

Student Voice Guide to Elections

Autumn Term Elections

2018

Introduction

This guide will give you further information on the various positions available for election in the Autumn Term 2018. These positions include:

- Ethical and Environmental Officer
- Guild Policy Development Group Member
- Chair of Officer Question Time
- Student Equality and Diversity Committee Member
- Ethical and Environmental Committee Member
- Appointments Panel Member
- NUS Conference roles

Further information about what these committees do, is provided later in this guide.

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

Why you should run?

- These positions are eligible for inclusion on your University enhanced transcript
- You will gain experience on running campaign, which can help with planning, organisation, 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

All positions elected during this election period run along the same schedule – below you can find the various deadlines which you will need to follow as a candidate:

Election	Noms Open	Noms Close	RON Period	Election Training	Campaigning and Voting	Count	Results
Autumn Term Elections	8 th October, 10am	19 th October, 4pm	22 nd – 24 th October 10am -4pm respectively	Various	29 th October, 10am – 2 nd November, 4pm	2 nd November	5 th November

Elections

Officer By-Election

The Guild Officer Team are the student leaders of the students' union (the Guild). They represent students to the University, ensuring that students get the best possible education They also work with Guild services to ensure that students get value for money and have a great time within the Guild of Students, whilst maximising their time at University through extracurricular activities. Part-Time Officers volunteer on the Guild Officer Team and do so whilst continuing their University studies. Each position has a specific policy remit and related responsibilities:

Ethical and Environmental Officer

The Ethical and Environmental Officer raises awareness of ethical and environmental issues amongst students! You'll also help us become more ethically and environmentally aware, and lobby the University to become more socially responsible.

Guild Policy Development Group Elections

Guild Policy Development Group is responsible for formulating, developing and debating Guild Policy. The Group plays a key role in the "Your Ideas" process. It is responsible for considering all of the ideas submitted in a given cycle and checking them for financial/reputational or legal issues.

Guild Policy Development Group Positions

The Guild Policy Development Group will be made up of the Officers and elected students. It is chaired by the President. The roles up for election include:

- 1 x LGBTQ student (reserved position for students who self-define as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer)
- 1 x Trans student (reserved position for students who self-define as Trans)
- 1 x woman student (reserved position for students who self-define and live as a woman)
- 1 x BME student (reserved position for students who self-define as black or ethnic minority students)
- 1 x disabled student (reserved position for disabled students)
- 3 x postgraduate student (reserved position for postgraduate students)
- 3 x International student (reserved for international students)
- 5 x open place positions (positions open to any registered student at University of Birmingham)

Chair of Officer Question Time (1 position available)

The Chair of Officer Question Time presides over all meetings of Officer Question Time – open meetings where students can hold their Officer Team to account for the things they do.

They will play a key role in setting the agenda for each meeting, being a key decision maker at the heart of the Guild's democratic process and helping to ensure that the Guild plays an effective role in the lives of the wider student population.

Guild Committee Roles

Student Equality and Diversity Committee Member (2 positions available)

The Student Equality and Diversity Group will work on a broad range of issues relating to equality and diversity on campus and develop the Guild's strategy for addressing them. This will bring together the work being done by different groups around the University such as accessibility on campus, gender-neutral toilets, the BME attainment gap, student parents and carers, LGBTQ-inclusive curricula and more.

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

Ethical and Environmental Committee Member (2 positions available)

The Ethical and Environmental Committee does exactly what it says on the tin – it is responsible for overseeing the Guild's response to environmental issues from recycling to power consumption.

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

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

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.

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

NUS Election roles

What is the National Union of Students?

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 and teaching standards. It has achieved a number of notable successes over its history including securing an exemption from paying Council Tax for students.

Each year, the NUS hosts liberation and section conferences where delegates can decide on policy or campaigns relating to that specific area. Each of the sections is autonomous and is overseen by the Officer(s) with responsibility for that section.

Here are some examples of campaigns that have been run by NUS liberation and section movements:

Equality in Education

The NUS is working hard to reduce the BME attainment gap – the national gap between degree attainment of white students and their BME counterparts. They are campaigning to introduce inclusive curricula and work with students' unions to develop BME student leadership networks within an individual union.

Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention

The NUS has sought to raise awareness of the mental health issues faced by students at university, brought about by student debt, homesickness etc. This year, the NUS Disabled Students campaign launched the Suicide Prevention Guide – a best practice guide for Students' Unions.

Tackling 'Lad' Culture

This year, the NUS Women's Campaign worked on a strategy to tackle lad culture within Students' Unions – attitudes of sexism and misogyny at some universities. Case studies have been developed with the assistance of unions across the UK; this best practice guidance is designed to make sure that students' unions are an open, inclusive and safe environment for all students.

Positions Available

This year, the NUS National Conference will be taking place in Glasgow in March 2019. As the Conference is earlier than last year, elections for the National Conference Delegate will be taking place in Term 1.

Delegates to the NUS Liberation and section conferences will be elected via a cross-campus ballot. This will promote awareness of the work of liberation and section conferences to the wider student population at the University of Birmingham. For some of these conferences, additional self-definition criteria will apply to standing and voting. This has been indicated, where applicable.

The dates of the conferences have been provided in an earlier section of this guide. Before nominating yourself it is advised that you check that you are able to attend. Some dates have not been provided by the NUS, we will communicate these to students as soon as possible.

A full list of positions up for election is provided below:

National Conference Delegate (8 positions available)

This year's National Conference will be taking place in Glasgow in March. All delegates will therefore be elected in Term 1.

Policy passed at last year's conference included a commitment to include Tampons and Sanitary products into the NUS purchasing consortium, the introduction of a culturally competent Mental Health Framework, similar to the Green Impact Award.

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

Any registered student can nominate themselves 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.

Black Students' Conference Delegate (1 position available)

Policy set at last year's Conference included support for the 'Black Lives Matter' campaign, policy that works to overcome the BME attainment gap and create course curricular from

more diverse cultural perspectives and campaigns against Government policies like the PREVENT agenda which is said to disproportionately affect BME people.

The term 'Black' is used to refer to African, Arab, Asian and Caribbean students and those who self-define as Black.

Disabled Students' Conference Delegate (1 position available)

Policy discussed at last year's conference included the continued opposition towards cuts of the Disabled Students' Allowances – that can be vital to continued participation in education.

Before nominating yourself for this position, you will need to make sure you self-define as someone who has a disability – this can include, but is not limited to, physical conditions, mental health conditions and specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia.

International Students' Conference Delegate (2 positions available)

The NUS has recently been campaigning against Xenophobia that may be experienced by students on campus. It has also produced guidance for international students renting accommodation in the UK – who may be affected by the need to find a Guarantor and proposed changes to the Immigration Bill.

To stand for this role, it is expected that you are an international student. This means you must be ordinarily resident in a country outside the UK.

LGBT+ Students' Conference Delegate (2 positions available, one of which must be reserved for a self-defining woman or non-binary student, who also defines as LGBT+)

Policy discussed at last year conference included a commitment to lobby the Government, specifically the Home Office for a more humane approach to dealing with asylum claims by individuals from countries where homosexuality is illegal.

Before nominating yourself for this role, you will need to self-define as someone who is either: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans.

Mature and Part-Time Students Conference Delegate (1 position available)

Mature and Part-Time Students Conference has discussed the impacts on Mature and Part-Time Students of the Higher Education White Paper; including the issue of access to funding by Mature and Part-Time Students.

Candidates for this position are expected to be either a mature student, aged 21 or over at the beginning of their undergraduate course, or aged 25 or over at the beginning of their postgraduate course, or a part-time student.

Postgraduate Students' Conference Delegate (2 positions available)

Postgraduate Conference has discussed aspects of the Higher Education White Paper and its implications for Postgraduate students including the availability of Postgraduate loans and how Postgrad courses will be rated by their students. Please note that during the conference for the purposes of elections, voting is done on a One Union, One Vote basis.

Candidates for this position are expected to be a postgraduate student – this can be either Taught or Research programmes.

Trans Students' Conference Delegate (1 position available)

The Trans Student Conference has recently debated motions on Supporting SU Officers to tackle Transphobia on campus; the introduction of a gender neutral toilet and changing room policy at all Higher and Further Education Institutions.

Before nominating yourself for this position, you need to make sure you self-define as a person who is Trans.

Women's Conference Delegate (2 open place positions available)

The Women's Conference have discussed policy on body positivity, expressed support for expanding Zero Tolerance Policies in Students' Unions and growing the representation of women in Union democratic structures.

Before nominating yourself for this position, you need to make sure you self-define as a woman

How to self-define using the Guild Website

For some of the positions listed above, you will need to self-define as a member of that community to nominate yourself 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'

Policy Making at NUS Conferences

Policy is passed at NUS Conferences in the form of Motions. Each Union is entitled to submit a specific number of motions; each must be on different subjects. Each motion will have a word count that has been set by the NUS. Further information on this is provided later on in this Guide.

Motions have a specific format, which is as follows:

Conference Believes – This provides the background to the motion – it should be factual and discuss why you came to write the motion

Conference Further Believes – This section should provide further information on the motivations behind writing the motion. This is an opportunity to convince people why they should vote for the motion you are proposing. This section is optional, but can be added if necessary

Conference Resolves – This section should set out the actions you wish to happen as a result of this motion being passed. This can include, but is not limited to: mandating an Officer to

look at this issue and report back; campaigning and lobbying of other organisations - i.e. National or Local Government.

Motions and Word Count

The precise number of motions a union is allowed to submit to conference and the word count for motions will vary depending on the specific conference. Full details of this will be provided in NUS Delegate training which will take place following the conclusion of the election.

Nominations Process

Nominations should be submitted online at www.guildofstudents.com/elections

When nominating yourself, you will need to be logged into the Guild website

When on the elections page, click on the position you wish to nominate yourself for making sure you have checked you meet the requirements for that post.

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. This is how your name will be shown when you are voting.

This is also where you can upload your written statement, although you do not have to do this at the time of submitting a nomination, this should be done before the close of nominations.

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. We will also ask you to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.

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

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

Campaigns Posters/Written Statements

All candidates in all elections should submit a written statement and in some cases a campaign poster. These must be submitted by close of nominations.

Campaign Poster

A campaign poster can be a good way to easily tell people about you and your campaign. This will be included on the website along with your written statement.

There's no 'right way' to create a poster but below is a list of musts:

- A campaign poster must be A4 in size, and be designed in landscape orientation. If it's not the Guild may have to resize it and that may impact its legibility
- It must have the Guild of Students logo in the design

- Ensure the candidate name and the position is very prominent
- If there is a background design/image, make sure that it isn't obscuring any text
- Make sure the layout is coherent and encourages people to read all of the information

Top Tips on how to create a campaign poster:

- Be concise and use clear language
- Include key policies but keep them as short as possible, trying to use as few words as possible
- Use an easy to read font, like Arial or Times New Roman; text should be readable and no smaller than font size 14
- Ask what friends and supporters think about your policies
- And above all....make sure to check for typos!

Here are some good examples:

Re-elect Alex Binnie for Women's Officer

- Continue work on the "It's Not On" campaign to tackle sexual harassment on our campus, focusing on the issue within sport.
- Work with the new Postgraduate Officer to explore the possibility of getting a crèche on campus.
- Organise a regular women's club night at the Guild for women and non-binary students.
- Support Women's Association, and work with them to increase engagement with the wider student population.

[/alexbinnie16](#)
[@alexbinnie95](#)

Your Students' Union
University of Birmingham
guild of students

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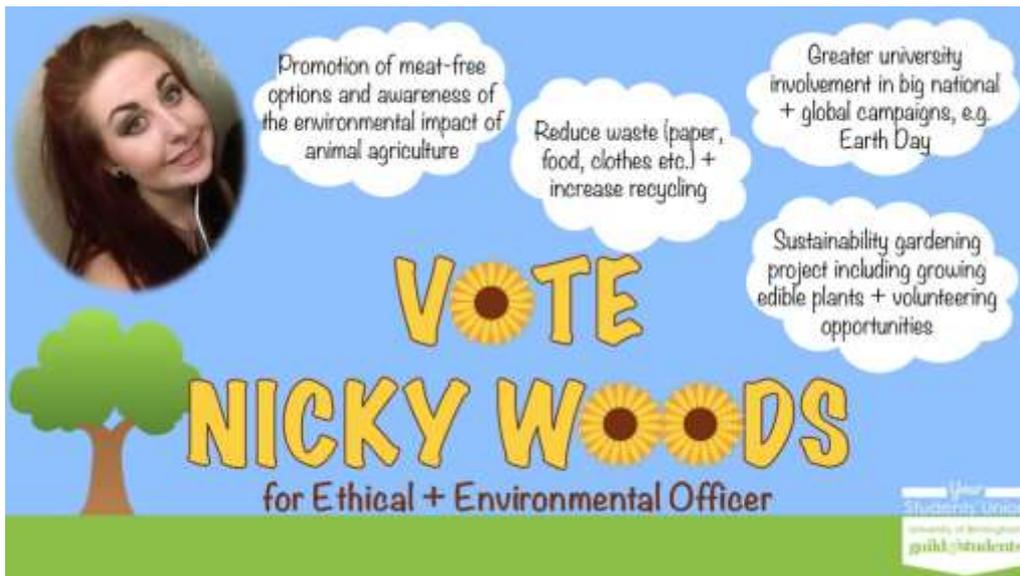
Chris Wilkinson #1 For Education

New!
Wilkybar KID

- Own Your Degree
 - ✓ Test Your Rep
 - ✓ Feedback Friday
- Customise Your Degree
 - ✓ Transparent Module Choices
 - ✓ Better Joint Honours Experience
- Maximise Your Degree
 - ✓ Get your lectures on Panopto
 - ✓ Personalised Essay and Exam Feedback

The Education's On Me!

#WilkyBarKid



Written Statements

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.

Re-Opening Nominations

If no nominations are received for a position by the close of nominations, nominations can be reopened for that position.

Election Training & Events

Training for all candidates on the election regulations will take place on 25th October 2018 in Murray Learning Centre - UG06.

Candidates will be sent further information on the role of each committee via email.

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

Voting

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

Candidates are permitted to 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.

Elections FAQ

- **Who runs the Elections?**

Elections are administered by the Student Voice 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 on the Guild website.

- **Can I support my friend who is standing for another position?**

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. Remember, they must also be students at the University of Birmingham.

- **What if I change my mind and don't want to be a candidate anymore?**

You are free to withdraw as a candidate from the election 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 run for a post, why is this?**

If you are registered student then you should be able to nominate yourself for a role you want. Some roles have additional criteria, where you would need to self-define. If you are unsure how to do this please let us know as soon as possible.

- **Where can I go for advice?**

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

Student Voice

The Guild's Student Voice Department is there to support candidates with election issues such as having problems completing their nomination forms and understanding the election regulations.

Email: elections@guild.bham.ac.uk

Call: 0121 415 8493

President – Reece Patrick Roberts

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