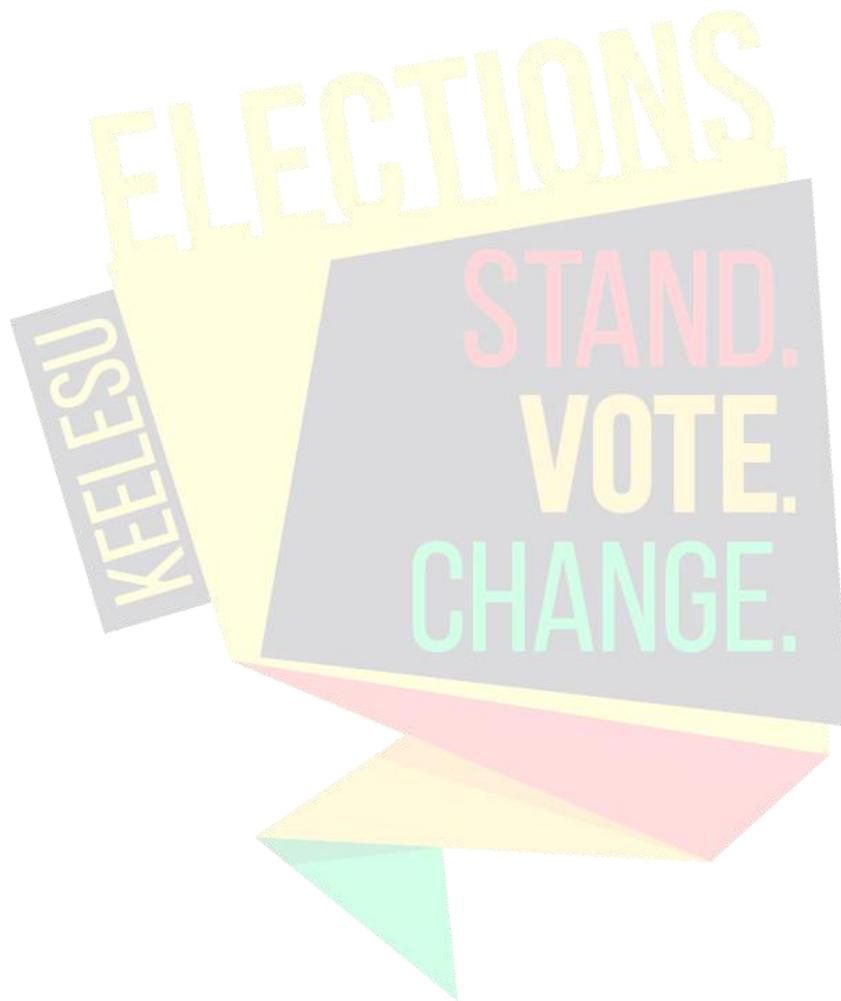


KeeleSU Elections – Candidate Guidebook

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About the KeeleSU Elections

KeeleSU is proud to be a democratic organisation that puts students at the heart of everything it does. KeeleSU is run by students, for students and every year we hold a number of elections to ensure students are able to stand and vote in these elections.

First of all, thank you for taking an interest in these elections! Whether you've put yourself forward for a position or you're just thinking about running, we hope you find all you need in this guide.

The KeeleSU Elections run on an annual cycle, with elections happening around these times:

February – The Main KeeleSU Elections.

Here we elect ALL Full Time Officer Positions and the majority of Union Council. Once elected, these officers will begin their term on July 1st of that calendar year.

May – The KeeleSU Spring By-Elections

In this election, we elect any unfilled full and part time officer positions along with Societies Executive. Once elected, these officers will begin their term on July 1st of that calendar year.

November – The KeeleSU Autumn By-Elections

In this election we elect any unfilled part time officer positions along with Delegates for NUS Conference. Once elected, these officers will begin their term immediately.

All Students' Unions are expected to run fair and democratic elections and to ensure that our elections give all students a fair chance to participate, there are a number of election regulations that we abide by. A small team of staff and students are in charge of ensuring that election regulations are not broken and that all students are given a fair opportunity to participate in the elections.

R.O (Returning Officer): Official head of the Elections. At Keele, this person is an NUS representative and is generally only contacted if there is a very serious rule breach or threat to the integrity of the elections. The DRO deputises for the RO as outlined in the constitution.

DRO (Deputy Returning Officer): Running elections from the Keele side, is responsible for most of the operational aspects of the elections and ensures candidates abide by the election regulations.

Elections Officials: KeeleSU staff members who assist the DRO in all aspects of running of the elections. The Elections officials are able to issue sanctions in the absence of the DRO.

EF (Electoral Forum): Electoral Forum consists of 3 Union Council Members. They ensure the D.R.O is acting fairly and that the regulations are being met.

Who is who in this election?

Returning Officer: Peter Robertson, NUS Deputy Chief Executive

Deputy Returning Officer: Emma Hedges, Student Voice Manager

Election Officials: Rachel Hadley, Student Voice Coordinator and Liam Searle, Student Voice Intern

Electoral Forum:

TBC

How these Elections work

All students at Keele can participate in these elections. Some positions are reserved for specific 'types' of students and you must identify accordingly in order to stand or vote in that specific election. Positions which have specific requirements are stated in the 'Positions Available' section.

All KeeleSU elections are run online. You submit your nomination, manifesto and vote on the KeeleSU website. Each available position will have a separate ballot which will list candidates in a randomised order. We use Single Transferable Vote here at KeeleSU, which is where voters are able to preference candidates. To see a really simple explanation of STV watch this video:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebqYVIBOUP0



Key Dates – KeeleSU Elections

Nominations: 9am 29th April – 7th May 5pm

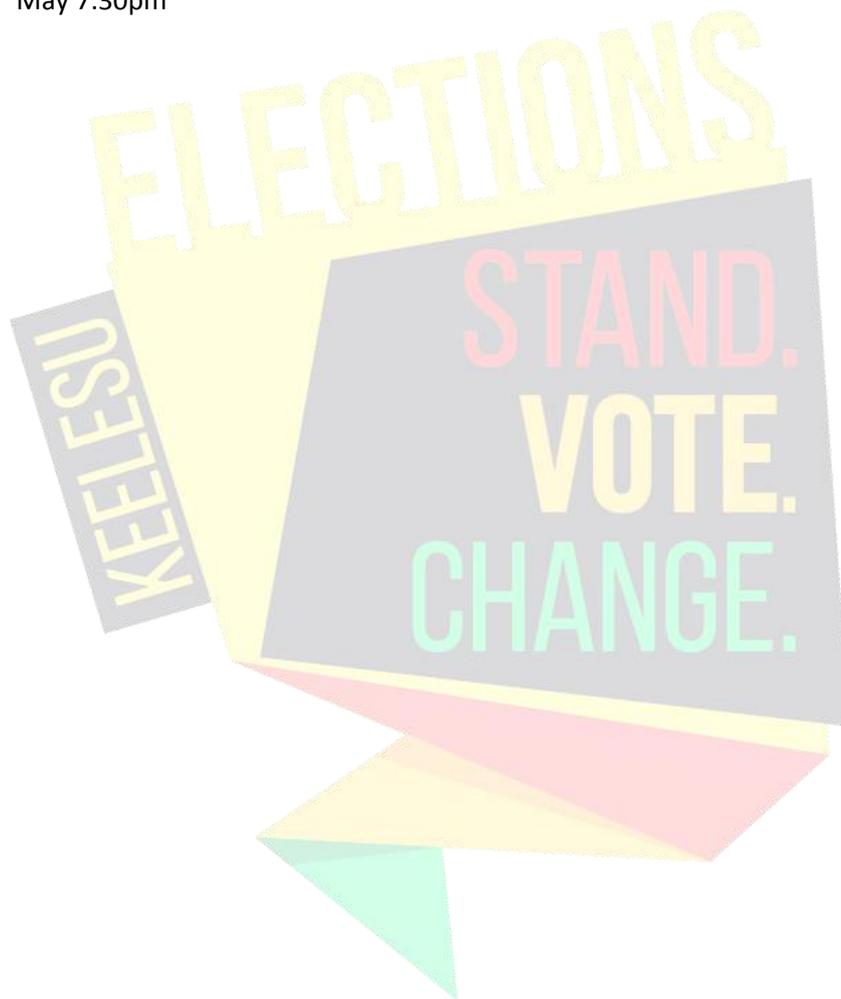
Candidates Briefing: 7th May 5pm

Print and Manifesto Deadline: Monday 13th February 9am

Print Collection: Tuesday 14th February midday till 5pm

Voting: 15th May 9am – 17th May 5pm

Results: 17th May 7.30pm



How to write a Manifesto

Relevant for – All Candidates

You'll be shown how to create your manifesto at candidates briefing.

Your manifesto is your opportunity to convince students to give you their vote. Most students voting in the KeeleSU Elections won't know you personally, so you need to explain who you are, why you are standing and what you hope to achieve.

Tips on Content:

Consider the role you want to run for – why do you want this role and why do you think you're a suitable candidate.

What are your interests – Do you have any suitable experience that you should mention?

Make a list of objectives for the forthcoming year – These will eventually become your aims. What would you like to see at Keele? Make an extensive list. You're probably going to have to think carefully about what is achievable and suitable but get your ideas down on paper before you decide what to include in your final manifesto.

Think about the Union in its entirety - What in your opinion should be the objectives for KeeleSU? Whilst you may want to make a lot of your manifesto relevant to the role you're running for, first and foremost, you'll be an elected officer of KeeleSU. Think about what makes KeeleSU unique and how can you ensure or enhance this?

Don't be afraid to criticise the SU or the University if you are able to evidence problems and present solutions to them. Manifestos should strive for improvements for students. Be careful though, an overly negative manifesto may discourage some students from voting for you.

Think about what will stand out, this could be a phrase, a pledge or a quote. Students will have an awful lot of manifestos to read and many will only read a small section so ensure you are able to summarise your manifesto.

Know your audience – Remember who will be reading your manifesto and pitch it accordingly. Students may turn off at overly political language but will also recognise a badly written manifesto. Make it straightforward and relevant.

Do your research – Don't just assume what students want and what issues they face. Use available research such as the National Student Survey and speak to staff and officers about what students are concerned about. If your manifesto is filled with relevant and current issues, you're going to gain more votes.

Manifesto Regulations:

Your manifesto is an opportunity to stand out and let voters know all about you. It's likely you'll want more than just text in your manifesto. Manifestos should be written on the online manifesto creator on the KeeleSU website. The main body of your manifesto should be text.

Length

Part time candidates recommended length: 500 – 750 words

Full time candidates recommended length: 750 - 1000 words

Word limit for ALL candidates: 1000 words. If your manifesto is found to contain more than 1000 words then you may be subject to sanctions.

If you have more to say then feel free to add links in your manifesto. This could be your own website, a blog, social media or a video. None of these things are limited by manifesto regulations (but they are obviously still limited by the main election regulations)

Font

The online manifesto creator uses the pre-approved KeeleSU fonts. These are the only fonts permitted on your manifesto. To change font and colour use the different options in the 'format' drop down list. You can also put text in bold, underlined and italic.

Note from the DRO: I don't care if you can do coding. Don't mess around with the Source button and change fonts, backgrounds and add loads of fancy stuff. The reasons we are limiting manifesto editing are consistency, accessibility and fairness.

Hyperlinks

Feel free to add links to websites and social media throughout your manifesto. You can make words and pictures into links. Please don't embed anything (videos etc) into the manifesto as we'll be adding your candidate video.

Pictures

You are able to add as many pictures but these should be to add to the manifesto, the main content should all appear as text.

The problem with pictures is that they may appear differently on certain devices, can be so large that they slow load up and are not compatible with screen readers. If your manifesto is picture based, the elections team may ask you to change it.

GIFS

Apparently young people like GIFS. You can put them in your manifesto as long as they are for public use or made by yourself. And are decent enough to shown on the KeeleSU website.

Campaigning

Campaign Team

Some candidates choose to recruit a campaign team. These are people who will help you distribute flyers, share your message on social media, put up posters and spread the word about your campaign. Remember: you don't have to have a campaign team to win!

If you do choose to have a campaign team, here are some tips on how to utilise them.

Delegate jobs – Find out the skillset of your campaign team (such as social media or design) and use them accordingly.

Inform your team – Make sure they know about your policies and that they are able to answer questions about you and your manifest. Even better, get them involved in coming up with ideas for policies.

Ensure they're aware of the **rules and regulations**.

Meet frequently with your team during campaigning to find out what is going well and what sort of feedback they are getting from students.

Where to Campaign – Physically

- Lecture shout outs

Get in touch with course leaders prior to the campaigning period to organise speaking to their students for a few minutes to talk about your campaign and gain support. Make sure you prepare your shout-out to use your time carefully. Try and keep this brief as you will be cutting into their lecture time!

- Student Accommodation

Campaigning in halls is permitted but you must gain access legitimately in order to put posters up in halls or speak to residents. Please ensure you respect the homes of residents and do not visit at antisocial times.

- Union Square (the forest of light), bus stops, the sports centre, Chancellors, Med School

High footfall areas will be your best places to campaign as this is where you'll see most students, but do try and get about the whole campus. There are certain areas that should be avoided for courtesy such as the chapel (people may be worshipping) and study spaces in the library (stick up posters and leave flyers but don't disturb work). Being seen at areas where students may feel more isolated (such as the Hospital Campus) will also send a good message that you'll make an accessible and considerate officer.

Where to Campaign – Online

- Social Media

Utilise social media as it's probably where you'll gain the most exposure. The Election Regulations apply to social media. You are permitted to purchase adverts through social media as long as you account for this in your campaign budget. Use public forums such as the 'Fresher's Page' and

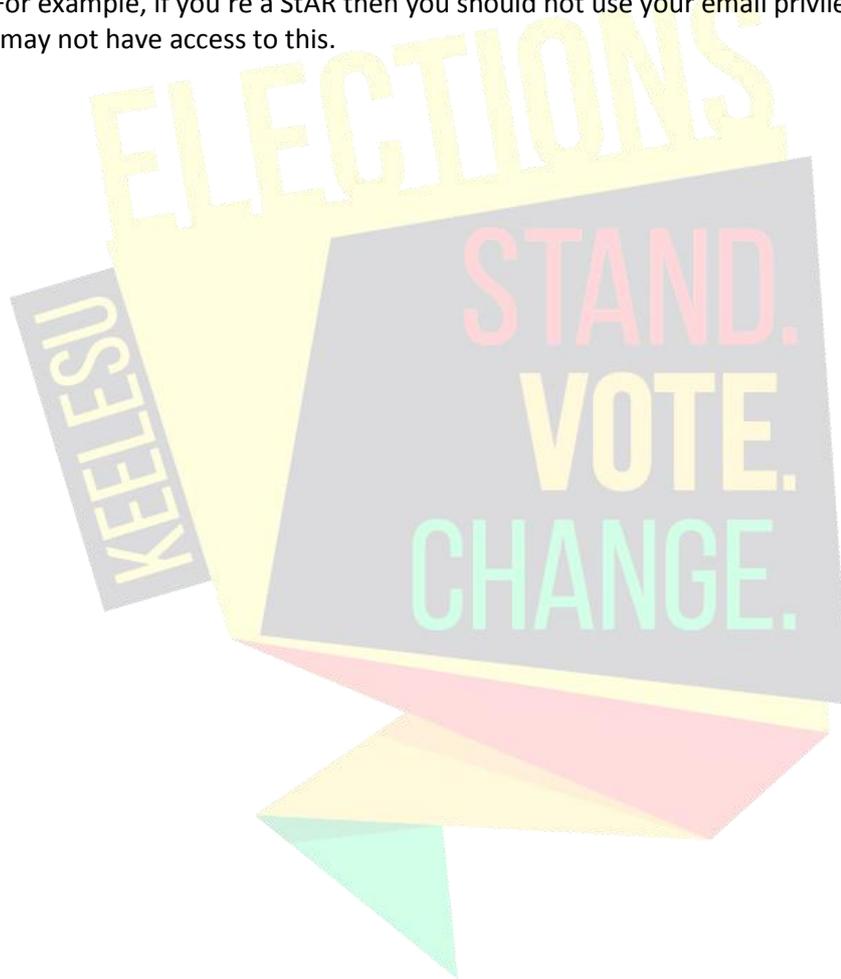
Twitter. Also think about using Snapchat to send out vote reminders. Don't get drawn in to arguments on social media (and don't feed the trolls...).

- Website

If you feel you've more to say than what's on your manifesto, then why not create your own website? This way you can show off any web design skills. If you purchase a web domain then you must account for this in your budget but we recommend using a free service. You are welcome to link to your website in your manifesto.

- Emails

If you plan on sending out emails then remember that you cannot use any special relationships or privileges. For example, if you're a StAR then you should not use your email privileges as other candidates may not have access to this.



Your Budget

Relevant to – All Candidates

All candidates will be given a budget to spend on their election campaign. This budget is as follows:

£10 – Part time officer candidates

You are not permitted to exceed your election budget or spend ANY of your own money. Overspending your budget WILL result in a sanction.

You can spend your money however you want*, as long as you are able to provide receipts for your purchases.

In order to simplify your campaign budget, we have created a 'Shopping List' which you can choose items from. This includes print, T shirts, banners and free of charge items.

Printed Publicity

If you are ordering print through our shopping list, you will need to provide us with files to send to the printshop. These must be in JPEG, Word or PDF format.

For any additional print options not listed on the shopping list, such as business cards, you are able to arrange your own printing. Receipts should be provided for ANY printing costs. For this reason, we recommend professional printshops rather than printing at home or in the library.

Special Discounts and Offers

You are able to take advantage of offers that are available to ALL candidates such as online sales, discounts and offers however you CANNOT use discounts that are only available to you. This might include using loyalty points, special relationships (ie, 'mates rates') and members only deals and discounts (unless any candidate could freely and easily become a member).

What can the Union Provide?

KeeleSU Activities have a selection of paint and other craft material that you are able to use free of charge. We will book out the MARs room for candidates to paint banners. We also have a macro card which candidates can use, tea urns, tables and chairs and standard election flyers.

Things you already own

Every year candidates ask if they can use something they already own to help with their campaign such as musical instruments, fancy dress items and vehicles. You are permitted to use your personal items, within reason**, to aid your campaign providing they are not bought especially for the elections.

**Note from the DRO: We ain't reimbursing you for anything illegal. Or alcohol...or the ingredients to brew it..*

***Note from the DRO: If you own something ridiculously outlandish such as a helicopter or a pet velociraptor then we probably won't let you use that for your campaign.*

Election Regulations

ELECTION GUIDANCE AND REGULATIONS

Elections Guidance – KeeleSU

1. KeeleSU will arrange free and fair elections to elect all democratic positions within KeeleSU. All elections shall be conducted by secret ballot, the procedure, arrangements and guidance set out in this chapter fully taking into consideration for accessibility of any such elections to all members, regardless of orientation, origin or disability.

2. Elections Bodies and Responsible Officers

a. Returning Officer

i. The trustees shall appoint an impartial Returning Officer, on an annual basis, who shall not be a sabbatical officer or employee of the Union.

b. Duties of the Returning Officer

i. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the observation of these regulations and shall have the power either to suspend the election or declare a nomination invalid should these regulations be contravened.

ii. The Returning Officer shall have the power to suspend or disqualify a candidate or group of candidates from an Election or declare an Election void.

iii. The Returning Officer will appoint a Deputy Returning Officer and other officials to ensure the good administration and promotion of the Election in agreement with the Board of Trustees. The Deputy Returning Officer and Election officials shall be instructed by the Returning Officer on their duties and shall perform these in an impartial manner. Any of the actions in this Chapter applicable to the Returning Officer may be carried out by the appointed Deputy Returning Officer. Wherever possible, the Deputy Returning Officer and Elections Officials should not be members of KeeleSU.

iv. The ruling of the Returning Officer on the conduct of the campaign and execution of the Election and/or Referenda shall be final.

v. The Electoral Forum may review the decision of a Returning Officer and may (in exceptional circumstances) overturn their decision by a formal vote achieving a majority of all voting members of the Electoral Forum if the consequence of any decision of the Returning Officer is deemed to fall outside of the scope and authority of these regulations.

1. Electoral Forum shall consist of 2 Union Council Members and 1 Member of the Constitutional Affairs Committee

vi. The Returning Officer shall publish any additional rules that are not provided for within these regulations in the candidate information pack which must be made available to candidates.

3. Election Timetable

a. Elections shall be held at times which are intended to enable the largest possible number of members to fully participate in all aspects of the electoral cycle.

b. Elections shall be held at time to the greatest benefit to the membership.

4. Nominations

a. An Election Information Pack must be available before nominations open. The pack shall contain a copy of the description of the role of each position available in the election, an election timetable, a copy of the election rules and regulations and information on the facilities and support the Union will make available to each candidate.

b. Full members of the Union, as defined in the KeeleSU constitution, can stand for

Election and shall be considered for nomination providing a nomination is submitted on the KeeleSU website before the close of nominations.

c. Cohort voting will be permitted for a number of positions within KeeleSU. The Returning Officer has responsibility for ensuring that the correct requirements are in place to ensure accurate and fair cohort voting.

d. Candidates may not stand for more than one post in any single election cycle, with the singular exception that candidates may be simultaneously elected to KeeleSU office and elected as a NUS Delegate.

e. In all elections there will always be one further candidate, namely "Re-Open Nominations". Thus in the event of there being only one candidate for one of these posts, the election shall continue as normal with the candidate running against "Re-Open Nominations".

f. In the event of no nominations being received for any position, the election for that position shall be postponed and re-scheduled at the earliest convenience.

Elections postponed in this way shall be conducted according to the by-election rules.

5. Voting

a. Voting shall be by the Single Transferable Vote scheme (STV) as prescribed for in the Electoral Reform Society guidelines.

i. Exception to the guidelines is outlined in '14. Resignations'

b. No elector shall vote more than once and no elector shall be allowed to vote in proxy for another elector.

6. The count

a. The count shall be supervised by the Returning Officer.

b. Subject to good order, the count shall be open to all members of KeeleSU.

c. Any candidate, independent observer, or Returning Officer may request a recount within twenty-four hours of the close of the count.

d. The Returning Officer shall retain all available count information for a period of three months from the last date of polling.

e. In elections where more than one candidate can be elected, if at any stage of the count “re-open nominations” candidate gains the required number of votes to be elected, it shall be deemed to have been elected. No further candidates can be elected after this point.

7. Poll Review Meeting

a. The Electoral Forum will meet after the close of poll but before the count.

b. This meeting will consider any outstanding complaints and appeals under these regulations. If the Forum decides that any problem has affected the election then the following resolutions will be open to it:

i. Allow the count to begin unhindered.

ii. Disqualify one or more candidates for breach of the Election ByLaws.

In this case the count shall proceed normally; all votes for disqualified candidates will be transferred to the electors next preferences according to the counting rules.

iii. In extreme circumstances, where the result of the poll could be adversely affected, declare the election invalid and reschedule it according to these regulations. In this case, the Forum must either:

1. Restart the election from the opening of polls, with the exclusion of one or more disqualified candidates. Or;

2. Restart the election from the opening of nominations, with one or more disqualified former candidates prohibited from nomination.

8. The declaration

a. Election results shall be declared by the Returning Officer or his/her nominees within reasonable time after the count has been completed.

b. Should “Re-Open Nominations” win, nominations shall be re-opened for election to be held as soon as possible at a time to be determined by the Returning Officer.

9. Appeal Meetings

a. The Electoral Forum will meet upon receipt of an appeal against a decision of the Returning Officer at any time from the open of nominations until the close of polling.

b. The Forum has the power to overturn decisions made by the Returning Officer.

10. Extraordinary Meetings

- a. The Returning Officer may at any time summon the Electoral Forum for the purpose of consultation.
- b. The Electoral Forum may call an extraordinary meeting at any time during an election from the open of nominations to the close of polls for the purpose of conducting business he or she considers too urgent to wait until the next scheduled meeting.

11. Election Discipline, Complaints and Appeals

- a. The Returning Officer has discretionary power to apply any reasonable penalty to candidates breaking these election regulations, except where regulations stipulate automatic disqualification.
- b. Any full member of KeeleSU can complain in writing about the conduct of the election or the conduct of any of the candidates or their campaign team and should address these complaints to the Returning Officer.
- c. If a complainant or any other full member of KeeleSU is dissatisfied with the Returning Officer's actions or decisions:
 - i. in response to a complaint made under 11b
 - ii. in the exercise of his/her powers as Returning Officer then the complainant shall have right of appeal to the Electoral Forum.

Appeals may be made in writing to any member of the Forum, who must then notify the Chair, who will convene an appellate meeting of the Forum at the earliest opportunity.

12. By-elections

- a. By-elections shall be conducted under the election regulations insofar as they apply.
- b. In the event of a By-Election, the following timetable rules shall apply. The Returning Officer shall determine the actual dates.
 - i. Polling dates and hours must be published in advance of the opening of nominations.
- c. On receiving notice of the resignation or removal of an Elected Officer of KeeleSU, the Returning Officer shall, within a reasonable period, declare a by-election for the post, pending approval from the Trustee board.

13. Statute of Limitations

- a. A 'Statute of Limitations' shall exist for 14 working days following the close of polls. Candidates shall be subject to punitive action from the Returning Officer and Elections Forum during this period.

14. Resignations

- a. Where a Full-Time Officer resigns following election, the Returning Officer shall, in accordance with 12c, be permitted to return to the original ballot and elect the candidate with the highest votes

once the full-time officers votes who has resigned had been re-distributed, following the single transferable vote protocol.

i. This shall only be permitted for full-time officer elections and shall only be permitted once. This must be conducted before the designated start of office.

ii. If candidate with the highest votes (following re-distribution) no longer wishes to hold the full-time officer position a by-election shall be held.

iii. If candidate with the highest votes (following re-distribution) does not reach quota a by-election should be held.

b. Where a part-time officer resigns, the Returning Officer shall not be permitted to return to the original ballot. A by-election will be held.

Elections Guidance – Candidate Regulations

1. Candidacy

a. All candidates shall be required to produce a manifesto and will be expected to upload these by a deadline determined by the Returning Officer.

2. Campaigning

a. Negative campaigning shall not be allowed.

b. It is prohibited for any person to publicise a “Re-Open Nominations” campaign in order to stand should the nominations actually re-open. Such an action will lead to the disqualification by the Returning Officer of that person from the following election.

c. Candidates must observe the University Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.

d. The Returning Officer, in agreement with the trustees, shall determine the publicity budget for candidates in the election. The candidate’s budget will be provided by KeeleSU and candidates are prohibited from spending any of their own, or donated money on their election campaign

e. Candidates must not exceed their budget limits.

f. KeeleSU will provide candidates with a ‘Campaign Shopping list’ which candidates can select items from (including the option of printed materials). These items will be provided by KeeleSU and the sum of this shopping list will be deducted from a candidate’s budget.

g. Candidates wishing to purchase additional materials, not provided by KeeleSU, must provide receipts of all campaign expenditure before the close of poll.

h. Publicity materials must not be obtained through special relationships with suppliers.

i. Items freely and readily available to all candidates can be used without itemisation.

j. Candidates may enlist assistants, or a campaign team, for campaigning purposes.

k. Any person enlisted by a candidate to assist them in distributing publicity or canvassing shall be bound by these regulations as if they were the candidate himself/herself. Candidates will be held entirely responsible for the action of any helper or assistant. It is the absolute responsibility of candidates to ensure that helpers are aware of, and abide by, election regulations.

l. Candidates must not undertake campaign activity which others could not reasonably do.

m. Candidates and their campaigners must not alter, move or remove the campaign material of any other candidate.

n. Campaigners and candidates must allow voters to cast their ballot freely and must not communicate with voters in any way once they have begun to complete their ballot.

