

Guild of Student Referendum Regulations 2023-2024

1. Interpretation

1.1 These Regulations are written with the intent of ensuring free and fair referenda at the Guild of Students.

1.2 These Regulations should be read in conjunction with Byelaws of the Guild of Students. Please refer to the Byelaws in addition to these regulations.

1.3 These Referendum Regulations shall apply to all Guild of Students referenda as defined by the Byelaws.

1.4 In addition to these Regulations, all other Guild of Students governing documents and policies, University Legislation, and all Laws of the Land shall apply.

1.5 The Returning Officer of the Guild of Students shall have the final say over the interpretation of these Regulations.

2. The Returning Officer

2.1 The CEO of the Guild of Students will determine who the Returning Officer is for any referendum.

2.1.1 The CEO or Returning Officer may appoint a Deputy Returning Officer(s).

2.1.2 The Returning Officer may delegate duties to the Deputy Returning Officer(s) as they see fit.

2.2 The Returning Officer and any Deputy Returning Officers shall be responsible for:

2.2.1 Enforcing the Referendum Regulations.

2.2.2 Ensuring that the Referendum is held in a free and fair manner.

2.3 The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the good conduct and administration of the referendum and shall have final interpretation of the Referendum Regulations and relevant Byelaws. The Deputy Returning Officer shall be responsible for supporting the Returning Officer in their responsibilities as well as the day-to-day conduct and administration of the referenda.

2.4 The Returning Officer (or their Deputy) may instigate investigations into breaches of Referendum Regulations without the need for a complaint to be submitted, where there is reasonable cause to believe a breach has been committed.

3. Voter Eligibility

3.1 All normally registered students shall be eligible to vote in the referenda.

3.2 Voting should take place online.

3.2.1 If voting cannot take place online then, where possible, a paper ballot shall be conducted in accordance with the Guild of Students' Paper Ballot Procedure.

4. Quorum

4.1 The quorum for any referenda shall be calculated at the point when the referendum is announced to members.

4.2 Quorum for all Referenda referring to governance changes shall be either 5% of the Full Membership or two thousand Full Members, whichever is the greater. As outlined in the Guild of Students' Bye-Laws, 2.3.5

4.3 The quorum for a referendum shall be published online before voting opens.

5. Campaigning

5.1 Formation of Campaign Teams

5.1.1 All students eligible to vote shall be able to join a Campaign Team.

5.1.2 Guild Officers can join a Campaign Team and participate in a Referendum.

5.1.3 Students must sign-up to be part of a Campaign Team. The Guild shall provide a mechanism for student to do this. This will be published on the Guild of Students' website.

5.1.4 Signing up to be a part of a Campaign Team allows students to formally campaign for a 'yes', 'no' or 'abstain' stance within the referendum. It also allows students to access a budget from the Guild for their campaign and to be recognised as a contact for students interested in supporting that particular stance.

5.1.5 Any student may act as a supporter of a Campaign Team by individually supporting a stance within the referendum. This does not require them to join a Campaign Team. They will not be able to access a budget or be recognised as a member of a Campaign Team.

5.2 Campaign Team Leader

5.2.1 All Campaign Team Members shall be able to nominate themselves as the Campaign Team Leader.

5.2.2 If more than 1 individual nominates themselves as Campaign Team Leader, the Deputy Returning Officer shall have the authority to appoint the Campaign Team Leader.

5.2.3 The Campaign Team Leader shall be responsible for ensuring that the Campaign Team submits their budget by the deadline published.

5.2.4 The Campaign Team Leader shall be responsible for ensuring that the conduct of their Campaign Team does not violate these Regulations.

5.3 Conduct of Campaigning

5.3.1 No Campaign Team Member or supporter shall attempt to influence or intimidate voters whilst they are voting.

5.4 Budgets

5.4.1 The Guild of Students shall provide a budget for all Campaign Teams.

5.4.2 The Campaign Team Leader shall provide a budget with all expenditure included in connection with their referendum campaign to the Student Voice Team by the budget deadline.

5.4.3 Campaign Teams shall not spend more than the budget given to them by the Guild of Students in connection with their referendum campaign.

5.4.4 No Campaign Team Member or supporter shall accept monetary or material support from any individual who is not a normally registered student of the University or 3rd party body or organisation.

5.4.5 The Guild of Students shall make all Campaign Team budgets available to all Full Members for public scrutiny.

6. Results

6.1 The results of the Referendum shall be counted and declared by the Returning Officer.

6.1.1 The results shall be provisional until approved by the Board of Trustees.

6.2 Abstentions shall be counted towards quorum.

6.3 The question shall be taken to have passed if it reaches 50% + 1 votes of the total votes cast.

6.4 The results shall be published online.

7. Complaints

7.1 All complaints regarding a campaign team, individual of a campaign team, or the conduct of the referendum having possibly broken these regulations must be made in writing to the Returning Officer via the Student Voice Team at studentvoice@guild.bham.ac.uk.

7.1.1 The Deputy Returning Officer may investigate conduct or breaches without a complaint being submitted.

7.1.2 Complaints can be made up to two hours after the close of voting.

7.2 Sanctions

7.2.1 The Deputy Returning Officer shall have the right to determine sanctions.

7.2.2 Any sanctions based on a complaint shall be made against a Campaign Team.

7.3 Appeals

7.3.1 Members shall have the right to appeal decisions made by the Deputy Returning Officer.

7.3.2 All appeals to decisions made by the Deputy Returning Officer shall be determined and decided the Returning Officer.

7.3.3 All decisions of the Returning Officer are final.

7.3.4 Appeals must be made in writing to the Guild of Students no less than 2 hours after the close of voting.