

# Bucks Students' Union



## **Standing Orders**

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# **Standing Order A**

## **Union Meetings**

### **General Guidance**

As a matter of guidance all meetings should be chaired to allow the proper recording of clear and informed decision making. As a matter of principle chairs of meetings should encourage participation from all present and allow meetings to reach consensus and conclusion through the natural flow of discussion.

When this is not desirable, due to the formal nature of a proposal, or possible chairs of meetings should use their judgement in applying the formal rules of debate in section 7 below.

### **1.0 The Meeting**

- 1.1 Union meetings shall be convened as under Schedule 3 of the constitution

### **2. Quorum**

- 2.1 A quorum for any given committee shall be as set out in the relevant passage of the Constitution
- 2.2 A challenge to the quorum can be made under a point of order.

### **3.0 The minutes**

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting shall be a true and accurate summary of the business transacted at the Union meeting. The minutes shall be a record of proceedings rather than giving only resolutions that were passed at the meeting.
- 3.2 The minutes of all meetings are the responsibility of the Union Manager but may be taken by a suitable nominee.
- 3.3 Meeting minutes shall be approved at the following meeting as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and shall be signed by the chairperson.
- 3.4 Minutes of the meeting must be available to all members of the union.

### **4.0 GUILLOTINE**

- 4.1 A guillotine, or time limit, may be set at the start of the meeting for the length of the meeting.
- 4.2 The reasons for setting a guillotine must be explained, and the guillotine must be supported by a simple majority vote to be valid.

### **5.0 Extraordinary Meetings**

- 5.1 Notice of such meetings should be advertised in accordance with Schedule 5.

## **6.0 THE CHAIR**

- 6.1 The Chair shall be responsible for preserving order, for ensuring that proceedings are conducted in a proper manner and for seeing that the minutes of the preceding meeting are signed.
- 6.2 All other persons at the meeting will address the meeting through the Chair.
- 6.3 With the permission of the meeting, the Chair may offer points of information to the meeting.
- 6.4 In the event of a tied vote on a procedural motion the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- 6.5 The Chair will act as the teller of all results when a vote is taken on motions, amendments and elections at the meeting.
- 6.6 In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair shall undertake the duties of the Chair for the duration of that meeting.

## **7.0 DEBATING PROCEDURE**

- 7.1 After an initial proposing speech for the main motion, each amendment will be debated in turn.
- 7.2 Speeches for both the substantive motion and the amendments will be taken for and against in turn.
- 7.3 The Proposer and Seconder of the substantive motion and amendments will be the first and second speakers respectively for their motion.
- 7.4 Each speech may last up to two minutes.
- 7.5 Each speaker may ask the meeting for a 30 seconds extension, and use that 30 seconds with the permission of the meeting.
- 7.6 Members, except the Proposer and Opposer, may speak once only during any one debate, except at the discretion of the Chair.
- 7.7 The Proposer and Opposer have one minute each to give a summary for and against the motion.

## **8.0 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS**

- 8.1 The following motions may be put to a Union meeting
- A) That the question be put to the vote immediately - if carried by a simple majority the current round of speeches will be completed

and a summary allowed before the vote is taken, if not carried by a simple majority the discussion shall continue.

- B) That the question not be put to the vote, and if carried by a simple majority the discussion will end, but may be brought to a subsequent meeting.
- C) That specified officer(s) or Committee(s) of the Union be censured.
- D) That there be a temporary adjournment of the meeting for not longer than 30 minutes and with a period of 90 minutes between any two adjournments.
- E) That the matter be postponed to a later specified meeting.
- F) That the matter be referred to a committee or sub-committee.
- G) That the matter be referred back to a Union body for re-examination.
- H) That the motions be taken in parts.
- I) That the matter be taken to a referendum in accordance with the Standing Orders for referendum.
- J) That the vote be taken to secret ballot.
- K) That a presentation should be given for a period of no more than 20 minutes.

All procedural motions must be passed by a simple majority to come in to effect except motion (C) which shall require a two-thirds majority.

There shall be no order of precedence amongst procedural motion except that motion (C) shall take precedence over all others.

## **9.0 POINTS OF ORDER**

9.1 Where a member of a Union meeting feels that the procedure of the meeting conflicts with these Standing Orders or the Constitution, they may raise a point of order. In doing so, they must cite the section of the Constitution with which they feel there is conflict.

9.2 A point of order may not be raised whilst a vote is being taken unless it concerns the conduct of the vote.

## **10. POINTS OF CLARIFICATION**

10.1 A point of clarification may only be used to make points clear to the meeting, and must be made through the Chair.

10.2 A point of clarification may be made at any point during the meeting.

## **11. CHALLENGES TO THE CHAIR.**

- 11.1 If a member wishes to challenge the Chair's ruling on any question, that member may challenge the Chair under a point of order.
- 11.2 The procedure is as follows:
- (a) The Chair shall nominate immediately a temporary Chair who shall preside until the question is decided.
  - (b) The challenger may then propose the challenge.
  - (c) The Challenged Chair may then reply.
  - (d) The Challenger may then give a summary.
  - (e) No other member has the right to speak, except the temporary Chair.
  - (f) The question shall immediately be put to the vote.

## **12. VOTING**

- 12.1 A vote will normally be taken by a show of hands.
- 12.2 The Chair may deem the vote to be carried if no dissent is shown.

## **Standing Order B**

### **Referenda**

#### **1. Remit**

- 1.1 Any question, save those relating to private and confidential matters, or those for which alternative procedures are established in the Union's constitution or its supporting Schedules, may be put to a referendum, subject to the provision of paragraph 4 of this standing order.

#### **2. Calling a Referendum**

- 2.1 Subject to the provisions of this standing order, a referendum may be called by:
- (a) The Executive Committee, or
  - (b) The Board of Trustees or
  - (c) Not less than 2% of the Union's Ordinary Members

#### **3. Notice of intention to call a Referendum**

- 3.1 Notice of intention to call a referendum shall be by way of:
- (a) Resolution of the Executive Committee, or
  - (b) Resolution of Union the Board of Trustees, or
  - (c) Petition to the President.

#### **4. Petitioning for a Referendum**

- 4.1 In the event of a petition to the President, the signatories to the petition shall:
- (a) Provide proof of ordinary membership status of the union.
  - (b) Number not less than the percentage of ordinary members indicated in section 2.1 above.
  - (c) Provide a contact name and address, to which acknowledgement of the petition may be sent.

## **5. Acknowledgement of a petition**

- 5.1 On receipt of a petition for a referendum, The President shall notify the Returning Officer, who shall forward written acknowledgement of receipt to the contact name and address.

## **6. Phrasing the Question**

- 6.1 Phrasing the question to be put to a referendum shall be the responsibility of the Returning Officer, who shall consult with the Executive Committee on the matter. The phrasing shall ensure that responses can be gauged by a 'Yes/No' vote.

## **7. Timing of Referenda**

- 7.1 Subject to the provisions of this section of the constitution, the outcome of any questions put to a referendum shall be known by the 3rd (third week, counting from the Monday after the resolution of the Executive Committee or Board of Trustees, or Receipt of the petition.

## **8. Publicity**

- 8.1 The Executive Committee shall make appropriate arrangements for publicising the referendum on all sites of the university.

## **9. Referendum Campaigns**

- 9.1 No Union funded resources, except for room bookings, shall be made available for referendum campaign activity. Use of Union facilities for referendum campaign activity shall be subject to the standard scale charge(s) applicable.

## **10. Hustings**

- 10.1 The Returning Officer may call hustings at which interested parties may debate the question to be put to a referendum, in order to inform the Union membership of the issues involved.

## **11. Method of determining the outcome of a referendum**

- 11.1 All referenda shall be conducted by open cross campus ballot in a manner approved by the electoral reform society.  
The question shall be determined by the means of a Yes/No vote.

## **12. Timetable for Referenda**

- 12.1 Publicity shall be produced on the Monday of the 1st (first) week after receipt of the petition.
- 12.2 Publicity shall be distributed to all campuses of the University by the Friday of the 1st (first) week after receipt of the petition.
- 12.3 Hustings (where applicable) shall be held during the 2nd (second) week after receipt of the petition.
- 12.4 Ballot boxes shall be open on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the 3rd (third) week after receipt of the petition.
- 12.5 The referendum count shall be on the Friday of the 3rd (Third) week after the receipt of the petition.
- 12.6 Declaration of results shall be the responsibility of the returning officer, whose determination shall be final, except that the petitioners may request a recount if the difference in yes/no votes is 5% (five percent or less of the total valid vote).

## **13 Quorum**

- 13.1 The quorum for a referendum to mandate the Union to take a course of action shall be no less than 5% of all registered students of the University

## **14 Notification of the outcome of a Referendum**

- 14.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Returning officer to ensure that the outcome of the referendum is advertised to the Union's membership, the Executive Committee and put to the Board of Trustees for ratification

## **15. Questions of Like Nature**

- 15.1 No questions of like nature shall be put to a referendum within 12 (twelve) calendar months of a previous referendum.

## **Standing Order C**

### **Conduct of Elections at Union Meetings**

- 1.1 The Chair shall call for nominations of eligible candidates.
- 1.2 Candidates shall be proposed and seconded by two ordinary members of the meeting.
- 1.3 Candidates shall be invited to make a brief speech in support of their candidacy.

- 1.4 At the discretion of the meeting, questions may be addressed to candidates. Questions should be applicable to all candidates and answered by each in turn.
- 1.5 Where the election is for a single post, the Alternative Transferable Vote System shall be used.
- 1.6 Where the election is for multiple posts, the Single Transferable Vote System shall be used.
- 1.7 Where there is only one candidate more than the number of posts available, the vote may be taken by a show of hands, after candidates have been asked to leave the room.
- 1.8 The vote shall be taken by secret ballot at the request of any member.
- 1.9 'Re - open nominations shall be entered in all elections held at union meetings and should be treated as if it were another candidate.
- 1.10 Only ordinary members of the Union are entitled to vote at meetings of the Union ([Constitution paragraph 4](#)) The chair of the meeting may ask for members to produce proof of membership.