4 Will need to take annual leave during the physical campaigning and voting period if they are campaigning for a candidate(s) (they may still attend UHI and HISA meetings where necessary).
 - .5 Cannot use HISA facilities (i.e. computers, printers, offices, parking permits/ spaces ect...) whilst campaigning in elections.
 - .6 Continue to have the same voting rights as they would as a lay student.
- GR08 HISA career staff members and UHI staff members are not permitted to support candidates in representative elections and must remain neutral. Lecturers/ teachers etc. cannot support candidates in the election or campaign. Postgraduate Research (PGR)/ PhD Students therefore cannot in their role as seminar leaders/lecturers etc support or campaign on behalf of students. As a PGR student they can support candidates but they are doing this as a student and therefore cannot use their seminar leader status e.g. Sarah Smith Senior Lecturer in Anthropology supports Dipesh Patel for President, so they cannot support a candidate in any lectures/seminars and cannot give preferential treatment in their role as lecturer to any candidate.



- GR09 No HISA student staff member shall be allowed to campaign for, or wear the publicity of, a candidate whilst carrying out the duties for which they are employed.
- GR10 If a candidate is in any doubt as to any election rule(s), they are advised to contact the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer at the earliest possible opportunity in order to obtain a formal ruling.
- GR11 The count shall take place following a one-hour period for the scrutiny of Candidates Expenses, after the close of voting, and once any deliberations of the Returning Officer are completed.

Nominations Rules

- NM01 All nominations must be submitted before the deadline as set out in the Candidates Nomination Pack for each election and must be submitted through the online form on the HISA website.
- NM02 No nominations will be accepted outside this timeframe.
- NM03 A completed nomination will consist of a completed online nomination form.
- NM04 Candidates must nominate themselves under the name they are registered with UHI or by an alternative name by which they are commonly known. Such an alternative name must be clearly specified on the nomination form and the Returning Officer has the right to deem alternative names inappropriate.
- NM05 Candidates should submit the following material as part of their nomination.
- A manifesto submitted online to be used on the HISA website.
 - A digital photograph of you, the candidate. This photo must not have a resolution higher than 200 pixels x 200 pixels. The Returning Officer has the right to remove any photograph they deem any photograph submitted to be inappropriate.
- NM06 Candidates may only nominate themselves for one role in any election.

General Campaigning Rules

- GC01 If you are concerned that an aspect of your campaign may breach the election rules or an election ruling you must contact the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer before you undertake the said aspect of your campaign. Failure to comply with this rule may result in your disqualification from the election.
- GC02 Under no circumstances can candidates or their campaign teams use HISA offices or facilities to advertise their campaign. This includes the storage of candidate's personal belongings and campaign materials.
- GC03 Any person campaigning on behalf of a candidate must be either a member or associate member of HISA.
- GC04 Candidates and their campaign teams should not attempt to assist or help any student to vote. Any student requiring assistance or help to vote should be advised to contact either elections.hisa@uhi.ac.uk or speak to a member of the Students' Association's Elections Team.
- GC05 Corrupt practices within any HISA election will not be tolerated and may lead to your disqualification from the election. Corrupt practices are defined as:
- Giving money or making any gift to or for any voter in order to procure the vote of that voter.
 - Giving, providing or paying, wholly or in part, for any food, drink or entertainment for any voter in order to bribe the vote of that voter.
 - Directly or indirectly by themselves or by another person on their behalf, making use of or threatening to make use of any force, violence, or restraint towards any other candidates in order to induce or compel that person to vote or refrain from campaigning.
 - Falsification of any document or information that is a requirement of the election procedures.
 - Any other serious misconduct or behaviour that undermines the conduct of the elections as determined by the Returning Officer.
- GC06 Personal attacks on other candidates are not permitted. Candidates must ensure that criticisms made of other candidates must be related to manifesto points or policy, and not of their character, appearance or belief system. Candidates must also adhere to UHI's Student's Code of Conduct.

Online Campaigning Rules

- OC01 No online campaigning must take place before the date and time outlined in the relevant Candidates Nomination Pack.
- OC02 Candidates may use and/or create their own website and social networking page to promote their campaign. Any costs incurred for this must come out of your campaign budget.



- OC03 Candidates can set up a social media group and/ or page to outline the fact they are running in the election before online campaigning commences, however, must only state that you are running and cannot outline your manifesto points or ask for their vote. You *cannot* publish your manifesto online or launch a specific campaign website (e.g. www.voteforjoe.com) before the online campaign period.
- OC04 Candidates and their campaign teams may not use Brightspace, the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), to promote themselves or their campaign.
- OC05 Candidates may not use any UHI or HISA contact or mailing lists to promote themselves or the campaigns. Candidates may create their own contact/ mailing list for the purposes of campaigning; however any such lists must not contain or use any information collected from any third party source (i.e. contact lists, email lists, social media groups, ect...) and must be General Data Protection Regulation (GPDR) compliant.
- OC06 Candidates and their campaign teams may not use Bluetooth or Push Messaging to promote themselves or their campaign.

Physical Campaigning Rules

- PC01 No physical campaigning must take place before the date and time outlined in the relevant Candidates Nomination Pack.
- PC02 Physical campaigning is defined as (but limited to) the distributing of leaflets and posters, as well as the use of t-shirts and banners. Physical campaigning also includes in-person lobbying such as door knocking and lecture shoutouts. You can tell people through conversation that you are running in the election before online or physical campaigning commences, however, you must only state that you are running and cannot outline your manifesto points or ask for their vote.
- PC03 Candidates and their campaign teams must not disrupt timetabled learning and teaching on campus. Permission to conduct 'lecture shouts' at the beginning or the end of lectures should be sought in advance from the relevant lecturer/ teacher.
- PC04 Candidates and their campaign teams can assume that they have permission to campaign as well as to display and distribute campaigning material around UHI campuses and learning centres, however they must be prepared to cease any campaigning and/ or remove any campaigning materials from a particular area if asked to do so by either a HISA Elections Team member or UHI staff member.
- PC05 Candidates and their campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own physical campaign materials.
- PC06 HISA and UHI staff members reserve the right to remove any campaign materials that are deemed to be placed in an inappropriate location. You will not necessarily receive this material back and any costs for the printing or creation of these materials must still be included in your final budget.
- PC07 All stunts must be risk assessed and permission sought from the elections team before they occur. Stunts include flash mobs, performances etc. No food can be given out apart from individually wrapped sweets.
- PC08 Candidates must not display or use the Students' Association's logo or any UHI logo on their physical or electronic campaign materials.
- PC09 Where the Students' Association organises a polling station, no candidate or person campaigning on their behalf may campaign within a five-metre radius of the polling station (or as deemed by the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer).
- PC10 Candidate and their campaign teams may not use laptops, tablets and smartphones to collect votes during the voting period. All voting must be through official HISA channels.
- PC11 Candidates and their campaign teams must respect that every student has the right to cast their vote freely and confidentially. Once a student starts the process of voting on a device (i.e. logging on to the HISA website) candidates and campaigners should move at least two metres away to give them privacy and should make no further attempts to influence their vote in any way.
- PC12 If running on a Slate (a group of candidates running on a common platform), you cannot promote other members of your slate on or your campaign materials. You can only display your slate's logo on your own materials, but it must fall within these size guidelines
- 3cm x 3cm for A5 sized materials.
 - 6cm x 6cm for A4 sized materials.
 - 12cm x 12cm for A3 sized materials.



Candidate Expenses Rules

- CE01 All campaign expenses incurred by a candidate and their campaign team must be recorded on a Candidates Expenses Form and must be submitted (along with copies of receipts) by the deadline outlined in the relevant Nominations Pack. Candidates for both Cross Campus and Local Officer roles must submit a Candidates Expenses Form regardless of whether they have spent anything on campaign materials.
- CE02 All items, materials and services used by a candidate and their campaign team, except for those that are readily and freely available to all (i.e. cardboard boxes), must be included and recorded on a Candidates Expenses Form. Basic campaigning costs such as personal printing, colouring pens, and notice board pins will be allocated a fixed cost in HISA's Campaigns Catalogue. Candidates must contact the Deputy Returning Officer to request a cost be assigned for items, materials and services not included in HISA's Campaign Catalogue and where a receipt or proof of purchase cannot be produced.
- CE03 Candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles can claim and spend £40 of funding from HISA on their campaign (excluding travel and/ or accommodation costs). Candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles may also spend up to £20 of their own money on their campaign (excluding travel and/ or accommodation costs).
- CE04 Candidates for Local roles can claim and spend £20 of funding from HISA as well as spend up to £10 of their own money on their campaign (excluding travel and/ or accommodation costs).
- CE05 Candidates for Cross-Campus Officer roles and Local Officer roles within UHI Argyll and UHI North, West & Hebrides can claim and spend an additional £50 of funding from HISA on pre-authorised travel costs to campaign.
- CE06 Candidates will only be reimbursed for items, materials and services where a receipt or proof of purchase is provided.
- CE07 Candidates may only take advantage of deals and promotions that are available to all candidates and must not use or take advantage of any personal favours (mates' rates) when purchasing items, materials or services.
- CE08 If running on a Slate (a group of candidates running on a common platform), members of the slate cannot combine their campaign materials and budget. Each person within the slate must have their own campaign materials.

Complaints & Rulings

- CR01 During voting week for Officer elections there will be a compulsory meeting every weekday between the candidates (or a nominated representative) and the Deputy Returning Officer. The meeting will discuss the conduct of the election so far and notify the candidates of any complaints or issues surrounding their conduct before addressing and making sure the issues are satisfactorily resolved.
- CR02 Only completed Election Complaint Forms will be considered by the Returning Officer.
- CR03 Complaints relating to any part of the campaign must normally be received prior to the close of polling and should be submitted as soon as possible to enable the Returning Officer to make appropriate rulings.
- CR04 Once the count has begun the only complaints that can normally be submitted are in relation to the conduct of the count.
- CR05 The Returning Officer shall make rulings on any properly submitted complaints within 24 hours of receipt.
- CR06 The Returning Officer may also take action without receipt of a complaint if they deem necessary.
- CR07 Any ruling of the Returning Officer shall be communicated to all candidates.
- CR08 The ruling of the Returning Officer is final.