

Election Guide 2025-26

Student Group online elections seek to democratically elect the principal officers of student groups, these being President (or equivalent) and Treasurer (or equivalent). Groups can opt in to elect other roles if they would like to e.g., social secretary, vice-president etc.

Online elections must be done via the Students' Unions website. These will be set up and administrated by the Student Engagement team. The staff support relevant to the student group will act as the lead contact for student group elections; they will set up the elections, inform all relevant parties of timelines and communications as well as publish results unless otherwise discussed in advance.

Election dates will be determined by the Student Engagement team and communicated via the website and via newsletters to groups. Elections dates will be split by Mile End groups and Whitechapel groups if necessary. Malta dates will be discussed with the BLSA Malta board in advance to see if the Mile End or Whitechapel dates work better. In Paris, a different process will be applied and communicated with students due to the one-year nature of their course.

The team will remind everyone (including current committee members) in advance to buy memberships, otherwise they won't be able to participate in the elections!

Elections overview

What roles can we elect?

To ensure a fair process, we require you to:

- President (or equivalent) and Treasurer (or equivalent) must be elected via online election.
- You can choose to elect any other committee position via online election, but this is not a requirement.
- You are also required to have a Welfare Representative on your committee, but this role can be a part of another role (e.g., Vice President), and you can decide to appoint this role through a selection process rather than an election.
- We recommend thinking about your group size when deciding how many committee members you want. If you are a larger group or run large scale events you might need more support than a group with only a few members for example. In addition to the two principal officers, you will need at least 1 extra committee member per 75 members and we advise to have no more than 1 extra committee members per 15 members.

In general, we recommend electing committee members via online election to ensure the process is fair and democratic. You can request to add committee positions beyond the principal officer roles on the online election system through a MS form that will be sent to all current student group committee members in advance via email.

Who is eligible to stand for a committee position?

- Current students who are standard paying members of said student group and who will be a student next academic year, this does not include external members.

- Registered volunteers for a volunteering group that will be a student next academic year, this does not include anybody external to QMUL.
- There are no requirements or experience needed to stand for a committee position. For example, you do not need to have been on committee before to stand for president.
- Membership sale will be paused during the voting period to ensure fair process.

What voting system do we use?

We run our elections using a voting system called Single Transferable voting (STV). This is a form of proportional representation meaning that votes are ranked. For someone to win, they need to reach a certain quota of votes depending on how many people voted in total. Voters decide on their preference of candidates, and if the voter's first choice is elected or eliminated, any surplus of votes above the quota are transferred to the voter's second choice and so on.

For more information you can watch/direct members to this [YouTube video](#). The video refers to this system as Alternative Transferable Voting, or ATV.

Committee information

What is expected of Student Group Committee members?

As the current committee we expect you to ensure fair and transparent election. Below are some points to help you with this:

- Advertise and publicise the election period to all members of your student group and share information on how members can nominate themselves.
- Be impartial when talking about the elections to members. This means you cannot endorse a candidate in their position as a committee member.
- Share the election rules with all members.
- Decide as a committee what rules you would like to implement. They should be something that you are willing and able to manage and enforce if needed. For example if candidates can post in group chats or on your online platforms and what the rules around this are. (e.g., only two messages into the group chat a day, cannot comment to promote themselves on Instagram posts etc.)
- Give fair and equal promotion during the election period to all candidates.
- Fill in the handover document as a committee and sending this to the newly elected committee and to your staff support.

Applications process for Committee roles

As mentioned, you cannot hold interviews/ applications or any form of screening for any roles that you are electing via online election, with President (or equivalent) and Treasurer (or equivalent) being required to be elected this way.

Any additional positions that are not being elected via online elections can be interviewed or have people submit applications. You are still required for this process to be fair and transparent:

- Widely advertise to your members what positions are available: make sure everyone has an equal chance of knowing that you are accepting applications.
- Ensure that only standard paying members have applied for committee positions, external members are not allowed to hold a role on committee.
- Provide timeframes of when you are accepting applications and when members can expect to hear an outcome by.
- Set criterion of what you are looking for from candidates for each role. You can then use this criterion to mark each applicant's submission
- Set a meeting with your committee to go through the applications and decide who to give the roles to. Keep minutes to this meeting and record what was decided within this meeting.
- Notify all applicants the outcome of their submissions, successful or not. It is good practice to also provide applicants with feedback.

Post-Elections

Once voting has ended, results will be released by the Student Engagement team 1-2 working days after this.

- If there have been any complaints submitted during voting, then this may delay the results being released. This will be communicated to the relevant student group and its members.
- The roles elected do not begin until 1st August, but new committee will be emailed about training dates and what they should be doing between being elected and their role starting.
- If you want to hold a result reveal event and don't want to have the results to be public beforehand, contact your staff support before voting to arrange this.

The current outgoing committee will write a handover document for the new incoming committee.

Candidate information

What is expected of candidates?

We hope that you are excited to nominate yourself for a committee role and have collected some advice below to support you. This is not an exhaustive list but meant to give you an idea of how it works.

What should candidates do?

- Ensure that you submit your manifesto and picture on time.
- Ensure that you follow the rules of the election, a breach in these may result in removal from the election.
- Treat other candidates with respect.

What can't candidates do?

- Vote on behalf of others.

- Bribe students to vote for you.
- Cannot use any pre-existing roles for the benefit of running e.g., cannot promote themselves on their student groups Instagram or use group money.
- Use the groups mailing list to promote themselves.

What happens if a candidate breaks the rules?

- They may be removed from the election and not allowed to run for a position.
- The election may need to be completely re-run.
- Depending on what has been done, a formal investigation may need to take place, which will cause delays to the election.
- A warning may be issued, where if another incident happens the candidate is removed from the election.
- A candidate may be given a campaigning ban.
- Not knowing the rules will not be accepted as an excuse for breaking any rules (provided that the student group has properly communicated rules).

Can I nominate myself for more than one role?

Yes! You can nominate yourself for multiple roles on different student group committees but only one per group. If you win several positions on different committees then you are welcome to take them on but be mindful to be able to fulfil the requirements for each role.

Can I share a role with someone else?

Only if this has been pre-agreed prior to the election taking place for example a student group has co-presidents instead of just one president position.

Benefits of being on a committee

- You can make an impact on the student community and wider community.
- Holding a role is an enjoyable experience!
- You will develop skills such as project management, communication, teamwork, leadership and more.
- Holding a position will look great on a job application and give you real life experiences to talk about in an interview.
- You will be eligible for our Skills Award programme
- Committee members can be eligible for our Student Group Awards and can receive a reference for their role

Is being on committee a large time commitment?

Being on committee is a time commitment and it can be quite a large commitment depending on the nature of your student group. If you are unsure, get in touch with the student group to get more information.

Complaints procedure

Complaints should be sent to the relevant inbox:

- Su-societies@qmul.ac.uk for society election complaints
- Su-volunteering@qmul.ac.uk for volunteering group election complaints
- Su-studentmedia@qmul.ac.uk for student media outlet election complaints

Complaints about elections should be sent in prior to results being released. We will not investigate new complaints that come in more than one working day after the results for a group have been released. The staff lead contact will review complaints.

If a complaint is made about the staff lead contact, then the Student Engagement Manager will handle the complaint.

How can student groups avoid complaints and issues?

We hope that most elections will be running smoothly and to support this we have added a few reminders below:

- The committee should properly advertise elections across multiple platforms e.g., group chats, Instagram, email.
- The committee should clearly communicate rules for candidates running for election.
- Candidates should abide by the rules communicated by the student group.
- If there are any issues with the election's webpage these should be reported immediately to the Students' Union.

