

## Elections 2016 Update

1.0 The Big Elections are the flagship democratic process which brings together cross campus, constituent union and Clubs, Societies and Projects elections. Big Elections 2015 offered 476 available positions for members to stand for and these attracted 650 candidates.

2.0 The timetable will follow the timeframes as previous years:

|                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Nominations Open         | Monday 1 Feb 2016                |
| Nominations Close        | Sunday 28 Feb 2016               |
| Your Candidates Revealed | Monday 29 Feb 2016 - lunchtime   |
| Manifestos due           | Monday 29 Feb 2016 - 17.00       |
| Meet the Candidates      | Wednesday 2 March 2016 – evening |
| Voting Opens             | Friday 4 March 2016– 12.00       |
| Voting Closes            | Friday 11 March 2016 – 12.00     |
| Results Announced        | Friday 11 March 2016 - evening   |

3.0 Positions included are:

- Officer Trustees
- Student Trustees
- Felix Editor
- Council Chair
- Liberation Officers
- Constituent Union Committees (GSU will be electing President only)
- 15 Dep Reps
- 21 DepSoc Committees

Currently there are 35 CSP's which have over 150 members. They are being contacted to inform them that they will be part of the elections. Those who are close to the 150 mark are also being contacted to make them aware that they may be included if they hit the 150 mark by 15 January as this is the cut-off date.

4.0 Training

13 sessions have been scheduled with the topics being a combination of information and practical training tips. The sessions are scheduled both over lunchtime and evenings to be able to make them accessible as possible. The slides will also be made available online.

The elections review highlighted the training and information sessions offered were poorly attended despite those that attending stating that they found them very useful and informative. The idea of putting a recorded session online is being considered at the moment and the viability is being discussed. This is to capture members who either don't have the time to

attend the sessions or don't wish to show that they are thinking of standing.

The sessions for manifesto writing and running a successful campaign had greater take up closer to the close of nominations so sessions have been moved to later in the month of February. The majority of the sessions will take place in the Union Building but we will be trialling doing some sessions on campus.

ICTV has been approached to offer some workshops on creating video manifestos. It is anticipated that this will cover the creative as well as the technical side.

The promotion of the sessions may follow the same plan as last year.

## 5.0 Branding

The 'Big Elections' name has been in use for the past 4 elections and the branding of the Big Elections has had a variety of guises over the 4 years; from the friendly stickmen to the collegiate look. Students are now familiar with this election period being the time that they will be electing the majority of their representatives. Although this has proven useful to describe elections as a whole, it's not particularly inspiring. The election review has highlighted that the value of leadership should be used to describe the elections. As such, a rebrand, which may include a name change, is looking to be launched on 18 January.

## 6.0 Risks

Last year saw the inclusion of CSP's with over 150 members being automatically included in the election for the first time. There were some Clubs, Societies and Projects where there were no candidates for any positions. This may have been a boycott however this cannot be substantiated. To mitigate this, individual emails were sent to members highlighting and encouraging them to stand for a position and this will also be the tact this year. Last year the Student Activities Team were without a manager which led to the level of support to CSP's not being best. This year the team is fully staffed and will be giving more support to the elections process; specially communicating and supporting queries from the CSP's and Dep Socs.

Insufficient number of candidates is a consideration and this will be mitigated by the monitoring of candidates in all positions and using the communication channels to target will be used, as it was in the previous year.

The Union is always striving to increase the turnout of voters and number of candidates. The introduction of the innovative personalised email function last year helped to get the increased turnout and also target individuals, where there was a lack of candidates, to stand for a position. This function is extremely agile in that it can target specific groups and individuals. This system will be used again this year with the lessons learnt from last year being incorporated, lessons such as best time to send and the drilling down of information being included.

## 7.0 Objectives

- Increase the number of candidates with the aim of having every position contested and ensure that the candidates are reflective of the diverse student population, specifically Postgraduate and international students.
- Ensure candidates are supported through information being easily accessible and candidates are aware of how to ask questions and have all their queries resolved.
- Deliver a training programme for potential candidates.
- The elections software will successfully deliver and return an election.
- Deliver a results party to celebrate the elections process being completed and promote the winners to the membership.