

Student Voice Guide to Elections

**Autumn Elections
2020**

Introduction

This guide will give you further information on the various positions available for election in Autumn 2020. These positions include:

- Activities Committee Member
- Campaigns Committee Member
- Education Committee Member
- Welfare & Liberation Committee Member
- Ethical & Environmental Committee
- Chair of All Student Meeting
- Appointments Panel Member
- NUS National Conference Delegate
- NUS Liberation Conference Delegate
- School Rep
- College Rep
- Senate Rep

Further information about what these roles involve, is provided later in this guide.

Why Should You Apply?

- These positions are eligible for inclusion on your University enhanced transcript
- You will gain experience on running a campaign, which can help with planning, organisation and public speaking skills
- You will have the opportunity to influence Guild policy and contribute to the its strategic direction
- You will have the opportunity to meet new people and potentially make long-lasting friendships
- You will receive training and support to run campaigns on issues you care about

Election Dates

Below you can find the various deadlines which you will need to follow as a candidate:

Election	Apply from	Apply until	Election Training	Campaigning and Voting	Results
Autumn Term Elections	Monday 5 th October, 10am	Wednesday 14 th October, 4pm	w/c 5 th October	Monday 19 th October, 10am – 23 rd October, 4pm	w/c 26 th October

Positions Available

Below you can find more information about the roles available in this year's Autumn Elections. For further information, please find the full role descriptions in the Applications Pack on the Elections web page <https://www.gildofstudents.com/autumnelections>

Guild Committee Roles

This year, the Guild has introduced four new "Decision-Making Committees". These committees will debate and discuss student-submitted policy and ideas, related to one of four areas – Activities, Campaigns, Education, and Welfare & Liberation. They will also set targets for the achievement of the committee's objectives.

There are various available positions on each committee that you can apply for – see below for more information!

For further information on individual roles for each committee, please refer to the relevant committee's role descriptions document – these can be found on the elections web page.

Activities Committee Member

Chaired by the Activities and Employability Officer, and co-chaired by the Sports Officer, the Activities Committee will be responsible for:

- Actively representing all students involved in sports, volunteering, and other student-led activities
- Overseeing, allocating and reviewing the Guild's Student Groups grants
- Making recommendations on the Guild's position on activities and development issues
- Consider, discuss and debate student policy and idea proposals relating to student groups, societies and sports clubs
- Support the Activities and Employability Officer and Sports Officer to achieve their manifesto aims
- Reviewing the Guild's Student Groups Policy, and ensure that student groups adhere to the requirements of this Policy

There are six positions available on the Activities Committee:

- Student Groups Representative x2
- Sports Representative x2
- Student member (Open Place) x3

Campaigns Committee Member

Chaired by the President, the Campaigns Committee will work with the President, Campaigns Officer, and Ethical and Environmental Officer, and will be responsible for:

- Overseeing and supporting the development of the Guild's campaign activity (except for liberation-related campaigns)
- Overseeing, allocating and reviewing the Guild's Student Campaigns Fund
- Debating, discussing and considering policy and idea proposals related to the Guild's campaign activity (excluding liberation-related proposals)
- Supporting the President and Campaigns Officer to achieve their manifesto aims

There are five positions available on the Campaigns Committee:

- Student Member (Open Place) x 5

Education Committee Member

Chaired by the Education Officer, the Education Committee will work with the Education Officer, Postgraduate Officer, International Officer and College Reps, and be responsible for:

- Overseeing, allocating and reviewing the Guild's Student Reps Fund
- Considering policy and idea proposals relating to student academic issues
- Discussing ongoing academic policy issues and developments, mandating and recommending actions as appropriate
- Supporting the Education Officer, Postgraduate Officer, and International Officer to achieve their manifesto pledges and mandates

There are five positions available on the Education Committee:

- Student Member (Open Place) x4
- Commuter Student Representative

Welfare & Liberation Committee Member

Chaired by the President, the Welfare & Liberation Committee will be responsible for:

- Overseeing, allocating and reviewing relevant Guild Campaign expenditure
- Considering policy and idea proposals relating to welfare, wellbeing, equality & diversity, and liberation issues
- Support the delivery of History Month campaigns and activities
- Support the Welfare & Community Officer and Liberation Part-Time Officers to achieve their manifesto aims
- Overseeing campaigning and representation activity relating to student welfare and students represented by the five "Liberation Guild Officers" (and the intersections of those groups)
- Make recommendations on the Guild's position on welfare and liberation issues

There are four positions available on the Welfare & Liberation Committee:

- Postgraduate Representative
- International Representative
- Student Member (Open Place) x2

Other Committee Roles

Ethical & Environmental Committee Member

The Ethical & Environmental Committee is a sub-committee of the Guild's Finance Committee (one of the committees of the Trustee Board) - and does exactly what the name says! It is responsible for overseeing the Guild's response to environmental issues such as sustainability, recycling, and efforts to reduce emissions, as well as relevant campaigns (e.g. Go Green Week) and relationships with the University.

Members of this committee will help to make the Guild a sustainable place, where the environment remains at the forefront of the organisation's vision and strategy.

There are two positions available on the Ethical & Environmental Committee:

- Ethical & Environmental Committee Member x2

These positions are open places, open to any student registered student at the University of Birmingham.

Chair of All Student Meeting

The All Student Meeting will provide a forum for debate and discussion of student-submitted ideas and policy. These ideas and policy may be referred from the Guild Committees, or from the "Allocations Procedure" (where ideas and policy are initially submitted). A vote will take place on each idea or policy, or they may be referred to an online all-student vote. These meetings will take place at least three times during the academic year, and can be attended by any UoB student.

The role of the Chair is to:

- Chair all meetings of All Student Meeting
- Act in an official capacity at a meeting of All Student Meeting
- Encourage fair and accessible discussions on these ideas and policies
- Empower student members to hold to account, and direct the Guild Officers.
- Remain impartial during debates and discussions, and refrain from demonstrating bias at any point.
- Ensure that minutes and records of meetings are kept, and manage its correspondence and notices
- Ensure that agendas and papers for All Student Meeting are available to all students
- Rule on matters relating to the agenda items
- Oversee the Allocations Procedure

The Chair will also be approved by the Guild Officer Group and reviewed at least once per academic year.

Appointments Panel Member (2 positions available)

The Appointments Panel is responsible for recruiting and selecting new Trustees for the Guild of Students. The Trustees have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Guild is legally and financially compliant and for monitoring the overall organisational strategy.

Members of the Appointments Panel can ensure the needs of students are represented during this process, and will continue to remain at the heart of the student experience.

There are two positions available on the Appointments Panel:

- Student Member (Open Place) x2

Please note that you will need to be available for the following dates if you are successful:

- Appointments Panel Training and Shortlisting session – **Tuesday 3rd November, 15:00 – 17:00.**
- Appointments Panel Interview Session – **Tuesday 17th November, 09:00 – 13:00.**

These positions are open places, open to any student registered student at the University of Birmingham.

Student Rep Positions

School Student Representative

School Education Committees consist of academic staff, professional staff and student representatives who meet throughout the year to discuss anything affecting the teaching and learning experience within each School, including the future direction and priorities for the School to focus on through submission of a School Education Plan.

School Reps are student representatives that sit on these committees to represent the student voice of all students within that School at the relevant level of study.

There are numerous roles available within each School, though some have already been filled in Summer elections. Please refer to the Student Reps role descriptions document in the on the Elections web page <https://www.gildofstudents.com/autumnelections>, to see if there are any positions available within your School.

You must be a student within the School that you are applying to be a School Rep for. You must also be studying at the level represented by the School Rep role you apply for (i.e. only a Postgraduate Taught student can apply for a Postgraduate Taught School Rep position).

College Student Representative

College committees consist of academic staff, professional staff, a Guild Officer and student representatives who meet throughout the year to discuss anything affecting the teaching and learning experience within each of the University's 5 Colleges. There are 2 main College

committees that meet regularly across the year that all College Reps are expected to attend (College Education Committees and College Quality Assurance and Approval Committees).

College Reps are student representatives that sit on these committees to represent the student voice of all students within that College at the relevant level of study.

Each of the 5 Colleges has an Undergraduate, a Postgraduate Taught and a Postgraduate Research College Rep. Some of these positions have already been filled in Summer elections. Please refer to the Student Reps role descriptions document on the Elections web page <https://www.gildofstudents.com/autumnelections> to see if there are any positions available within your College.

You must be a student within the College that you are applying to be a College Rep for. You must also be studying at the level represented by the College Rep role you apply for (i.e. only a Postgraduate Taught student can apply for a Postgraduate Taught College Rep position).

Senate Student Representative

Senate is the highest education-related decision-making body at the University. It is chaired by the Vice Chancellor and consists of other senior members of staff at the University, as well as Guild Officers and student representatives (Senate Reps). The committee meets 3-4 times per year and many discussion topics are confidential.

Senate Reps are student representatives that sit on these committees to represent the student voice of all students across the University at the relevant level of study.

There are 4 Senate Reps in total – 2 Undergraduate, a Postgraduate Taught and a Postgraduate Research Senate Rep. Some of these positions have already been filled in Summer elections. Please refer to the Student Reps role descriptions document in the Applications Pack on the Elections web page <https://www.gildofstudents.com/autumnelections> to see if there are any positions available.

You must be a student studying at the level represented by the Senate Rep role you apply for (i.e. only a Postgraduate Taught student can apply for the Postgraduate Taught Senate Rep position).

NUS National Conferences Delegates

The National Union of Students (NUS) is the largest democratic student organisation in Europe, working to represent students on a national level, lobbying the Government and universities on a wide-range of issues including tuition fees, teaching standards and liberation. It has achieved a number of notable successes over its history, including securing an exemption from paying Council Tax for students. You can find out more information about NUS here <https://www.nus.org.uk/>

There are two NUS Conferences that take place each year – the National Conference, and Liberation Conference. This year, both conferences will be taking place in Liverpool in Spring 2020. However, the elections for Delegates for these conferences will take place in Autumn.

A full list of available positions is provided below. Please refer to the full role descriptions on the elections webpage for further information.

National Conference Delegate (9 positions available)

NUS National Conference Delegates will represent UoB students on a national level. They will take three policy ideas to be debated at the conference.

Policy passed at last year's conference included a commitment to supporting Carer Leaver students in Higher Education (submitted by last year's UoB Guild President!), ending the student mental health crisis, and declaring a climate emergency.

The National Conference is a really good opportunity to network with delegates from other Student Unions and share ideas.

Any registered student can apply for this role. In line with NUS policy, 50% (rounded down) of the delegation must be self-defining women; this is to ensure the delegation is gender balanced.

NUS Liberation Conference Delegate (6 places)

NUS Liberation Conference Delegates will represent UoB students who self-identify with one of five main liberation groups - also on a national level. These liberation groups are black students, black woman students, woman students, LGBT+ students, trans students and disabled students. The six Delegate roles thus are:

- Black Student x2 (one black woman student)
- Woman Student
- LGBT+ Student
- Trans Student
- Disabled Student

You must self-identify with one of these positions in order to apply.

The Liberation Conference is also a really good opportunity to network with delegates from other Unions and share ideas.

Applications Process

Applications should be submitted online at <https://www.guildofstudents.com/autumnelections>

When applying, you will need to be logged into the Guild website.

When on the elections page:

- Click on the position you wish to apply for, making sure you have checked you meet the requirements for that role.

- You will be asked to provide your contact information.
- If you want to use a nickname as part of your campaign, you can add this here. Your nickname will be shown instead of your real name when students vote.
- You can include a slogan (maximum 30 words), which will be shown with your name or nickname
- You can also upload your written statement here, although you do not have to do this at the time of submitting an application - this should however be done before the close of applications.

After submitting an application, you should receive an acknowledgement, either in the form of automated response or an email. If you think you should have received this, but didn't, please let us know as soon as possible, by contacting elections@guild.bham.ac.uk. We will also ask you to complete an anonymous equal opportunities monitoring form.

You will be required to sign the Candidate Terms and Conditions, stating that you understand how, and give consent for, the use of your personal data in elections.

All applications will be confirmed as soon as possible. A list of confirmed candidates will be published before voting opens.

How to self-define using the Guild Website

For some of the positions available, you will need to self-define as a member of that community to apply and vote in these elections. This will need to be updated every year. You can self-define into as many groups as you think apply to you. Just follow these simple steps:

- Log into the Guild website
- Click on the 'My Guild' button in the top left hand corner of the website
- Click on the Self-Define button under the "Tell us about you" heading
- Tick the boxes that apply to you
- Click on 'update'

Written Statements

All candidates in all elections should submit a written statement. These must be submitted by close of applications.

A written statement is an opportunity to tell others why they should vote for you. You can speak about what you like, but you might want to think about the below:

- What do you want to achieve in this role to benefit your constituents?
- What has inspired you to run for the role?

Written statements are limited to 200 words.

Election Training & Events

Training for all candidates will take place online. Further information will be sent to all students who have applied for a position or expressed an interest, closer to the time.

If you are aware that you are not able to make any of these times, please contact the Elections Team: elections@guild.bham.ac.uk and make alternative arrangements with us.

Budgets

Candidates for some positions are provided with a budget of £10, which they can use towards their campaigns. These roles are:

- Guild Committee roles
- Other Committee roles
- NUS Delegate roles

Please note, School, College and Senate Student Rep positions do not have budget support. This is due to the number of roles that exist and for parity across all levels of student representation.

All items must be claimed for – this includes all postage and packaging.

If you are worried about having the money to run in the election, please contact us on elections@guild.bham.ac.uk, and we will be able to help.

Voting

Voting in this election is open for 5 days. Students can vote online or using the Guild app.

Candidates can campaign in sight of a ballot station such as a computer, but are not allowed to interrupt a vote.

Results

All results shall be provisional until confirmed by the Returning Officer following the closure of any complaints. Results shall only be announced once the Returning Officer is satisfied with the conduct of the election and after any outstanding complaints have been resolved.

Candidate Welfare & Liberation Support

Before, during, and after the Election, there is welfare support available, as well as support for liberation groups, and other underrepresented students.

Please see the document "Candidate Welfare & Liberation Support" in the Applications Pack on the Elections web page <https://www.guildofstudents.com/autumnelections> for more information.

Autumn Elections FAQs

Who is responsible for the Elections?

Elections are administered by the Elections Team, and are overseen by the President. The Returning Officer is responsible for the overall fair conduct of this election.

Are there any rules?

Guild of Students Election Regulations, Guild of Students Byelaws and all applicable University Regulations apply to this election. Election Regulations and Byelaws are available as part of the Application Pack online, and on the Guild website.

The Guild's Zero Tolerance Policy and University's Harassment & Bullying Policy also apply, and these are available as part of the Application Pack online.

Can I support my friend who is applying for another role??

Yes. Candidates in different elections can endorse each other. This is called a Slate. However, if you are running in the same election e.g. a multi-seat election you are prohibited from supporting each other.

Can my friends help?

Of course! The more people who get involved in your campaign the better! They must however also be students at the University of Birmingham.

What if I change my mind and no longer want to apply??

You are free to withdraw at any time. You will be asked to provide your wish to withdraw in writing to elections@guild.bham.ac.uk.

The website says I am not eligible to apply for a role, why is this?

If you are a registered student, then you should be able to apply for a role that you want. Some roles have additional criteria, where you would need to self-define. Guidance on how to do this can be found in the Elections Guide. If you are still struggling, please let us know as soon as possible.

Can I apply for more than one role?

You can apply for more than one role, as long as they are not from the same committee/area. For example, you cannot apply to be a Sports Representative AND Student Groups Representative on the Activities Committee, but you could apply to be a Sports Representative on the Activities Committee and a School Rep.

You can also apply for a role on more than one committee. For example, you could apply to be a Sports Representative on the Activities Committee and Student Member (Open Place) on the Welfare & Liberation Committee.

Where can I go to for advice?

This depends on the information being sought – please find a directory below:

Elections Team

The Elections Team is there to support candidates with election issues, such as having problems applying for roles or understanding the election rules. You can contact the Elections Team on elections@guild.bham.ac.uk

President – Tobi Adeyemi

The President oversees the running of elections as part of their remit and will be happy to answer any questions about the election process.

Email: president@guild.bham.ac.uk

Candidate Welfare & Liberation Support

The Elections Team and wider Student Voice Team are here to support your welfare during the election.

For further information on welfare and liberation support, please refer to the document "Candidate Welfare & Liberation Support" in the Applications Pack on the elections webpage <https://www.guildofstudents.com/autumnelections>

For further information in general, please email: elections@guild.bham.ac.uk.