



Imperial College Union Governance Committee

19/09/2018

AGENDA ITEM NO.	9
TITLE	Elections 2019/20
AUTHOR	Keriann Lee, Head of Student Voice & Communications
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Governance Committee has oversight of all Union elections. In keeping with that remit, below are the updates for 19/20 for both AE19 and LE20.
PURPOSE	For the Committee to note the timetables and plans for AE19 and LE20.
DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED	For the Committee to approve: - Returning Officer for AE19 - Proposed Timetable for LE20

Introduction:

The Governance Committee is being asked to note the following for elections to be held during the 2019/20 academic year.

Autumn Elections (AE19)

Autumn Elections are a major election under the by-laws of Imperial College Union which aim to elect the following positions between 21 and 24 October 2019:

- UG Academic & Wellbeing Reps
- PGT Academic Reps
- Representatives to Council (Council Reps)
- Open CU Committee positions
- Open CSP Committee positions
- Disabilities Officer
- International Officer

Timetable

The Election will follow this approved timetable which includes student-facing and operational dates:

Timetable	Event	Day	Date	Time
Operations	Hard deadline for positions set-up in eActivities	Wednesday	02/10/2019	18:00
Operations	Electorate and positions synced to eVoting, all electoral rolls populated	Thursday	03/10/2019	08:00 - 11:00
Operations	Automatic updating of CSP electoral rolls enabled (students added to relevant erolls when joining clubs)	Thursday	03/10/2019	11:00
Election	Nominations open	Thursday	03/10/2019	12:00
Election	Nominations close	Monday	14/10/2019	12:00
Operations	Automatic updating of CSP electoral rolls disabled (this only has an effect during nominations)	Monday	14/10/2019	14:00
Election	Manifestos deadline	Wednesday	16/10/2019	12:00
Election	Manifestos published / start of campaigning	Thursday	17/10/2019	12:00
Operations	Final electorate and electoral roll refresh in eVoting	Monday	21/10/2019	08:00 - 11:00
Operations	Election stats setup	Thursday	03/10/2019	11:00 - 11:30
Election	Voting opens	Monday	21/10/2019	12:00
Election	Voting closes	Thursday	24/10/2019	14:00
Election	Complaints deadline	Thursday	24/10/2019	17:00
Operations	Votes counted	Friday	25/10/2019	14:00
Operations	Results collated from count, candidates notified (elections bunker)	Friday	25/10/2019	14:00 - 17:00
Election	Results published	Friday	25/10/2019	17:00

Changes:

- Last Autumn, open positions in Clubs, Societies & Projects were elected on a later timetable to allow sufficient time for new members to be incorporated into the electoral roll and stand for positions. However, with the dates for AE19 moved forward by a week, this will not be necessary.
- Training and Candidates' Briefing will be done exclusively online in keeping with a larger attempt to go digital.
- The Candidates' Pack will be rewritten to make the campaigning recommendations more applicable to this election which does not have as a great a demand on

students. It was noted last year that the emphases on campaigning for LE20 are not applicable to this election and are a turn off.

- Elected students will not be part of the Working Group in order to prevent conflicts of interest. This preserves the sense of independence and increases trust in the process and decisions made regarding specific candidates’.
- The Deputy Returning Officers for Autumn Elections are usually the Education and Welfare Manager and Activities Manager. However it is felt that these are the student facing roles who will have to onboard the successful candidates after the elections. This can be quite challenging afterwards due to the tension created by difficult but necessary rulings during the process.

Metrics

Below are the aims for this election, relative to previous performance:

KPI	Measure	Previous
Turnout	35 percent	33% in 2018; Average 26% last 4 years
Higher satisfaction among candidates	Evidenced by the post-election Candidates’ Survey	No previous Survey data
Speedier and more transparent handling of complaints	Complaints log	Not applicable since the complaints system has changed
More candidates standing per position	An average of 2 per position	1.5 per position and up 4.2% over 2017
Training attendance	Online traffic	First year for this to be done online

Project Management

The Elections will be managed through the following planning method:

- A project management team convened 9 weeks before the elections comprising Head of Student Voice & Communications (chair), Systems Lead, Senior Designer, Digital Marketer, Representation Manager, Representation Coordinator, Governance Coordinator, and the Activities Manager, meeting every Thursday for an hour and a half until a week after the election, after which the WG will transition into LE20 activities.

Background and Risks

Autumn Elections have ordinarily been the more low-key of the two main elections conducted by the Union annually. Participation grew last year from an average turnout of 26 percent in the previous four years to 33 percent on the back of more focussed project management, integrated communications planning, and more PG positions included.

Despite the successes, the following risks should still be noted with regards to this election:

- Messaging for these elections is more challenging because they occur during Welcome, the busiest time on campus when there is a lot of competing information
- Key members of the Elections Team are also key members of the Welcome Team and therefore have less time, energy and focus to expend on these elections.
- The Systems team has to spend more time refreshing the electoral roll for CSPs which tend to gain a lot membership at the start of year and therefore will have uncertain numbers throughout the elections.
- First years do not quite understand the Union's complex governance structure and therefore, there is a greater demand on the communications plan to achieve awareness, generate interest in standing for positions, and also emphasise the importance of voting in a very short space of time.

Returning Officer:

Deborah Evanson, Press and Communications Officer at Imperial College London, is recommended for the role of Returning Officer. Deborah has served as Returning Officer in previous Autumn Elections, including 2018.

Leadership Elections 2020

The dates recommended for Leadership Elections 2020 are as follows:

- 12:00, Monday 3 February - **Nominations open**
- 12:00, Friday 28 February– **Nominations close**
- 14:00, Tuesday 3 March - **Manifestos due**
- 12:15, Wednesday 4 March – **Candidates' Briefing**
- 13:00, Wednesday 4 March - **Campaigning begins and manifestos published**
- Circa 16:00, Wednesday 4 March - **Candidates' Debate event**
- 12:00, Monday 9 March – **Voting opens**
- 14:00, Thursday 12 March – **Voting closes**
- 17:00, Thursday 12 March - **Complaints deadline**
- 19:00, Friday 13 March - **Results party**

The proposed dates are based on the following considerations:

- Very strong support for the reduction of campaigning from two weeks
- Support for a pause between the close of nominations and the opening of campaigning
- Strong opposition to opening campaigning and voting simultaneously.
- The need to have a longer time to consider complaints. It's proposed that the complaints deadline therefore be moved forward to allow more time for them to be processed and for the Governance Committee to consider disqualification cases.

For reference, below are last year's dates:

- 12:00, Monday 4 February - Nominations open
- 12:00, Friday 1 March – Nominations close
- 14:00, Tuesday 5 March - Manifestos due
- 12:15, Wednesday 6 March – Candidates' Briefing
- 13:00, Wednesday 6 March - Campaigning begins and manifestos published
- 16:00, Wednesday 6 March - Candidates' Debate event
- 12:00, Monday 11 March – Voting opens
- 14:00, Thursday 14 March – Voting closes
- 10:00, Friday 15 March - Complaints deadline
- 19:00, Friday 15 March - Results party