

UCU STRIKES REFERENDUM 2023



RULES

*Last updated
Thursday 9th February 2023*

**greenwich
students'
union**

GREENWICH STUDENTS' UNION REFERENDUM GUIDANCE

Any Greenwich Students' Union (GSU) referendum aims to be free, fair and accessible to everyone. It is the responsibility of GSU to ensure the smooth running of the referendum.

This document outlines some of the rules, guidelines, and processes to make that happen.

The complete list of referenda rules and regulations are held and owned by the GSU and may be reviewed in reflection of changing circumstances throughout any referenda if deemed necessary.

The rules and regulations will be explained to each Campaign Lead and can be discussed further with the GSU team upon request.

The Returning Officer (RO) is the National Union of Students (NUS). The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) is Sophie Harrison.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

GSU staff are responsible for the conduct and administration of all elections and referenda in line with the rules and regulations.

The rules and regulations will be interpreted and enforced by the Returning Officer (National Union of Students) with the support of GSU staff.

The Returning Officer has the power to govern and interpret all matters relating to the referendum in line with the referenda rules and regulations.

GSU will appoint a Deputy Returning Officer (a senior member of GSU Staff) to whom the Returning Officer is able to delegate the implementation of rules and regulations. Rulings of the Returning Officer are final, and will be clearly communicated to any individuals involved.

- Campaign Leads are responsible for any and all actions related to their campaign activity.
- Where rules or regulations refer to 'campaigners' this encompasses any GSU member participating in referendum activity on behalf of any nominated Campaign Leads.
- Quorum for this referendum is 500 valid votes and the winning result requires a simple majority to pass. If the vote does not meet quoracy, the previous vote taken at Student Assembly on the matter will continue to stand.
- All in person campaigning must take place on University of Greenwich campus sites.
- No stickers can be used anywhere on campus.
- Candidates must adhere to any COVID-19 guidance and regulations throughout the referendum.

ELIGIBILITY

- All Campaigners must be a Full Member of the Greenwich Students' Union.
- To be eligible to vote, you must be a Full Member of Greenwich Students' Union.
- External campaigners are not permitted. External campaigners are defined as anyone that is not a member of GSU.
- UGIC Students as partial members are unable to vote in the referendum.

CAMPAIGN ENDORSEMENT

- GSU and University of Greenwich staff cannot support a particular stance during the referendum and must remain neutral throughout.
- GSU Trustees, including Student Trustees and Officers, may participate and engage with the referendum and campaign for either side in their role but only as student members. They cannot participate in their role as Student Trustees.
- GSU student staff may campaign and take part in the referendum, but must remain impartial whilst working in their student staffing role.
- Postgraduate Research students may campaign on behalf of either side of the referendum, however not whilst they are teaching or on behalf of other students.
- GSU student groups are entitled to endorse one referendum stance. If your student group would like to endorse, please contact elections@greenwich.ac.uk.

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EXPENSES & FINANCES

Each Campaign Team has a £50 campaign budget.

All campaign expenses incurred by a candidate must be sent to elections@greenwich.ac.uk by Sunday 19th February at 19:00

If candidates have not spent any money during the voting period, they must still email by the deadline explicitly expressing this.

Where costs of materials are not listed on the expense form, a market value will be given by the Returning Officer in line with the fixed costs outlined at the candidate briefing.

If a campaign expense form is not submitted by the deadline by either campaign lead, the matter will be referred directly to the Deputy Returning Officer for review. The likely outcome includes a conversation regarding spending and the campaign team lead may be refused reimbursement due to failure of submission.

BANNED ACTIONS

Banned actions within the referendum will not be tolerated and may need to sanction at the discretion of the Returning Officer.

Banned actions are defined as:

- Using force towards any other member in relation to the referendum, voting or campaigning.
- Falsification of any document or information that is required for referendum procedures.
- Trading in exchange for votes, whether this be through money, food, or drink etc.

This list is not exhaustive, and any other misconduct or behaviour that goes against rules or regulations of the referendum will be reported to the Returning Officer.

ENSURING A FAIR, INFORMED & EQUITABLE REFERENDUM

- Campaign Leads are encouraged to ensure that all activities are accessible to all.
- Campaign Leads may not use mailing lists obtained by other roles within the University of Greenwich or GSU to influence campaigning.
- Campaigners are expected to campaign in a manner that retains respect for both campaign leads and the process, alongside a student's right to freedom of speech and their own individual vote.
- Personal attacks against campaigners are not permitted.
- Debate is encouraged and welcomed, however only in relation to the referendum stance.
- Campaigning may take place from 14:00 on Monday 13th February until voting closes.
- Campaigners are not able to request for members to fill out a ballot in front of them, or provide any electronic devices for voting.
- Campaign Leads may collect and create their own mailing lists for the purposes of campaigning. Such lists must be GDPR compliant, and students must be fully aware of the purpose of the list before signing up. No pre-existing mailing lists may be used.
- Candidates must only campaign during the campaigning window outlined above
- Candidates must not exceed the maximum campaign budget of £50 per campaign team.
- Campaigning materials are not permitted to be put up in any buildings.
- Campaigners must not campaign around the voting stalls around campus.
- Campaign Leads are required to attend a briefing and sign a code of conduct prior to the commencement of the referenda and the voting period.

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CONDUCT & COMPLAINTS

Any conduct that is deemed to be significant cause for concern will be referred to the University of Greenwich for investigation.

All formal complaints about candidates must be reported directly to elections@greenwich.ac.uk, which are then submitted to the Deputy Returning Officer.

Any complaints about candidate conduct should be submitted via email within 24 hours of the alleged incident.

The complaint deadline is three hours after the referendum vote closes.

No candidate may challenge the result of the referendum once the count has started.

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer will decide on the penalty (if any) in response to any candidate complaint.

The Returning Officer is responsible for the final interpretation of the referenda rules and regulations and the final decision.

The Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to consider complaints that are made maliciously, or to purposefully disrupt a candidates' campaign.

The Deputy Returning Officer may take disciplinary action accordingly.

To appeal any complaint, candidates must do so in writing to the Returning Officer via elections@greenwich.ac.uk.

Appeals must be submitted within 24 hours of notification of the complaint, or by the appeals deadline.

The appeals deadline is four days after the referendum vote closes.

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