

<b>Approval Date:</b>	August 2021	<b>Approval Authority:</b>	LUSA Executive
<b>Review Date:</b>	June 2023	<b>Contact Officer:</b>	LUSA President

## Purpose

1. This document sets out the administrative procedure to ensure that the Lincoln University Students' Association (LUSA) elections are conducted in a fair, efficient and democratic manner while encouraging maximum participation amongst members.

## Principles

2. LUSA recognises that freedom of speech and expression are a guaranteed part of fair and democratic elections, in accordance with relevant legislation.
3. All elections are to be free from harassment, intimidation or abuse and conducted in a manner free from undue interference including material produced by all candidates.
4. Nothing in this procedure will contradict the LUSA Constitution, nor will anyone subject to this policy act in a manner which is inconsistent with the LUSA Constitution.

## Definitions

5. In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires:

**Bi-election** means an extraordinary election where a casual vacancy exists.

**Campaign period** means the period from the opening of nominations to the close of voting.

**Campaigning** means the process of actively or passively promoting a candidate standing for election on the LUSA Executive. This includes any attempt to persuade voters to vote for or not vote for a particular candidate.

**Casual vacancy** means the situation where any Executive position is currently unoccupied, or where there is no person elected to fill a position following any election.

**Nominee** means nominated candidate.

**Voting period** means any time during which voters are able to cast ordinary votes.

## Returning Officer

6. The Returning Officer is responsible for overseeing the promotion and running of the election, and ensuring that a proper, fair and democratic process was adhered to during the election. The following tasks are the responsibility of the Returning Officer:
7. Administration:
  - 7.1. Ensure an electoral roll is available at LUSA reception at least 7 days before the election begins, and is removed one day before voting begins.
  - 7.2. In conjunction with the General Manager, ensure that LUSA's Candidates Information Sheet and the LUSA Executive Nomination Form are updated.
  - 7.3. Inform candidates of the rules of the election.
  - 7.4. Be available for candidates and all Lincoln University students to answer questions on the rules or organisation of the election.
8. Publicity:
  - 8.1. Advise all Lincoln University students of their rights and the process on how to vote, at least 7 days before the election.
  - 8.2. Post a daily notice listing open positions and the number of accepted nominations for each position.
  - 8.3. Publicise all candidates running for positions, within 24 hours of nominations closing. This is to remain in place until the close of voting on election days.
9. Manage nominations and results:
  - 9.1. Receive all nominations for the LUSA Executive until 9 days before the election dates.
  - 9.2. On receipt of a nomination form from a candidate, ensure that the form is completed, and that:

- 9.2.1. The prospective candidate is eligible to stand.
- 9.2.2. The endorsers are eligible to endorse.
- 9.3. Notify all valid nominees and request a photograph and brief candidate statement, if it is not already provided.
- 9.4. If the requirements under the above clause (9.3) are not met, this is considered a refusal by the nominee to accept their nomination.
  - 9.4.1. Make the nominee aware of their right to appeal to the LUSA Executive through the President.
  - 9.4.2. Where a nominee appeals the eligibility of their nomination, their nomination is considered valid until the Executive determines otherwise.
- 9.5. The Returning Officer may not refuse to accept a nomination for any reason other than form or eligibility.
- 9.6. Announce the results of any election or poll within 24 hours of voting closing in the following order, and note in the announcement the number of votes cast for each candidate:
  - 9.6.1. Candidates.
  - 9.6.2. General population.
- 10. Manage the online voting system:
  - 10.1. Voting must be available on no less than two consecutive days and no more than four days.
  - 10.2. Confirm that the system meets the specifications and requirements laid down in the LUSA Constitution.
  - 10.3. Check the voting form, ensuring the names and photographs of candidates are listed in alphabetical order by surname under the positions they are standing for. The positions are to be listed in the order as per Clause 16 of the Constitution.
  - 10.4. Ensure the system allows all Lincoln University students to vote, and only vote once for each position.
  - 10.5. Test that the secrecy of the ballot is maintained.
  - 10.6. Test that on the ballot, in all elections and for each position, there is an option to vote "no vote" and "no confidence" in the candidates.
- 11. Receive and manage complaints, disputes and appeals:
  - 11.1. Inform the candidates to whom a complaint relates, and where appropriate any other party to the breach, of the complaint. They should be given a minimum of 24 hours to prepare their response.
  - 11.2. Announce all affected election results as "provisional" until the complaint and any subsequent appeals are resolved.
  - 11.3. When a complaint is upheld, apply either a restriction, limitation or penalty (including disqualification), taking into account:
    - 11.3.1. The seriousness of the breach.
    - 11.3.2. The potential or actual effect the alleged breach may have or has had on the outcome of the election; and
    - 11.3.3. The intention of the candidate in committing the breach; and repeated breaches of the rule by a candidate.
  - 11.4. Disqualification may be appropriate in case of:
    - 11.4.1. Damage to property.
    - 11.4.2. Serious, or repeated harassment, intimidation or abuse of any persons.
    - 11.4.3. Any attempt to undermine the integrity of the elections.
    - 11.4.4. Serious or repeated deliberate or negligent breaches of the rules; or
    - 11.4.5. Serious or repeated disregard for the instructions of the Returning Officer of the University and its officers.
  - 11.5. Once the complaint and/or the appeal process are concluded, and determinations have been made, publicly notify the detail of the complaint and any responses, where appropriate.
  - 11.6. Check that any appeal is signed by at least ten (10) Lincoln University students
- 12. Complete Election Report:
  - 12.1. Within 20 working days of the close of voting, complete the report for the LUSA Executive which contains, as a minimum:

- 12.1.1. A summary of the results.
- 12.1.2. A summary of issues, complaints and feedback that arose before, during and after the election.
- 12.1.3. Recommendations on improvements to the election process.
- 12.1.4. Any other matters relevant to the elections.

### **LUSA Executive**

- 13. Set the dates for nominations to open and close.
- 14. Set the dates and give notice of the election days:
  - 14.1. No less than 21 days before elections commence.
  - 14.2. Set by substantive motion.
- 15. Set the dates for any bi-election by substantive motion, provided it is satisfied:
  - 15.1. Sufficient time remains to run an effective election.
  - 15.2. Any elected officer would serve for a reasonable length of time.
  - 15.3. The running of an election would not be unduly expensive.

### **LUSA President**

- 16. Manages any disputes and appeals received during the election process outside the Returning Officer's authority in accordance with Clause B5 of the Constitution.
- 17. Receives complaints against any party except for a candidate.

### **General Manager**

- 18. The General Manager is responsible for ensuring publicity for the elections is undertaken.
  - 18.1. Post a notice calling for nomination for the LUSA Executive and circulate the notice through appropriate media.
    - 18.1.1. The notice must specify the nomination dates no later than seven (7) days before nominations open.
  - 18.2. Promote the elections and all candidates through any other appropriate media.
    - 18.2.1. This publicity must include the date and time of elections and how to vote.
  - 18.3. Update the LUSA website with all candidate statements and photographs once nominations have closed and until the close of voting. Extend this to other relevant social media.
    - 18.3.1. Update the notice in the event that a candidate withdraws.
      - 18.4. Coordinate an "election Q&A" session at least ten (10) days before voting commences.
  - 18.5. Coordinate a "meet the candidates" event no more than five (5) days before voting commences.

### **Related Documents**

- 19. LUSA Elections Policy
- 20. The Constitution of the Lincoln University Students' Association Incorporated
- 21. LUSA Candidates Information Sheet
- 22. LUSA Executive Nomination Form

### **Review**

- 23. This policy is to be reviewed biennially by the LUSA Executive. The Executive may review the policy in the interim.
- 24. The LUSA Executive, by substantive motion, may alter the duration of any actions outlined in the policy, procedure or the constitution, provided that the first date for voting must be no less than seven days after the call for nominations.

## Schedule 1: Timeline of election activities

<b>Event</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Give notice of Elections	At least 21 days before voting.	14
Election Q&A Session	At least 10 days before voting	18.4
Nominations close	7 days before voting	9.1
Electoral Roll available at LUSA Reception	7 Days before voting	7.1
Notice of how to vote given to all LU Students	7 days before voting opens	8.1
Meet the Candidates	Within five days before voting	18.5
Electoral Roll no longer available	1 day before voting	7.1
Voting Duration	No less than two days	10.1
Results announced	Within 24 hours of voting closes	9.6
Appeals	Within 48 Hours	11 &16