Union of Jewish Students Election Rulebook

Effective from: 24th October 2025

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1. Introduction and Scope

1.1 Authority

This Rulebook is made pursuant to the UJS Constitution and By-Law 1 (Elections), as amended.

1.2 Purpose

This Rulebook governs all UJS elections, including:

- Presidential elections
- National Council elections
- UJS representatives to the Board of Deputies elections
- By-elections for any of the above positions

1.3 Aims

The Rulebook aims to ensure that UJS elections are:

- Fair and democratic
- Transparent and accountable
- Accessible and inclusive
- Conducted in accordance with Jewish values
- Clearly understood by all participants

1.4 Hierarchy

In the event of any conflict or inconsistency:

1. The UJS Constitution shall take precedence over all other documents
2. By-Law 1 (Elections) shall take precedence over this Rulebook
3. This Rulebook shall take precedence over any other guidance

1.5 Interpretation

The Returning Officer has the authority to interpret these rules in circumstances not explicitly covered, guided by the principles of fairness, transparency, and democratic participation.

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2. Definitions

For the purposes of this Rulebook:

Alternative Vote (AV): An electoral system where voters rank candidates in order of preference. If no candidate receives more than 50% of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and their votes redistributed according to second preferences. This continues until one candidate has a majority.

Appeals Panel: The body responsible for hearing appeals against Returning Officer decisions. The panel consis of one Sabbatical Team member, one other staff member, and one further person appointed by the incumbent President (this can be a member of staff, National Council, or a trustee, but cannot be the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer).

By-Law: Rules made pursuant to the UJS Constitution that govern specific operational matters.

Campaigning: Any activity intended to promote a candidate or solicit votes, whether public or private, online or offline.

Campaign Manager: An individual(s) appointed by the candidate to lead their campaign, under the direction of the candidate.

Campaign Period: The specified time during which public and direct campaigning is permitted, beginning when announced by the Returning Officer and ending at the close of polling.

Campaign Team: Any person or persons assisting a candidate with their campaign, whether formally designated or informally helping.

Candidate: A Member who has submitted a valid nomination for an elected position.

Chief Executive: The Chief Executive Officer of UJS, responsible for day-to-day management of the organisation.

Conference: The annual gathering of UJS Members, as defined in Article 6 of the Constitution, where policy is debated.

Deputy Returning Officer (DRO): An independent, external individual appointed to assist the Returning Officer with administrative tasks.

Disqualification: The permanent withdrawal of a candidate from the election, the most serious sanction available.

Endorsement: A public or private statement of support for a candidate. Under these rules, only individual Student Members may endorse candidates.

Fair Market Value: The price that an item or service would typically cost if purchased at arm's length in the open market, used to value donated or discounted items.

Gender Quota: A requirement that a minimum proportion or number of elected representatives identify as female or non-binary, to ensure gender diversity in representation.

Hustings: A formal event where candidates present their platforms and answer questions from Members.

Jewish Festival: Any major Jewish holiday during which work is traditionally prohibited, including but not limited to: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot (first two and last two days), Pesach (first two and last two days), and Shavuot.

JSoc: An affiliated Jewish Society at a higher or further education institution.

Member / Student Member: Any person entitled to membership under Article 3.4 of the UJS Constitution, being any Jewish student in full-time or part-time education at a higher/further education institution, including the current President and Sabbatical Team.

National Council: Five elected students responsible for scrutinising the President's decisions, amending By-Laws as part of the NEC, and providing student feedback.

National Executive Committee (NEC): The National Executive Committee as defined in Article 7 of the UJS Constitution.

Negative Campaigning: Campaign activity that focuses on attacking, undermining, or criticising other candidates rather than promoting one's own positive vision and policies.

Personal Attack: A comment or action directed at a person's individual characteristics, identity, or character, rather than their policies or qualifications.

Re-open Nominations (RON): A ballot option representing "no suitable candidate" which, if elected, triggers a new election with fresh nominations.

Returning Officer (RO): The independent external individual appointed to oversee the conduct of UJS elections, responsible for ensuring fairness and compliance with rules.

Sabbatical Officers: Paid staff members of UJS who execute the policy of the Union and report to the President. They are ineligible to stand for National Council.

Sabbatical Team: The collective body of Sabbatical Officers and the President.

Sanction: A penalty imposed by the Returning Officer for breach of election rules, ranging from warnings to disqualification.

Shabbat: The Jewish Sabbath, observed from Friday evening at candle-lighting until Saturday evening at nightfall, during which campaigning restrictions apply. During the Campaign Period, Shabbat times are determined by the location of the candidate at candle-lighting time.

Single Transferable Vote (STV): An electoral system used for multi-seat positions where voters rank candidates in order of preference, and votes are transferred according to a quota system until all seats are filled.

Working Day: Any day other than Saturday, Sunday, Jewish festivals, or UK public holidays.

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3. Elected Positions and Terms

3.1 Positions

The following positions are elected under this Rulebook:

3.1.1 President

- One position
- Term: One year commencing in June or July
- The President may stand for re-election once (maximum of two consecutive terms)

3.1.2 National Council

- Five positions
- Term: One year, in line with the President's term
- At least one position must be filled by a candidate who identifies as female or non-binary
- Current Sabbatical Officers are not eligible to stand for National Council

3.1.3 Board of Deputies Representatives

- Twelve positions in total
- Only vacated positions (due to graduation) are open for election each year
- Term: From July following election until graduation
- Students in their final year of study, and current Sabbatical Officers, are not eligible to stand
- At least 40% of the full twelve-member delegation must identify as female or non-binary

3.2 Eligibility

All Members are eligible to stand for election, subject to:

- The restrictions in clause 3.1 above
- The requirements of the UJS Constitution
- Not being subject to a current suspension of membership rights

3.3 Term Limits

The President may serve a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms. All other positions have no term limits except as imposed by graduation or loss of student status.

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4. Election Administration

4.1 Returning Officer

4.1.1 Appointment

The Returning Officer is appointed within 3 months of the President taking office, for a term of one year, in accordance with By-law 1, clause 3.1.

Until a new Returning Officer is appointed, and in the eventuality of requiring mid term electoral decisions (such as recall, vote of no-confidence, mid-term resignation etc), the existing Returning Officer should continue to act in this role.

4.1.2 Independence

The Returning Officer must not be on Payroll as a staff member of UJS and have a genuine and perceived independence from the candidates and their teams.

4.1.3 Responsibilities

The Returning Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring the election timetable is published
- Verifying nominations
- Overseeing the conduct of candidates and campaigns
- Managing the voting and counting process
- Investigating complaints
- Imposing sanctions where appropriate
- Certifying and announcing results

- Creating supplementary guidance to clarify these rules where necessary

4.1.4 Powers

The Returning Officer has the power to:

- Make rules and issue guidance consistent with the Constitution, By-law 1, and this Rulebook
- Interpret these rules in unforeseen circumstances
- Investigate potential breaches of election regulations
- Impose sanctions up to and including disqualification
- Extend deadlines or adjust procedures in exceptional circumstances (with approval of the Appeals Panel for significant changes)

4.1.5 Conduct

The Returning Officer will:

- Act impartially and fairly towards all candidates
- Be mindful that students may have prior commitments regarding their studies
- Communicate decisions clearly and in a timely manner
- Treat candidates with respect throughout the process.

4.2 Deputy Returning Officer

4.2.1 Appointment

The Returning Officer shall appoint a Deputy Returning Officer.

4.2.2 Role

The Deputy Returning Officer assists the Returning Officer with administrative tasks and acts under the Returning Officer's direction.

4.2.3 Authority

The DRO may from time to time perform these functions under the RO's supervision.

4.3 Appeals Panel

4.3.1 Composition

The Appeals Panel consists of:

- One Sabbatical Team member
- One other UJS staff member
- One further person appointed by the incumbent President (this can be a member of staff, National Council, or a trustee, but cannot be the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer).

4.3.2 Role

The Appeals Panel hears appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer and has the power to uphold, alter, or overturn those decisions.

4.3.3 Decisions

The decisions of the Appeals Panel are final and binding on all parties.

4.4 Communication with Candidates

4.4.1 Candidate Responsibilities

Candidates and their campaign teams must:

- Be respectful in all communications with the Returning Officer
- Respond to requests from the Returning Officer in a timely manner
- Recognise that the Returning Officer may have other commitments
- Allow reasonable time for responses to queries

4.4.2 RO Responsibilities

The Returning Officer will:

- Respond to candidate queries within a reasonable timeframe (normally within 48 hours during the campaign period)
- Provide clear explanations for decisions
- Treat all candidates equally in communications

5. Election Timetable

5.1 Publication

The Returning Officer must publish the full election timetable at least 14 days before nominations open.

5.2 Timetable Contents

The timetable must specify:

- The dates and times when nominations open and close
- When the campaign period begins and ends
- When polling (voting) opens and closes
- When results will be published
- Dates of any mandatory meetings or hustings events
- Deadlines for complaints and appeals

5.3 Notice Periods

5.3.1 Presidential Elections

Detailed notice must be given at least 14 days before nominations open.

5.3.2 National Council and Board of Deputies Elections

Detailed notice must be given at least 2 working days before nominations open.

5.4 Scheduling Considerations

Elections shall be scheduled at times intended to enable the largest possible number of Members to vote, avoiding where possible:

- Major Jewish festivals
- University examination periods
- Long vacation periods
- Other periods when student engagement would be significantly reduced

5.5 Adjustments

The Returning Officer may adjust the timetable if exceptional circumstances require, provided:

- Reasonable notice is given to all candidates and Members
- The adjustment does not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any candidate
- The adjustment is necessary to ensure fairness or comply with this Rulebook
- For significant changes, approval from the Appeals Panel is obtained

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6. Nominations

6.1 Nomination Period

6.1.1 Presidential Elections

The nomination period shall be at least 15 working days.

6.1.2 National Council and Board of Deputies Elections

The nomination period shall be at least 3 working days.

6.2 Nomination Requirements

6.2.1 Presidential Nominations

Valid nominations must contain the signatures of at least ten other Members from five different affiliated JSocs.

6.2.2 National Council and Board of Deputies Nominations

Valid nominations must contain the signature of at least one other Member from an affiliated JSoc.

6.2.3 Nominators

All nominators must:

- Be current Members of UJS at the time of nomination
- Understand that their nomination constitutes support for the candidate appearing on the ballot, not necessarily endorsement.

6.3 Nomination Forms

6.3.1 Availability

Nomination forms, where relevant, must be made available as soon as nominations open.

6.3.2 Information Required

Nomination forms must include:

- Candidate's full name
- University/institution
- Confirmation of current student status
- Contact details
- Required nominator signatures with full names, institutions and confirmation of nominators' student status.
- Declaration that the candidate has read and agrees to abide by election rules
- For National Council and Board of Deputies candidates: Graduation year

6.4 Verification

The Returning Officer or their deputy shall verify all nominations at the close of the nomination period, checking:

- Eligibility of candidates
- Validity of nominator signatures
- Compliance with nomination requirements
- That nominators are current Members

6.5 Publication

The Returning Officer shall publish all valid nominations within two working days of the close of nominations.

6.6 Withdrawal

Candidates may withdraw their nomination at any time before polling opens by notifying the Returning Officer in writing.

6.7 Candidates' Meeting

6.7.1 Presidential Elections

A mandatory meeting of presidential candidates and their Campaign Manager(s) with the Returning Officer must be held following the closure of nominations, at a time specified by the Returning Officer.

6.7.2 Purpose

The candidates' meeting will cover:

- Election rules and procedures
- Campaign finance and expense claims
- Prohibited conduct
- Complaints procedures
- Question and answer session

6.7.3 Attendance

All presidential candidates must attend. Campaign agents are strongly encouraged to attend.

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7. Campaigning Rules

7.1 Campaign Period

7.1.1 Presidential Elections

The campaign period shall last at least ten days.

7.1.2 Start of Campaigning

Campaigning may only begin once the campaign period has commenced as specified by the Returning Officer.

7.1.3 End of Campaigning

Campaigning shall only be permitted during the campaign period and must cease when polling closes.

7.2 Pre-Campaign Activity

7.2.1 Prohibition on Public Campaigning

Public campaigning is not permitted before the campaign period begins. This includes but is not limited to:

- Social media posts promoting candidacy
- Posters, flyers, or other publicity materials
- Public statements of intention to run
- Soliciting endorsements beyond nominations

7.2.2 Permitted Pre-Campaign Activity

Before the campaign period begins, candidates may:

- Privately contact Members for the purpose of building a campaign team
- Seek advice and perspective on the Jewish student experience, although public meetings are not permitted
- Prepare campaign materials (provided they are not published or distributed beyond campaigns teams)

7.2.3 Prohibition on Vote Solicitation

Candidates may not contact Student Members with the sole or primary intention of soliciting their vote before the campaign period begins.

7.3 General Principles

7.3.1 Fair Conduct

All campaigning must be:

- Fair and honest
- Democratic and respectful
- Inclusive and accessible
- Consistent with the values of UJS
- Compliant with all rules in this Rulebook, including in spirit

7.3.2 Candidate Responsibility

Candidates are fully responsible for:

- Their own conduct
- The conduct of their campaign team members
- All campaign materials produced or distributed by their campaign or in its name
- Ensuring compliance with these rules

7.4 Campaign Materials

7.4.1 Content Standards

All campaign materials must:

- Be honest and not misleading
- Comply with social media platform terms of service
- Be accessible (e.g., include alt text for images where possible)

7.4.2 Prohibited Content

Campaign materials must not:

- Contain personal attacks
- Constitute negative campaigning
- Contain false or defamatory statements
- Misrepresent a candidate's positions or record
- Use imagery or language that could reasonably be considered discriminatory
- Violate any person's privacy or dignity
- Bring UJS into disrepute

7.5 Campus Visits and In-Person Campaigning

7.5.1 Travel

Candidates may visit campuses to campaign, subject to:

- Reimbursement provisions in clause 8.2.2
- Respectful engagement with JSocs and students
- Compliance with local JSoc and university rules

7.5.2 Conduct During Visits

Candidates must:

- Coordinate with local JSocs where appropriate
- Respect students' time and commitments
- Leave campuses in good condition (remove all campaign materials when required)

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8. Campaign Finance

8.1 Principles

No candidate shall be unfairly disadvantaged through lack of financial means.

8.2 Campaign Allowance

8.2.1 Standard Allowance

All candidates shall receive an equal campaign allowance of £100 for legitimate campaign expenses.

8.2.2 Travel Reimbursement

In addition to the standard allowance, all candidates shall receive full travel reimbursement for:

- Up to six campus visits during the campaign period
- All debates, hustings, and official UJS events to which they are invited as candidates

Additional campus visits beyond six must be expensed from the campaign allowance.

8.2.3 Eligible Expenses

The campaign allowance may be used for:

- Printing costs (flyers, posters, banners)
- Digital advertising (within the rules of clause 10)
- Campaign merchandise
- Website hosting or domain costs
- Stationery and office supplies
- Other materials directly related to campaigning

8.2.4 Ineligible Expenses

The campaign allowance may not be used for:

- Food or refreshments for voters (this constitutes an inducement)
- Gifts or prizes for voters
- Payments to campaigners
- Items that violate any rules in this Rulebook

8.3 Expense Claims

8.3.1 Receipts

All claims on the campaign allowance must be accompanied by valid receipts showing:

- Date of purchase
- Description of items purchased
- Amount paid
- Vendor name

8.3.2 Submission

Expense claims must be submitted to the Returning Officer within 7 days of the close of polling

8.3.3 Review

The Returning Officer will review all expense claims and may reject claims that:

- Are not properly receipted
- Exceed the allowance
- Are for ineligible items
- Were unreasonably incurred outside the campaign period

8.4 Spending Limits

8.4.1 Prohibition on Excess Spending

Any expenditure beyond the £100 campaign allowance (excluding reimbursable travel) is strictly prohibited.

8.4.2 Donated or Discounted Items

The Returning Officer shall be responsible for determining the true fair market value of any items or services:

- Obtained below cost price
- Donated to the campaign
- Provided at a discount

Such items count toward the spending limit at their fair market value.

8.4.3 Examples of Valuation

- Professional design work donated: valued at market rate for such services
- Materials borrowed from a JSoc: valued at £0 if returned in same condition
- Printing done at cost through university: valued at actual cost paid

8.5 Transparency

8.5.1 Record Keeping

Candidates must maintain accurate records of all campaign spending.

8.5.2 Disclosure

The Returning Officer may require candidates to disclose their campaign spending within a reasonable timeframe if concerns are raised.

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9. Endorsements

9.1 Individual Endorsements Only

Candidates may only be endorsed by Student Members in an individual capacity.

9.2 Prohibited Endorsements

Candidates may not be endorsed by:

- JSocs or other student organisations
- Youth movements
- External organisations or charities
- Companies or commercial entities
- Chabad staff/rabbis/rebbetzins, Chaplains, PJS, or other religious institutions
- Current Sabbatical Officers

This prohibition applies to both public and private endorsements.

9.3 Permitted Endorsement Formats

9.3.1 Individual Capacity

Endorsements may state the individual's roles and affiliations, provided it is clearly not an organisational endorsement.

Example (permitted): "Sarah Cohen, President of Oxford JSoc, endorses [candidate] in a personal capacity"

Example (prohibited): "Oxford JSoc endorses [candidate]"

9.3.2 Group Endorsements

Groups of students may endorse simultaneously, provided that:

- It is clear they are each doing so in an individual capacity
- The format does not suggest organisational endorsement
- Each individual is named

Example (permitted): “Rachel Levy, Josh Green, and Emma Stone, all Jewish students at Manchester, individually endorse [candidate]".

9.4 Sabbatical Officer Neutrality

9.4.1 Prohibition

The incumbent President and Sabbatical Officers may not campaign for any candidate in any capacity, with the exception of themselves if standing for re-election.

9.4.2 Permitted Activity

Sabbatical Officers may:

- Answer factual questions about candidates or the election process
- Perform their official duties impartially
- Vote in the election
- Publicly encourage Jewish students to participate by voting

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10. Shabbat and Jewish Festivals

10.1 General Principle

Candidates are not permitted to campaign on Shabbat or Jewish festivals in any way that would give them an advantage over a candidate who is strictly observant.

10.2 Shabbat Times

10.2.1 Determination

For the purposes of these rules, Shabbat times apply to candidates based on their location at candle-lighting time on Friday evening, regardless of their subsequent movements.

10.2.2 Campaign Team Obligations

Candidates' campaign teams must abide by the Shabbat restrictions according to the timings that apply to their candidate.

10.2.3 Application to Festivals

All rules regarding Shabbat also apply to any major Jewish festival during which work is traditionally prohibited.

10.3 Location Restrictions

A candidate can only campaign in one locality per Shabbat. Once Shabbat has begun in a candidate's location, they may not travel to a different city to continue or extend their campaign.

10.4 Social Media Pause

10.4.1 Required Pause

All social media campaigning must be paused over Shabbat, including but not limited to:

- Social media posting on any platform
- Paid social media advertisements
- Direct messaging for the sole or primary purpose of soliciting votes
- Responding to comments or messages about the campaign
- Scheduled posts set to publish during Shabbat

10.4.2 Advance Planning

Candidates must ensure that any scheduled posts or automated content does not publish during Shabbat.

“stories” that stay “live” for 24 hours may be posted just before Shabbat, knowing that they will be live during Shabbat, but with no edits or additions during that time.

10.4.3 Campaign Team

Campaign team members must not post, share, or engage in any social media activity promoting the candidate during Shabbat.

10.5 In-Person Campaigning

10.5.1 Prohibition

In-person campaigning is allowed during Shabbat in general, however, the following are examples of activity that are prohibited during Shabbat:

- Distributing flyers or materials
- Instructing or encouraging members to cast their vote during Shabbat
- Campaigning at religious services
- Any activity that would not be possible by a candidate who is Shomer Shabbat (Shabbat Observant)

10.5.2 Permitted

Candidates may attend Shabbat meals, or social events without breaching the prohibitions in 10.5.1.

Candidates may be invited to speak at a JSoc or other provider event, but if asked not to do so they must respect the wishes of the JSoc/organiser.

10.6 Passive Presence

Campaign materials that have a passive presence (e.g., a poster on a wall, a profile picture) are permitted.

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11. Social Media and Digital Campaigning

11.1 General Rules

11.1.1 Platform Compliance

All social media campaigning must comply with the terms of service of the relevant platform.

11.1.2 Accessibility

Candidates should endeavour to make digital content accessible, including:

- Alt text for images
- Captions or transcripts for videos
- Clear, readable fonts and colour contrast

11.2 JSoc Group Chats

11.2.1 Addition to Group Chats

Candidates and their campaigns team cannot campaign on JSoc group chats, UJS group chats, or group chats affiliated with JSoc/UJS (e.g. sports teams, Fellowship groups etc).

11.2.2 Permitted Messages

JSoc Committee members may not be perceived to be endorsing a candidate as part of their role. As such, JSoc committee members, even when on a campaigns team, are only permitted to send following types of messages on JSoc group chats:

- "Remember to vote in the UJS elections"
- "Registration for UJS elections closes on [date]"
- Sharing official UJS election information

11.2.3 Other Group Chats

Campaigning is permitted in:

- Personal friend group chats
- Group chats not affiliated with JSocs or Jewish organisations
- Direct messages to individuals (subject to other rules)

11.3 Direct Messaging

11.3.1 Permitted

Candidates may send direct messages to individual Students Members to discuss their campaign.

11.3.2 Best Practices

Candidates must:

- Not spam or excessively message individuals
- Respect requests to stop messaging
- Not use automated messaging services

11.4 Dating Apps

Dating apps (including but not limited to Tinder, Hinge, Bumble, JSwipe) may not be used for campaigning purposes.

11.5 Collaboration and Sharing

11.5.1 Collaboration Posts

Instagram collaboration posts are permitted, provided they are made by an individual person who is allowed to endorse the candidate under clause 9.

11.5.2 Shares and Retweets

Individuals may share, retweet, or otherwise amplify a candidate's content in their individual capacity, subject to endorsement rules.

11.6 Paid Advertising

11.6.1 Permitted Platforms

Candidates may use paid advertising on social media platforms, subject to:

- Spending limits in clause 8
- Compliance with platform terms of service
- Shabbat restrictions in clause 10

11.6.2 Targeting

Paid advertisements may be targeted at relevant demographics (Jewish students) but must not be used to suppress turnout or target opponents' supporters with negative content.

11.7 Websites and Digital Platforms

11.7.1 Personal Websites

Candidates may create personal campaign websites, with costs counting toward the campaign allowance.

11.7.2 Email Lists

Candidates may email Student Members who have consented to receive campaign emails, but must:

- Include an unsubscribe option
- Respect opt-out requests immediately

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12. Conduct and Prohibited Behaviour

12.1 General Standards

12.1.1 Fair Conduct

Candidates must act in a fair, honest, and democratic manner at all times.

12.1.2 UJS Values

Candidates must not undertake any activity during the campaign that contravenes the Core Values of UJS:

- Cross-communalism
- Peer leadership
- Representation
- Engagement with Israel

12.1.3 Candidate Responsibility

Candidates are fully responsible for the actions of their campaign team members.

12.2 Personal Attacks

12.2.1 Prohibition

Personal attacks are strictly prohibited, regardless of the target.

12.2.2 Definition

Personal attacks include:

- Comments about a person's appearance, identity, or personal characteristics
- Attacks on someone's character rather than their policies
- Derogatory or insulting language directed at an individual
- Questioning someone's Jewish identity or religious observance

- Mocking or ridiculing any person

12.2.3 Scope

The prohibition on personal attacks applies to:

- Other candidates
- Campaign team members
- Members of UJS
- Staff and Sabbatical Officers
- Any other person

12.3 Negative Campaigning

12.3.1 Prohibition

Candidates are not permitted to engage in negative campaigning.

12.3.2 Definition

Negative campaigning includes, but is not limited to:

- Defacing, mutilating, destroying, or removing any election material without the authority of the publisher
- Unfairly interfering with a candidate's publicity or campaign activities
- Physically or verbally harassing or bullying any person
- Engaging in sexist, racist, homophobic, ableist, or other discriminatory intimidation or abuse
- Assaulting or attempting to assault any person
- Emotional manipulation
- Suggesting that a Student Member or group of Student Members should not vote or should not be permitted to vote
- Spreading false or misleading information about opponents
- Focussing campaigning negatively only on another candidate(s)'s campaign.

12.3.3 Permitted Criticism

The following are NOT considered negative campaigning:

- Fairly comparing the policies of all candidates
- Respectfully disagreeing with another candidate's positions
- Politely suggesting a ranking of candidates to voters
- Campaigning for Re-open Nominations (RON) without directly targeting other individual candidates

12.4 Dishonesty and Deception

12.4.1 Prohibition

Any dishonest conduct in an election is prohibited.

12.4.2 Specific Prohibitions

The following are specifically prohibited:

- Providing false information in any form lodged with the Returning Officer
- Distributing or making misleading, false, or defamatory statements about any person
- Misrepresenting one's own record, experience, or qualifications
- Falsely claiming endorsements
- Impersonating another candidate, their campaign team, or UJS officials

12.5 Inducements

12.5.1 Prohibition

Any inducement, whether financial or otherwise, offered to encourage a student to vote or to vote in a particular way, is prohibited.

12.5.2 Examples

Prohibited inducements include:

- Offering gifts, prizes, or money

- Providing free food or drinks conditional on voting
- Prize draws for voters
- Offering to do favours in exchange for votes

12.5.3 Permitted Activities

The following are permitted:

- Offering food or drink at a campaign event open to all students
- General hospitality that is not conditional on voting or voting in a particular way

12.6 Voting Integrity

12.6.1 Prohibitions

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Voting on behalf of another person using their voting credentials
- Attempting to vote more than once
- Accessing or attempting to access another person's voting account
- Coercing or pressuring someone to vote in a particular way
- Looking over someone's shoulder while they vote

12.7 Non-Member Involvement

12.7.1 Prohibition

Any campaigning, directly or indirectly, or aiding in campaigning, by any persons who are not current Student Members is prohibited.

12.7.2 Exceptions

The following are permitted:

- Professional services paid for from the campaign allowance (e.g., printing, graphic design) provided the provider does not actively campaign
- Administrative support from UJS staff as part of their official duties
- Candidates may be assigned mentors who are Non-Members

12.7.3 Alumni and Graduates

Former students who are no longer Student Members may not campaign for candidates, even if they remain involved with JSocs or UJS in other capacities.

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13. Debates and Hustings

13.1 Presidential Hustings

13.1.1 Requirement

UJS, under the supervision of the RO or the DRO shall organise at least one hustings event for presidential candidates.

13.1.2 Format

The hustings should include:

- Opening statements by each candidate
- Question and answer session
- Closing statements
- Equal opportunity for each candidate to speak
- The order of speaking shall be determined by the President in advance of the start of the hustings. In the event of an incumbent President running for re-election, the order of speaking shall be determined by the RO.

13.2 National Council and Board of Deputies

13.2.1 Requirement

UJS shall facilitate the electorate knowing who is standing, and what they stand for.

13.2.2 Flexibility

Given the timing of these elections (typically launched at Conference), formats that may be used include (but are not limited to):

- Speeches at Conference

- Written Q&A distributed to members
- Video presentations
- Video speeches
- Written manifestos

13.3 Equal Treatment

13.3.1 Opportunity

All candidates must be given equal opportunity to participate.

13.3.2 Accessibility

Events should be scheduled at times when all candidates can reasonably attend, and should be accessible to all Members.

13.3.3 Format Fairness

The Returning Officer shall ensure that:

- Speaking time is equal for all candidates
- Questions are allocated fairly
- The moderator acts impartially
- All candidates are treated with equal respect

13.4 Additional Events

13.4.1 Candidate-Organised events

Candidates may organise Q&A events, provided:

- The event is open to all Members
- The event doesn't breach any campaigning rules

13.4.2 JSoc Invitations

JSocs may invite candidates to speak at events, provided:

- If a JSoc invites one candidate, they must invite all candidates (although this is not required to be at the same time/event)
- If a candidate requests to speak at a JSoc, the JSoc must make every effort to facilitate this
- If a JSoc intends to reject a request for a candidate they must give a clear and reasonable justification for doing so
- Equal opportunity is given to all who accept
- The JSoc does not endorse any candidate

13.4.3 external organisation events and invitations

External organisations (Such as Youth Movements) may organise Hustings and Q&A events, provided:

- All candidates are invited
- The event is open to all Members
- The event is moderated fairly
- No candidate receives an unfair advantage, particularly in cases where one candidate is affiliated with the organiser.

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14. Voting and Polling

14.1 Voting System

14.1.1 Single-Seat Positions

Voting for single-seat positions (President) shall be by secret ballot using the Alternative Vote (AV) system, as described by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain & Northern Ireland.

14.1.2 Multi-Seat Positions

Voting for multi-seat positions (National Council, Board of Deputies) shall be by secret ballot using the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system, as described by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain & Northern Ireland.

14.1.3 Re-open Nominations (RON)

Re-open Nominations (RON) shall appear as a candidate option on all ballot papers.

14.2 Voter Eligibility

14.2.1 One Vote Per Member

No Member shall have more than one vote in any election.

14.2.2 Verification

The Returning Officer shall be responsible for ensuring that:

- Only current Members can vote
- Members are only able to vote once
- The electoral register is accurate and up-to-date
- Voters are required to respond to an "eligibility" question before being able to vote

14.2.3 Voter-fraud

The RO and DRO must do all they can to ensure that 14.2.1 and 14.2.2 are fulfilled. That being said the following are the responsibility of the voter:

- Respond honestly to the eligibility question
- Only vote once in each election
- Only use their own voter key, and not pass it on to anyone else
- Report any suspected voter fraud to the RO, a campaign manager, or the President

If any voter-fraud is suspected the RO may void any or all of the votes registered to the perpetrators email address, invalidate any future votes, or ban the voter from voting in any future elections. In extreme circumstances the RO has the right to make a case to the President for removal of membership of UJS.

14.2.4 Electoral Register

The electoral register shall be based on:

- Current JSoc membership lists
- Individual student registrations with UJS
- Current Sabbatical Officers and President

14.3 Polling Period

14.3.1 Duration

The Returning Officer shall determine the length of the polling period, ensuring:

- Maximum opportunity for Members to vote
- Sufficient time for all eligible voters to participate
- Typically not less than 48 hours for presidential elections and re-elections

14.3.2 Timing

Polling should be scheduled to:

- Avoid Shabbat and Jewish festivals where possible
- Enable maximum participation from students across different institutions
- Account for different time zones if relevant

14.4 Voting Method

14.4.1 Online Voting

Voting shall be conducted online using a secure voting platform.

14.4.2 Secret Ballot

All votes must be cast by secret ballot, ensuring:

- Voter anonymity
- No ability to trace votes back to individual voters
- Security against tampering or fraud

14.4.3 Accessibility

The voting platform should be accessible to students with disabilities and diverse needs.

14.5 Voter Registration

14.5.1 Advance Registration

The Returning Officer may require Members to register in advance of polling opening.

14.5.2 Verification

Voters may be required to verify their identity and student status before accessing the ballot.

14.6 Turnout Maximisation

14.6.1 RO Responsibility

The Returning Officer shall make arrangements to ensure maximum turnout, which may include:

- Email reminders to registered voters
- Social media promotion of voting periods
- Working with JSocs to encourage participation

14.6.2 Candidate Activity

Candidates may encourage turnout through:

- Reminding supporters to vote
- Posting general "get out the vote" messages
- Sharing voting instructions and deadlines

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15. Counting and Results

15.1 Count Timing

15.1.1 Determination

The timing of the count shall be decided by the Returning Officer prior to the start of polling and published in the election timetable.

15.1.2 Conduct

The count shall be conducted as soon as reasonably practicable after the close of polling.

15.2 Count Process

15.2.1 Supervision

The Returning Officer shall supervise the count and ensure its integrity.

15.2.2 Observers

In the event of a manual recount, each candidate may nominate one individual to observe the count on their behalf (for presidential elections).

15.2.3 Invalid Ballots

Spoilt or invalid ballots shall be excluded from the count and recorded separately.

15.3 Ties

15.3.1 Recount

In the event of a tie at the end of counting, the Returning Officer may order a recount.

15.3.2 First Preference Votes

If the tie persists after recount, the tied candidate with the most first-preference votes shall progress or be declared elected.

15.3.3 Lower Preference Votes

If the tie persists after recount and after considering first-preference votes, the tied candidate with the most second-preference votes shall progress or be declared elected. If the tie persists after considering second-preference votes, this process is continued sequentially with lower preference votes. As soon as a level of preference votes is reached at which one candidate has the most votes, that candidate shall progress or be declared elected.

15.3.4 Drawing Lots

If a tie cannot be resolved after considering preference votes, the Returning Officer may determine the result by drawing lots in the presence of candidate observers and the Appeals Panel.

15.4 Results Announcement

15.4.1 Delay for Complaints

Results shall not be announced until all complaints and appeals received before the close of polling have been processed and resolved.

15.4.2 Certification

The Returning Officer shall certify the results before announcement.

15.4.3 Public Announcement

The Returning Officer shall announce results publicly, including:

- Names of elected candidates
- Number of votes cast (in the case of the Presidential election only)

- Whether gender quotas were satisfied
- Vote totals for each candidate as a percentage (in the case of the Presidential election, and at each stage of counting)

15.4.4 RON Victory

If Re-open Nominations receives the most votes and would be elected, this shall be announced as such and the procedures in clause 20 shall apply.

15.5 Post-Results Process

15.5.1 Certificate of Election

Elected candidates shall receive a certificate of election from the Returning Officer.

15.5.2 Notification

All candidates shall be notified of the full results, including detailed vote breakdowns.

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16. Gender Quotas

16.1 National Council Quota

16.1.1 Reserved Seat

At least two of the five National Council positions must be filled by a candidate who self-defines as female or non-binary.

16.1.2 Counting Method

The STV count shall proceed normally. After all five positions are filled:

- If at least two elected candidates identifies as female or non-binary, the results stand
- If no elected candidate identifies as female or non-binary, the candidate in fifth place shall be replaced by the highest-ranked female or non-binary candidate from the remaining candidates

16.1.3 RON and Quotas

If Re-open Nominations would prevent the quota from being met, the procedures in clause 20 shall apply.

16.2 Board of Deputies Quota

16.2.1 Overall Requirement

At least 40% of the full twelve-member Board of Deputies delegation must identify as female or non-binary (minimum of 5 out of 12).

16.2.2 Calculation

The quota applies to the total delegation of twelve, not to the positions open in any given year.

16.2.3 Monitoring

Before each election, the Returning Officer shall determine:

- How many current BoD representatives identify as female or non-binary
- How many positions are vacated
- Whether the quota is at risk

16.2.4 Quota Enforcement

If electing the candidates according to the STV count would result in the overall delegation falling below 40% female or non-binary representation:

- The lowest-ranked elected candidate who does not identify as female or non-binary shall be replaced by the highest-ranked female or non-binary candidate from the remaining candidates
- This process continues until the 40% quota is achieved

16.3 Self-Identification

16.3.1 Declaration

Candidates shall be asked to self-identify their gender on nomination forms for the purposes of quota monitoring only.

16.3.2 Confidentiality

Gender identification information shall be kept confidential and used only for quota compliance purposes.

16.3.3 Non-Binary Inclusion

Non-binary candidates count toward the female/non-binary quota.

16.4 Insufficient Candidates

16.4.1 If Quota Cannot Be Met

If there are insufficient female or non-binary candidates to meet the quota requirements, Re-open Nominations shall be triggered for the affected positions and clause 20 shall apply.

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17. Complaints and Investigations

17.1 Complaints Procedure

17.1.1 Submission

Complaints regarding candidates' conduct or alleged breaches of election rules must be submitted to the Returning Officer:

- By email
- Promptly upon discovery of the alleged breach
- In any event, no later than the close of polling

17.1.2 Late Complaints

Complaints received after the close of polling may be considered only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Returning Officer, such as:

- The complainant could not reasonably have known about the breach earlier
- The breach occurred in the final hours before polling closed
- New evidence has come to light
- Other extenuating circumstances as determined by the Returning Officer

17.1.3 Complaint Content

Complaints should include:

- Name and contact details of complainant
- Details of the alleged breach
- When and where it occurred
- Any evidence (screenshots, photos, witness statements, etc.)
- Which rule(s) were allegedly breached

17.2 Investigation

17.2.1 RO Discretion

The Returning Officer has the power to investigate any alleged breaches of election regulations, whether complained about or identified independently.

17.2.2 Process

Investigations may include:

- Reviewing evidence submitted
- Interviewing witnesses
- Requesting statements from candidates
- Examining campaign materials, social media, or other content
- Consulting with the Appeals Panel on complex matters

17.2.3 Right to Respond

Before any sanction is imposed, the candidate must be:

- Informed of the complaint or concern
- Given the opportunity to respond in writing
- Allowed to provide evidence in their defense
- Given reasonable time to respond (normally 24 hours)

Where the Returning Officer considers content or conduct apparently breaches these rules and delay would cause harm or unfairness, the Returning Officer may direct interim measures (such as removal or suspension of specific content) pending investigation. An interim measure is not a finding of breach or a sanction, and shall not be treated as prior conduct under 18.3. The candidate shall be told the reason and may respond within 24 hours, after which the Returning Officer shall confirm, vary or lift the measure.

17.3 Confidentiality

17.3.1 Privacy

Complaints, investigations, and rulings shall not be made public during the election period.

17.3.2 Anonymised Reporting

Complaints shall be summarised in anonymised form in the post-election report (see clause 24) without identifying complainants or specific details.

17.3.3 Exceptions

Sanctions that affect the election (such as disqualification) must be announced, but the details of the underlying complaint may remain confidential.

17.4 Timeliness

17.4.1 Prompt Resolution

The Returning Officer shall endeavour to investigate and resolve complaints as quickly as possible, ideally within 48 hours of receipt.

17.4.2 Delays

If an investigation cannot reasonably be completed before polling closes, results may be delayed until the matter is resolved.

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18. Sanctions

18.1 Sanctioning Authority

The Returning Officer has the power to impose any sanction they believe to be reasonable and proportionate to the breach, up to and including the permanent withdrawal of a candidate.

18.2 Range of Sanctions

Sanctions may include, in approximate order of severity:

18.2.1 Reminder of Rules

A formal reminder of the relevant rule(s), with no further penalty. Appropriate for minor first-time infractions or genuine misunderstandings.

18.2.2 Written Warning

A formal warning placed on record. Appropriate for minor breaches or first-time violations of moderate rules.

18.2.3 Second Written Warning

A more serious warning indicating that further breaches will result in significant sanctions.

18.2.4 Final Warning

A final opportunity before more serious sanctions are imposed.

18.2.5 Temporary Campaign Ban

Prohibition from campaigning for a specified period:

- 12-hour ban from online campaigning
- 24-hour ban from online campaigning
- 48-hour ban from online campaigning
- 24-hour ban from all campaigning
- 48-hour ban from all campaigning
- 72-hour ban from all campaigning

18.2.6 Removal of Campaign Materials or Campaign team members

Requirement to remove specific campaign materials that breach the rules, or in serious cases the removal of an individual from the candidates campaign team.

18.2.7 Reduction of Campaign Allowance

Reduction of the campaign allowance by a specified amount, appropriate for financial rule breaches.

18.2.8 Public Correction

Requirement to issue a public correction or apology (where appropriate and with candidate consent).

18.2.9 Disqualification

Permanent withdrawal of candidacy. Reserved for:

- Very serious breaches
- Repeated breaches after final warning
- Breaches that fundamentally undermine election integrity
- Personal attacks or discriminatory behavior

18.3 Factors in Determining Sanctions

The Returning Officer shall consider:

- Severity of the breach
- Impact on other candidates or the election
- Whether the breach was intentional or negligent
- Previous conduct of the candidate
- Mitigating circumstances
- Consistency with sanctions for similar breaches

18.4 Progressive Discipline

Sanctions should generally follow a progressive discipline approach, with more serious sanctions for repeated violations. However, some breaches may warrant immediate serious sanctions regardless of prior conduct.

18.5 Multiple Breaches

If multiple breaches are found, the Returning Officer may:

- Impose multiple sanctions
- Impose a single sanction appropriate to the totality of conduct
- Consider the pattern of behaviour as an aggravating factor

18.6 Notification

18.6.1 Written Decision

The Returning Officer shall provide written notification of any sanction to the candidate, including:

- The breach found
- The sanction imposed
- Reasons for the decision
- Right to appeal and deadline for appeal

18.6.2 Timing

Sanctions shall be communicated as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision is made.

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19. Appeals

19.1 Right to Appeal

Any candidate may appeal a decision of the Returning Officer to the Appeals Panel.

19.2 Grounds for Appeal

Appeals may be based on:

- Error of fact in the RO's findings
- Procedural irregularity
- Disproportionate sanction
- New evidence that was not available to the RO
- Bias or unfairness in the process

19.3 Appeal Process

19.3.1 Submission

Appeals must be submitted:

- In writing to the Appeals Panel via the RO
- Within 24 hours of receiving the RO's decision
- Including grounds for appeal (as per 19.2) and any supporting evidence

19.3.2 Late Appeals

Late appeals may be accepted only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Appeals Panel.

19.4 Appeals Panel Procedure

19.4.1 Meeting

The Appeals Panel shall meet within 24 hours of receiving an appeal, where reasonably practicable.

19.4.2 Hearing

The Appeals Panel shall:

- Review all evidence and submissions
- Hear from the appellant (the candidate) where necessary
- Hear from the Returning Officer
- Consider any other relevant information
- Deliberate in private

19.4.3 Conduct

The hearing should be conducted fairly, giving both parties (candidate and RO) equal opportunity to present their case.

19.5 Appeals Panel Decisions

19.5.1 Powers

The Appeals Panel has the power to:

- Uphold the RO's decision
- Alter the sanction (increase or decrease severity)
- Overturn the decision entirely
- Order a re-investigation
- Provide directions to the RO

19.5.2 Finality

The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and binding on all parties. There is no further right of appeal within the UJS election process.

19.5.3 Written Decision

The Appeals Panel shall provide a written decision including:

- Summary of the appeal
- Findings of fact
- Reasoning for the decision
- Final outcome

This will be communicated to the candidate via the RO

19.6 Effect on Election

19.6.1 Delay of Results

If an appeal is pending at the time results would otherwise be announced, the announcement shall be delayed until the appeal is resolved.

19.6.2 Post-Results Appeals

If new evidence emerges after results are announced, the process in clause 22 (Recounts) may apply.

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20. Re-open Nominations (RON)

20.1 RON on Ballot

Re-open Nominations (RON) shall appear as a candidate option on all ballot papers.

20.2 RON Victory

20.2.1 When RON Wins

If RON receives more votes than any candidate (or is elected in the STV count for multi-seat positions), nominations shall be re-opened.

20.2.2 Interpretation

A vote for RON indicates that the voter believes none of the current candidates are suitable and that new nominations should be sought.

20.3 Procedures Following RON Victory

20.3.1 Announcement

The Returning Officer shall announce that RON has been elected and that nominations will re-open.

20.3.2 Timeline

The Returning Officer shall organise a new election within 30 days, following the same timeline as outlined in clauses 5 and 6 of this Rulebook.

20.3.3 Shortened Timeline

The nomination and campaign periods may be shortened for the re-run election, but must be:

- At least 10 working days for presidential nominations
- At least 1 working day for National Council and Board of Deputies nominations
- Fair to all new candidates

20.4 Previous Candidates

20.4.1 Right to Re-stand

Candidates from the original election may stand again in the re-run election, subject to all normal rules.

20.4.2 No Presumption

Previous candidates have no special status or advantage in the re-run election.

20.5 RON and Quotas

20.5.1 National Council

If RON prevents the National Council gender quota from being met (e.g., RON is elected to the fifth seat and only one female/non-binary candidates were elected in the first four), then:

- The election shall be re-run for the affected seat(s)
- Only candidates who identify as female or non-binary may stand

20.5.2 Board of Deputies

If RON prevents the Board of Deputies quota from being met, then:

- The election shall be re-run for the affected seat(s)
- The re-run may be limited to female/non-binary candidates if necessary to meet the quota

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21. By-Elections and Vacancies

21.1 Circumstances for By-Elections

By-elections shall be held in the following circumstances:

- Re-open Nominations is elected
- An elected office-holder is removed from office
- An elected office-holder resigns from office
- An elected office-holder is permanently unable to continue in office and this has been certified by the Chief Executive and the President
- An elected position is not filled in the original election
- A President-elect declines to accept office
- A President-elect becomes permanently unable to take office and this has been confirmed by the Chief Executive and President
- A President-elect does something that is considered to be gross misconduct, causes legal, financial or reputational risk to the organisation, or otherwise brings the organisation into disrepute.
- A National Council or Deputy member ceases to be a student during their term

21.2 Board of Deputies

If a Board of Deputies representative has to stand down, the National Executive Committee can co-opt a new Board of Deputies representative in their place.

21.3 Timing

21.3.1 General Rule

The Returning Officer shall organise by-elections within two months of the vacancy arising, whilst ensuring the largest possible number of Members can vote.

21.3.2 Scheduling Considerations

The Returning Officer should consider:

- Academic calendar (avoiding exam periods and long vacations where possible)
- Jewish festivals
- Time needed for nominations and campaigning

- Urgency of filling the position

21.4 By-Election Process

21.4.1 Application of Rules

By-elections shall be conducted in accordance with the same rules as regular elections, unless modified by this clause.

21.4.2 Shortened Timelines

The Returning Officer may use shortened timelines for by-elections, provided they remain fair:

- Minimum 10 working days for presidential nominations
- Minimum 1 working day for other nominations
- Minimum 7 days for presidential campaigning
- Minimum notice of 14 days before nominations open

21.5 Partial Terms

21.5.1 Completion of Term

A person elected in a by-election serves the remainder of the term of the person they are replacing.

21.5.2 Effect on Term Limits

For presidential by-elections:

- Service of a partial term of six months or less does not count toward the two-term limit
- Service of a partial term of more than six months counts as one full term

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22. Recounts

22.1 Grounds for Recount

A recount may be requested on the following grounds:

- The margin of victory is very close
- Evidence of technical error in counting
- Significant number of challenged or unclear ballots
- Concern about the integrity of the count

22.2 Request Process

22.2.1 Who May Request

Any candidate may request a recount.

22.2.2 Deadline

Requests must be made within 7 days of the announcement of results, or within 7 days of the resolution of any appeal, whichever is later.

22.2.3 Submission

Requests must be submitted in writing to the Returning Officer, stating the grounds for the request.

22.3 RO Discretion

22.3.1 Decision

The Returning Officer shall decide whether to grant a recount based on:

- The grounds provided
- The closeness of the result
- The likelihood that a recount would change the outcome
- Technical feasibility

22.3.2 Automatic Recount

The Returning Officer may order an automatic recount if:

- The margin between first and second place is less than 1% of votes cast
- Technical issues during counting are identified
- Significant irregularities are suspected

22.4 Recount Process

22.4.1 Method

The Returning Officer shall conduct a manual recount of all ballots cast, or review the electronic records if manual recount is not possible.

22.4.2 Observers

Candidates may nominate observers for the recount process.

22.4.3 Finality

The result of a recount is final, subject only to appeal on the grounds of procedural irregularity.

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23. Accessibility and Inclusion

23.1 General Duty

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer must ensure that all aspects of the election are accessible to students with disabilities and diverse needs.

23.2 Reasonable Adjustments

23.2.1 Provision

Reasonable adjustments must be offered to candidates and voters who require them, including:

- Accessible voting platforms
- Alternative formats for election materials
- Timing accommodations for hustings or meetings
- Communication accommodations
- Preview of questions for hustings where possible

23.2.2 Requests

Students requiring adjustments should contact the Returning Officer as early as possible.

23.3 Non-Discrimination

23.3.1 Protected Characteristics

Campaign rules and their enforcement must not disadvantage any student on the basis of:

- Gender or gender identity (excluding quotas)
- Religious observance
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Race or ethnicity
- Any other protected characteristic

23.3.2 Religious Observance

Particular attention must be paid to ensuring that Shabbat and festival observant students are not disadvantaged, as reflected in clause 10.

23.4 Inclusive Language

All election materials, communications, and processes should use inclusive language and avoid assumptions about gender, ability, or other characteristics.

23.5 Multiple Campus Locations

Where feasible, hustings and events should be held in multiple locations or online to enable participation from students across different universities.

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24. Transparency and Reporting

24.1 Public Information

24.1.1 Election Information

The Returning Officer shall publicly announce and maintain up-to-date information about:

- Election timetable

- Valid nominations
- Hustings and debate schedules
- Voting instructions and deadlines
- How to make complaints
- The results in accordance with clause 15.4.3

24.2 Confidential Information

24.2.1 Protected Information

The following shall remain confidential:

- Individual voting choices
- Details of specific complaints and investigations (except where sanctions require public announcement)
- Private deliberations of the RO or Appeals Panel
- Personal information about candidates beyond what they choose to make public

24.3 Post-Election Report

24.3.1 Requirement

The Returning Officer shall provide a comprehensive Post-Election Report to the UJS President and National Executive Committee within 30 days of final results being certified.

24.3.2 Report Contents

The report must include:

- Summary of the election process and timeline
- Turnout statistics and analysis
- Complete results for all positions
- Confirmation of quota compliance
- Total number of complaints received and their general categories (without identifying details)
- Summary of sanctions imposed (anonymised)
- Any irregularities or concerns
- Recommendations for improving future elections
- Reflections on the effectiveness of these rules

24.3.3 Publication

An anonymised version of the post-election report may be published to Members, excluding any confidential information.

24.4 Record Keeping

24.4.1 RO Records

The Returning Officer shall maintain records of:

- All nominations received
- All complaints and investigations
- All decisions and sanctions
- All expense claims
- Vote counts and tallies
- All communications with candidates

24.4.2 Retention

Records should be retained for at least two years after the election.

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25. Interpretation and Exceptional Circumstances

25.1 Interpretation Authority

25.1.1 RO Interpretation

The Returning Officer has the authority to interpret these rules in circumstances not explicitly covered.

25.1.2 Guiding Principles

Interpretations should be guided by:

- The purposes stated in clause 1.3
- The principles of fairness and natural justice
- The spirit rather than just the letter of the rules
- Consistency with previous decisions
- The UJS Constitution and values

25.2 Exceptional Circumstances

25.2.1 Definition

Exceptional circumstances are unforeseen situations where strict adherence to these rules would:

- Lead to unfairness
- Be impossible or impracticable
- Undermine the integrity of the election
- Significantly disadvantage candidates or voters

25.2.2 Examples

Exceptional circumstances might include:

- Major public health emergencies
- Technical failures of voting platforms
- Extreme weather affecting campus access
- Significant changes to the academic calendar
- Unexpected candidate withdrawals or health issues

25.3 Variation of Procedures

25.3.1 RO Authority

In exceptional circumstances, the Returning Officer may vary procedures such as:

- Extending deadlines
- Adjusting timelines
- Changing voting methods
- Modifying debate formats
- Postponing elections
- Imposing sanctions not listed

25.3.2 Appeals Panel Approval

For significant variations that affect fundamental election procedures, the Returning Officer must obtain approval from the Appeals Panel before implementing changes.

25.3.3 Documentation

Any variations must be:

- Documented in writing with full reasoning
- Communicated to all candidates as soon as possible
- Applied consistently to all candidates
- Reported in the post-election report

25.4 Supplementary Guidance

25.4.1 RO Authority to Issue Guidance

The Returning Officer may issue supplementary guidance to clarify or elaborate on these rules during their term.

25.4.2 Scope of Guidance

Supplementary guidance:

- Must be consistent with the Constitution and its By-Laws, and this Rulebook
- Cannot contradict or override these rules except in exceptional circumstances as per 25.3.1
- Should address specific situations or questions that arise
- Must be published to all candidates simultaneously

25.5 Unforeseen Situations

25.5.1 Significant Bias Risk

If a situation arises which is not covered by these rules and which risks significantly biasing the election result, the Returning Officer or their deputy shall have the power to:

- Advise the candidates
- Impose interim sanctions or restrictions
- Seek guidance from the Appeals Panel

25.5.2 Consultation

In cases of significant uncertainty, the Returning Officer should consult with the Appeals Panel before making binding rulings.

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26. Amendment and Review

26.1 Authority to Amend

26.1.1 NEC Authority

This rulebook will be amended annually by the President, and passed for approval to NEC. NEC approval requires a simple majority.

26.2 Restrictions on Amendment

26.2.1 During Election Periods

No amendments to this Rulebook may be made during an election period, defined as the time from when nominations open until all results are certified and all appeals resolved.

26.2.2 Constitutional Consistency

All amendments must be consistent with the UJS Constitution its By-Laws. If there is any conflict, the Constitution and its By-Laws take precedence.

26.3 Review Cycle

26.3.1 Regular Review

This Rulebook shall be reviewed before nominations open annually.

26.3.2 Review Process

The review should involve:

- Amendments by the President following their experience of the previous election
- Consultation with recent Returning Officers
- Feedback from recent candidates
- Input from the National Council where appropriate
- Consideration of developments in election best practice
- Assessment of new technologies and social media platforms

26.3.3 Post-Election Review

The Returning Officer's post-election report should include recommendations for amendments, which the President should consider.

26.4 Interim Amendments

26.4.1 RO Recommendations

The Returning Officer may recommend amendments to the President at any time based on issues identified during their tenure.

26.4.2 Member Proposals

Any Member may propose amendments by writing to the President in good time ahead of the annual review of this document.

Appendix A: Quick Reference Guide for Candidates

Key Deadlines

- Monitor the election timetable published by the RO
- Submit nominations with required signatures
- Attend mandatory candidates' meeting (presidential candidates)
- Submit expense claims within 7 days
- Submit complaints by close of polling
- Request recount within 7 days of results

Campaign Finance

- £100 campaign allowance
- Travel reimbursement for up to 6 campus visits plus hustings
- Keep all receipts
- No spending beyond allowance

Prohibited Activities

- No campaigning before campaign period starts
- No personal attacks on anyone
- No negative campaigning
- No organisational endorsements
- No campaigning on dating apps
- No campaigning in JSoc group chats (beyond general "vote" messages)
- No campaigning during Shabbat/festivals that would break an Orthodox understanding of Shabbat Observance
- No inducements to vote

Social Media Rules

- Pause all social media during Shabbat/festivals
- No adding to JSoc group chats during campaign
- Limited campaigning in certain group chats
- Collaboration posts allowed with individuals

Shabbat Rules

- Campaign in only one locality per Shabbat
- Pause all social media activity
- No campaigning during Shabbat/festivals that would break an Orthodox understanding of Shabbat Observance

Getting Help

- Contact the Returning Officer with questions
- You are responsible for your campaign team's actions
- If in doubt, ask before acting

Appendix B: Guidance for Returning Officers

This appendix provides practical guidance for Returning Officers implementing this Rulebook.

Before the Election

1. **Familiarise yourself** with the Constitution, UJS Policy and this Rulebook
2. **Publish the timetable** at least 30 days before nominations open
3. **Prepare nomination forms** and make them accessible
4. **Set up the voting platform** and test it thoroughly

5. **Coordinate with UJS staff** on communication and logistics
6. **Appoint your deputy**

During Nominations

1. **Be available** to answer candidate questions
2. **Verify eligibility** of candidates promptly
3. **Check nominator signatures** carefully
4. **Publish valid nominations** within 2 working days of Nominations closing
5. **Schedule the candidates' meeting** immediately after nominations close

During Campaigning

1. **Monitor social media** for potential rule breaches
2. **Respond to queries** within 48 hours where possible
3. **Be impartial** and treat all candidates equally
4. **Document everything** - keep records of all communications
5. **Investigate complaints** promptly and fairly
6. **Give candidates right to respond** before imposing sanctions

Handling Complaints

1. **Receive complaints** up until close of polling
2. **Acknowledge receipt** within 24 hours
3. **Gather evidence** from all parties
4. **Give the accused candidate** opportunity to respond
5. **Make decisions** based on balance of probabilities
6. **Impose proportionate sanctions**
7. **Document your reasoning**
8. **Inform candidates** of appeal rights

During Voting

1. **Monitor turnout** and send reminders to registered voters
2. **Ensure voting platform** remains accessible and functional
3. **Be available** to troubleshoot technical issues
4. **Stop all complaints** being accepted at close of polling
5. **Do not announce results** until complaints are resolved

Counting and Results

1. **Ensure the Online Count** is valid and fair
2. **Document invalid ballots** and reasons
3. **Check quota compliance** for National Council and Board of Deputies
4. **Resolve any complaints** before announcing results
5. **Prepare clear results announcement** with all required information
6. **Certify the results** formally

After the Election

1. **Respond to recount requests** within the 7-day window
2. **Complete the post-election report** within one week
3. **Archive all records** securely
4. **Provide recommendations** for improving future elections
5. **Debrief with the Appeals Panel** and UJS staff

Best Practice

- **Communicate clearly and promptly** with all candidates
- **Be consistent** in applying rules to all candidates
- **Document your decisions** and reasoning thoroughly

- **Seek guidance** from Appeals Panel when uncertain, and previous ROs if helpful
- **Be fair and impartial** at all times
- **Remember that students** may be stressed and have other commitments
- **Focus on the spirit** of the rules, not just technicalities
- **Prioritise election integrity** and fairness above all else

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Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions

About Nominations

Q: Can I nominate myself? A: No. You need other Members to nominate you (10 from 5 JSocs for President; 1 from a JSoc for other positions).

Q: Can the same person nominate multiple candidates? A: Not for the same position, but they can nominate one candidate for President and up to 5 for National Council (one per "position").

Q: What if I can't get enough signatures? A: You cannot stand. Start gathering signatures early and reach out to JSocs across the country. If you are struggling your sabbatical officer may be able to assist in connecting you to JSocs.

Q: Can current Sabbatical Officers nominate candidates? A: They are able to nominate candidates for National Council and Board of Deputies, however not for President as they are not associated with a specific JSoc or Campus and therefore do not help meet the criteria of 10 nominations from **5 JSocs**.

About Campaigning

Q: When exactly can I start campaigning? A: Only when the campaign period officially begins, as announced by the Returning Officer in the election timetable.

Q: Can I discuss that I'm thinking of running before the campaign period? A: You can discuss it privately and build a small campaign team, but no public announcements or vote solicitation.

Q: What counts as "campaigning"? A: Any activity intended to promote your candidacy or solicit votes, including social media posts, distributing materials, speaking to voters about your campaign, wearing campaign clothing, etc.

About Finance

Q: What if I don't spend my full £100? A: That's fine. There's no requirement to spend the full amount. Only spend what you need for your campaign.

Q: Can my parents pay for my campaign materials and I don't claim it? A: No. All campaign spending must come from the campaign allowance, regardless of who physically pays. Any spending beyond £100 is prohibited.

Q: What about things I already own, like my laptop? A: Items you already own and would use anyway (laptop, phone, your own time) don't count toward the allowance. But new items purchased for the campaign do count.

About Social Media

Q: Can I change my profile picture to a campaign photo? A: Yes, during the campaign period. This is a normal form of campaigning.

Q: What if someone shares my content without me asking? A: Organic sharing by individuals is fine and you're not responsible for it. But you can't ask organisations to share your content. If that person/organisation goes on to breech any of the election rules, you must show that you have made every possible effort to get that removed.

Q: Can I reply to comments on my posts? A: Yes, engaging with people who comment on your content is normal and expected. Just ensure your replies comply with the rules (no personal attacks, etc.).

About Shabbat

Q: I'm not Shabbat observant. Do these rules still apply to me? A: Yes. The rules exist to ensure observant candidates aren't disadvantaged, so all candidates must pause digital campaigning during Shabbat.

Q: What if there's an emergency during Shabbat? A: Contact the Returning Officer as soon as possible after Shabbat. Genuine emergencies will be handled appropriately.

Q: Can my campaign materials stay visible during Shabbat? A: Yes, passive presence (like a poster on a wall, an Instagram story, or your profile picture) is fine. You just can't actively campaign in digital spaces.

About Complaints

Q: What if I see another candidate breaking the rules? A: Submit a complaint to the Returning Officer in writing, with evidence. Do this promptly, before polling closes.

Q: Will people know I made a complaint? A: Complaints are kept confidential. Your identity as complainant won't be disclosed publicly.

Q: What if I accidentally break a rule? A: Contact the Returning Officer immediately, explain the situation, and take corrective action. Genuine mistakes with quick correction are treated more leniently than intentional violations.

About Voting

Q: Can I see who people voted for? A: No. All voting is by secret ballot and individual choices are never disclosed.

Q: What is RON and should I encourage people to vote for it? A: RON (Re-open Nominations) means "no suitable candidate." You can campaign for RON, but you can't make personal attacks on candidates while doing so.

Q: When will I know the results? A: As announced in the election timetable, but results may be delayed if there are unresolved complaints or appeals.

About National Council and Board of Deputies

Q: How do gender quotas work? A: At least two National Council seats must be filled by someone who identifies as female or non-binary. For Board of Deputies, at least 40% of the full 12-person delegation must be female or non-binary.

Q: What if I'm in my final year? A: You cannot stand for Board of Deputies or National Council (as your term would end when you graduate and therefore you would not be able to fulfil the position).

Q: Can Sabbatical Officers run for National Council? A: No. Current Sabbatical Officers are not eligible to stand for National Council.

General Questions

Q: What if a situation isn't covered in the rules? A: Contact the Returning Officer. They have the authority to interpret rules in unforeseen circumstances.

Q: Can I appeal a decision? A: Yes. Any candidate can appeal a Returning Officer decision to the Appeals Panel within 24 hours.

Q: What happens if I'm disqualified? A: Your candidacy is permanently withdrawn and you cannot continue in the election. You may appeal the decision.

Document History

Version 1.0 – 24th October 2025

- Initial comprehensive rulebook written by Louis Danker, UJS President 2025-26, subject to approval by NEC pursuant to By-Law 1.
- Replaces previous piecemeal guidance and any previous guidance produced through constitution, By-Laws or general documentation.
- Based on review of UJS Constitution, By-law 1, advice and feedback from 2024-25 campaign managers and candidates, and best practices from comparable organisations

Version 2.0 – 23rd October 2026

- Rulebook reviewed and updated by Raphi Leon, UJS President 2026-27, with minor changes made for clarity based on guidance from the Returning Officer, subject to approval by NEC pursuant to By-Law 1.

Future Amendments: All amendments will be recorded here with dates and brief descriptions of changes.

Acknowledgments

This Rulebook was developed with input from:

- Campaign managers from the 2024/25 UJS Presidential Election
- Former CEO and 2025-26 Returning officer
- The UJS National Executive Committee
- Previous Returning Officers
- Best practices from NUS, student unions, Board of Deputies, and UK electoral bodies

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End of UJS Election Rulebook

For questions about this Rulebook, contact the UJS Returning Officer at democracy@ujs.org.uk or the UJS President at info@ujs.org.uk stating clearly that the email is for the attention of the President

For questions about eligibility or membership, contact UJS at info@ujs.org.uk