

ENSA Official Student Elections Rules 2026

Section A: Before you are a Candidate, you must know...

1. Definitions

- 1.1. **Election Period** – This is the period which covers all election activities, from the opening of nominations until the results declaration. Election rules will be in force throughout this period.
- 1.2. **Restriction Period** – This is the period when the public activity of current Elected Officers is restricted. This period runs from the close of nominations until the results declaration.
- 1.3. **Voting Week** – This is the period from the opening of the polls until the results declaration. During this period, students will be able to vote online.
- 1.4. **Campaigning** – This is considered to be any activity which promotes an election campaign and asks, or implies, that students vote for a particular candidate.
- 1.5. **Sanctions** – This refers to the actions that the Election Committee can take against a candidate as a result of breaching the Election Rules. These can be thought of as punishments for breaking the rules.
- 1.6. **Campaign Budget** – The amount of money, provided by ENSA, that each candidate is allowed to spend in relation to their campaign. There are strict rules about spending money and breaking these rules is a serious offence.
- 1.7. **Legitimate Campaign Expenses** – There are strict rules around what you can, and can't, spend your Campaign Budget on. Any expenses must directly relate to promoting your campaign only and must not be used to 'pay' your campaign team or supporters, whether in cash or with other items.

- 1.8. **A ‘Ticket’ or ‘Slate’** – This refers to 2 or more candidates, running for different positions, teaming up and promoting each other’s campaigns, as permitted within these rules. There are, however, some additional rules about working together, especially if any of the candidates are already Elected Officers with ENSA.
- 1.9. **Elections Officials** – These are the people who ‘run’ the elections, writing the rules, enforcing them and making decisions about what to do if the rules are broken. The Election Officials can be University Staff, ENSA Staff and students.
- 1.10. **Returning Officer** – An individual external and independent of ENSA who has responsibility for ensuring that the Student Elections are conducted fairly and democratically. They have the final decision over decisions related to the election, including complaints and appeals resolutions.
- 1.11. **Deputy Returning Officer** – An appointed member of ENSA staff who oversees the election process to ensure it is compliant with ENSA policies. They handle the day-to-day running of the Student Elections, including dealing with election complaints.
- 1.12. **Assistant Returning Officers** – Members of ENSA staff who assist the Deputy Returning Officer with the running of the Student Elections, and who may handle complaints in their absence.
- 1.13. **Elections Committee** – The group that looks after the elections process, including creating and maintaining a level playing field, setting and enforcing the rules of campaigning, and handling complaints or queries. They remain strictly neutral throughout the Election.
- 1.14. **R.O.N.** – R.O.N. stands for Re-Open Nominations. This will appear as a candidate in all Student Elections polls and allow voters the opportunity to say if they don’t feel any candidates are suitable for the position. If R.O.N. is the most popular candidate for a position, it means no candidate has been elected for that role and ENSA will open nominations again when the election can be reasonably re-run.

2. Your Personal Responsibility as a Candidate

2.1. By nominating yourself as a candidate in ENSA's Student Elections, you agree to:

- **Take personal responsibility for ensuring that you understand and abide by ENSA's rules, regulations, and policies for these elections.**
- **Be held responsible for your own actions and for those of others acting in support of your campaign.**
- **Be personally liable, including for any cost of repair or compensation, for any damage or injury caused during your campaign.**

2.2. ENSA shall make every reasonable effort to answer any questions you may have about the Student Elections; however, **it remains your personal responsibility to ensure that you do not breach any rules or regulations.**

2.3. **Ignorance of the rules shall not be a valid excuse.** "I didn't know" or "We weren't told" will not be accepted as a valid excuse.

2.4. If you want to do something as a Candidate, and you are not sure if it is permitted, **seek advice from ENSA Election Officials first.**

3. Becoming a Candidate

To become an official candidate in the Student Elections, you must:

3.1. Make sure you are eligible to run for a position.

- 3.1.1. Any student currently registered at Edinburgh Napier University, who is actively pursuing their studies towards a qualification in Edinburgh (as confirmed by Edinburgh Napier University), and has been actively engaged in a programme of studies for at least 1 full trimester, is eligible to stand for office.
- 3.1.2. All Sabbatical Officer positions are full-time jobs for a 1-year term. If you are not currently in your final year of studies, you must suspend your studies for a year to take up the post next session (starting in July).
- 3.1.3. All Sabbatical Officers work full-time in Edinburgh, and you must be able to work across the Edinburgh Napier University campuses.
- 3.1.4. Please note that a student can only run for one position and cannot submit multiple nominations.
- 3.1.5. Check www.napierstudents.com/elections/eligibilitycriteria/ for all criteria.

3.2. Write your manifesto to be published on the ENSA Website.

- 3.2.1. Your manifesto is a document that tells students what you would like to achieve if you win the Student Election.
- 3.2.2. Your manifesto must not exceed 300 words. If it exceeds 300 words, any excess will be cut off before it goes live on the ENSA website. It is recommended that you write your manifesto in Word, check the word count, and then start the online application form.
- 3.2.3. Please note that the 300-word limit does not include the answers to the role-specific questions that you must answer on the nomination form.

3.3. Complete the [Online Election Candidate Nomination Form](#).

3.3.1. This must be completed by no later than 12pm on 19/02/2025. Late submissions shall not be accepted.

3.4. Upload your manifesto and 'passport' style photograph to be used in ENSA Student Elections publicity.

3.4.1. You will be asked to upload these as part of the online nomination form.

3.4.2. Uploaded photos should be as large/high definition as possible, ideally showing your full head and shoulders against a plain background. This is similar to a passport photograph however you are allowed to smile!

3.4.3. Remember that your photograph will be used in official publicity alongside your manifesto so think about the kind of 'professional' image you want to give to potential voters.

3.5. Upload your short campaign video to be used in ENSA publicity.

3.5.1. There is an opportunity to upload your campaign video as part of the online nomination form.

3.5.2. Videos should be kept between 15 and 30 seconds, as a simple and quick way of telling students what you would want to achieve in office and why they should vote for you. This could be just you talking to the camera however feel free to make it as interesting and exciting as possible!

3.5.3. If you do not have your campaign video ready to upload or need help with this, please contact d.wright@napier.ac.uk and c.reid@napier.ac.uk.

3.6. Attend a Candidate Briefing Session.

3.6.1. You must attend a Candidate Briefing session to run in the Student Elections.

3.6.2. A member of your campaign team may also attend if you wish.

3.6.3. There will be two briefing sessions held on Wednesday 25 February (2-3pm in Craiglockhart 1/09) and Thursday 26 February (10-11am in Merchiston E31).

- 3.6.4. If you are unable to attend a Briefing Session, you must email d.wright@napier.ac.uk as soon as possible.

3.7. Complete the Trustee/Director Eligibility Form.

- 3.7.1. As all elected Sabbatical Officers sit on the ENSA Board of Directors, you must declare that you are eligible to be a Trustee/Director and declare any 'conflict of interest' you may have.
- 3.7.2. This will be covered in the Candidate Briefing Session.

4. Basic Principles & Core Regulations

4.1. You and your supporters MUST:

- 4.1.1. **Abide by the Student Election Rules, ENSA Policy and UK Law throughout the election process.** This includes Data [Protection Law & Policy](#).
- 4.1.2. Act in the interests of a fair election and **treat other candidates, voters and election officials with civility and respect.**
- 4.1.3. **Be respectful of students' rights not to vote and to go about their business without harassment,** including on campus and online.
- 4.1.4. Observe the deadlines, timetables and rulings set by the Election Officials.

4.2. You and your supporters MUST NOT:

- 4.2.1. Do anything to put yourselves or others in danger.
- 4.2.2. **Make any attempt to influence students who are in the process of voting. This includes explicitly showing students how to vote by directing them to vote for you and taking a voter's device from them.** Every member of the Association has the right to vote freely and in private.
- 4.2.3. **Campaign in any computer or library areas of the University campuses.**

- 4.2.4. **Campaign in, or directly outside, any bathrooms on any University campuses.**
- 4.2.5. **Pass electronic devices to students with which to vote, such as phones, tablets or laptops.** Any appearance of these actions and photographic evidence will lead to sanctions.
- 4.2.6. Act to further your campaign by employing unfair advantage (e.g. using resources not available to others).
- 4.2.7. **Spend any of your own money** or allow supporters to spend any of their own money on your campaign.
- 4.2.8. **Make criticisms of a personal or unsupported nature about other candidates.** It is, however, legitimate to criticise any policy for which a candidate is standing, or to criticise a current office holder's record in office.
- 4.2.9. **Criticise ENSA staff, NUS staff, or University staff** in your campaign.
- 4.2.10. **Deliberately mislead or make false declarations** to Elections Officials.

5. Corrupt Practices

- 5.1. **ENSA will not tolerate corrupt practices and will lead to your disqualification from the election.**
- 5.2. Corrupt practices include:
 - 5.2.1. Giving, making a promise of, any gift or inducement to, or for, any voter to procure their vote (e.g. alcohol, money, food, items of value or promises of positions or favours).
 - 5.2.2. Giving or paying for, wholly or in part, any food, drink or entertainment for any voter in order to secure their vote.
 - 5.2.3. Directly or indirectly making use of, or threatening to make use of, any force, violence, or restraint towards any voter or candidate, to induce or compel that person to vote or not vote, or towards any candidate and their supporters, in order to induce or compel them to refrain from campaigning.

Section B: Timelines

6. Timeline

TIME	DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	INFORMATION
09:00	Mon 19 Jan	Nominations Open		
10:00	Mon 19 Jan	Election Drop-In	Craiglockhart 3/59	Informal drop-ins for students to discuss running in the Elections.
15:00	Mon 19 Jan	Election Drop-In	Merchiston ENSA Office	
15:00	Tues 20 Jan	Election Drop-In	Sighthill ENSA Office	
10:00	Thurs 22 Jan	Election Drop-In	Craiglockhart 1/47	
11:00	Tues 27 Jan	Election Drop-In	Merchiston ENSA Office	
15:00	Wed 28 Jan	Election Drop-In	Sighthill 2.D.15	
10:00	Tues 3 Feb	Election Breakfast: Could you be a Sabbatical Officer?	Craiglockhart 2/07	Come along for an informal chat about running in the Elections, the roles available and how you could lead ENSA next year.
14:00	Wed 4 Feb	Candidate Workshop	Merchiston C18	A no-commitment workshop on running in the Elections, with tips from previous Officers, and general advice on manifesto writing and campaigning.
10:00	Thurs 5 Feb	Candidate Workshop	Craiglockhart 2/117	
12:00	Thurs 19 Feb	Nominations Close	N/A	Deadline for students nominating themselves to run in the Elections
12:00	Fri 20 Feb	Elected Officer Restriction Period Begins		

14:00	Weds 25 Feb	Candidate Briefing Session	Craiglockhart 1/09	Mandatory for all candidates to attend to receive information on being an Election Candidate.
10:00	Thurs 26 Feb	Candidate Briefing Session	Merchiston E31	
09:00	Mon 9 Mar	Online Voting Opens		
15:00	Weds 11 Mar	Budget Form Submission Deadline		
15:00	Thurs 12 Mar	Online Voting Closes		
16:00	Thurs 12 Mar	Candidate Appeals Deadline		
18:00	Thurs 12 Mar	Results Declaration & Announcement Event		The winners of the Student Elections are announced at an event open to all candidates, students and staff.

Section C: Campaign Finances

7. Campaign Budgets

- 7.1. To prevent any unfair advantage between candidates, **each candidate running will be allocated an equal Campaign Budget.**
- 7.2. **You must not spend any of your money on your campaign or allow your supporters to do so.**
- 7.3. **You will be allocated a Campaign Budget of £40**, specifically, which can only be spent on your election campaign.

- 7.4. **You will not receive the Campaign Budget directly, and must reimburse your spending with ENSA using an official Budget Form.**
- 7.5. **It is solely your responsibility to ensure that you do not exceed the spending limit and that you only spend on legitimate items to support your campaign.**
- 7.6. Exceeding the spending limit or buying disallowed items is equivalent to spending your own money, which is a breach of these rules. **Spending limits will be strictly enforced.**
- 7.7. **You must submit a list of all of your spending on a Budget Form, with full receipts attached, to d.wright@napier.ac.uk at least 24 hours before close of polls.**
- 7.8. Budget Forms can be downloaded from the ENSA website [here](#).
- 7.9. **Even if you have not spent any of your allocated Campaign Budget, you must still complete a Budget Form** and submit it by the deadline for public scrutiny.
- 7.10. All candidates' Budget Forms will be published on the ENSA website for public scrutiny and challenge before the results declaration.
- 7.11. **Failure to submit a Budget Form at least 24 hours before close of polls; or exceeding the spending limit; or evidence of a candidate or supporters spending their own money, will result in disqualification of the candidate regardless of the Election results.**
- 7.12. **Expenses will only be reimbursed by ENSA on production of receipts**, up to the limit of your allocation.
- 7.13. **Campaign Budgets may only be spent on legitimate campaign expenses.** The list below is for guidance and is not exhaustive. **If you have any questions about allowed campaign expenditure, please contact the Deputy Returning Officer.**

Allowed Expenses	Disallowed Expenses
Facebook/Instagram paid posts	Food & Drink (including alcohol)
Flyers or Banners	Posters & Stickers
Graphic design or Video Production & Editing	Event tickets (for you or other people)
Costumes & Props	Promotional giveaway items (e.g. pens, notepads, stress balls, key rings)

Section D: Campaign Publicity & Materials

8. Publicity

- 8.1. To avoid any unfair advantage, **any campaign materials used or procured by any means must be deemed to be reasonably available to any ordinary student** at Edinburgh Napier University.
- 8.2. **Your publicity must not contain registered trademarks, any copyright infringement, or other content that could be legally actionable.** For example, your publicity should not personally defame anyone.
- 8.3. **Under UK and EU law, use of copyrighted material for ‘parody’ and ‘pastiche’ does not infringe copyright.**
- 8.4. **Your publicity must not contain images of a sexual nature, weaponry, be abusive, or use derogatory or discriminatory language.**
- 8.5. **The University prohibits the use of stickers** of any kind on or around its property.

9. Posters & Flyers

- 9.1. **You must not distribute or display any posters on campus or in University accommodation.**
- 9.2. **ENSA will arrange the design, printing, and distribution of all Election posters** that give equal representation and promotion to all candidates.
- 9.3. **Use of flyers is permitted; however, candidates must arrange the design, printing, delivery and distribution of their own flyers.** The cost of any flyers produced must be included in the candidate's campaign budget and declared on the Budget Form.
- 9.4. **Candidates are encouraged to minimise their use of flyers**, in line with ENSA's Sustainability Charter. Candidates are also encouraged to collect and reuse discarded flyers, rather than producing more.
- 9.5. Candidates are solely responsible for ensuring flyers are cleared away and do not cause any health and safety risks (such as becoming slip hazards on floors).

10. Digital & Online Campaigning

- 10.1. **Students will cast their votes using an electronic voting system**, so campaigning digitally, online and using social media can be very important; some regulation of these methods is required to avoid students being harassed and 'spammed'.
- 10.2. Candidates must follow the University's guidelines, as well as UK Law, relating to computer use and digital and online communications (such as the Data Protection Act and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations).

11. Computers & the Internet

- 11.1. Any computer usage must be in line with all Edinburgh Napier Information Security policies. (see <https://my.napier.ac.uk/it-support/staying-safe-online/information-security-policies>)
- 11.2. Malicious uses of Information Technology (IT) will be treated as gross misconduct, and disciplinary action will be taken. This includes, but is not limited to, unauthorised access to accounts or systems, creation of fake profiles, impersonation or identity theft, cyber-bullying or harassment.
- 11.3. **You, or your supporters, must not create any websites to further your campaign.** Your manifesto, photograph and a short 'Candidate Profile' will be made available on ENSA's website.
- 11.4. **You must not collect or utilise any personal information from students,** such as names, email addresses or telephone numbers, whether online or in hard copy, for the purpose of furthering your campaign, to avoid any Data Protection legislation implications.
- 11.5. **Any ENSA, Union Bar, or Edinburgh Napier University webpages, mailing lists, email groups or official social media pages must not be used to further your campaign.** This includes member lists for clubs and societies.

12. Electronic Communication

- 12.1. **You, or your supporters, must not send any excessively frequent unwanted communications by any electronic medium** (i.e. no spamming).
- 12.2. **You, or your supporters, must not use emails to further your campaign,** such as sending campaign materials, soliciting votes or 'electioneering', but may respond to questions asked about your manifesto and campaign, provided you did not initiate the communication.

13. Social Media

- 13.1. You must adhere to the terms and conditions of the platform when posting to social media. Inappropriate materials must not be used. (see 8.4)

- 13.2. **You are required to inform the Election Officials of any ‘admin rights’ for any ENSA or Edinburgh Napier University accounts, pages, groups or lists (including individual Sports Clubs and Societies) by the Candidate Briefing, and you must give up such ‘admin rights’ prior to beginning your campaign and until the declaration of results.** The ENSA Communications Team can act as impartial care-takers of any pages or groups during the election period where required.
- 13.3. **You may create appropriate social media accounts to publicise your campaign; however, you must provide details of all campaign accounts to the Deputy Returning Officer or their appointee.**
- 13.4. **You, or your supporters, must not add people to any social media groups (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp etc.) unsolicited or in bulk.** Group members must personally request to be added to any group individually.
- 13.5. **You, or your supporters, must not ‘tag’ people unsolicited or in bulk,** including individual Sports Clubs and Societies, except those that have given express permission. Evidence of permission should be retained, and a failure to provide this evidence upon request will be deemed a breach of election rules.
- 13.6. **To maintain impartiality, the following social media accounts are off limits** and must not be used to further your campaigns, not endorse or give preferential treatment to any specific candidate. ENSA has direct responsibility for these groups and pages, no matter who sets them up.
- ENSA Facebook page
 - ENSA Twitter/X account
 - ENSA Instagram account
 - ENSA Presidents Instagram account
 - Napier Student Film Festival Instagram account
 - UniForce Instagram account

- ENSA LinkedIn account
- ENSA Discord
- Napier Freshers Facebook page
- Napier Freshers Twitter/X account
- Napier Freshers Instagram account
- Any Union Bar social media page or account
- Any Edinburgh Napier University social media page or account
- Any EUSA social media page or account

13.7. You, your supporters, or any campaign-related social media accounts, must not post to any of the pages or accounts listed above.

13.8. You, your supporters, or any campaign-related social media accounts, are permitted to post to certain ENSA-moderated groups on Facebook, including:

- Sports Committee Facebook group
- Societies Committee Facebook group
- Team Napier Shout-Out Facebook group
- ENU Students Only Facebook group
- Find Your Room/Classmates Facebook group
- ENSA Programme Reps Facebook group

13.9. **Paying for boosted adverts and posts on social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, is allowed; however, you must remember to submit evidence of any expenditure** (e.g. a screenshot or email receipt), with your Budget Form.

14. Campaign Videos

- 14.1. **You can submit a single campaign video for inclusion on your Candidate Profile on the ENSA website and ENSA social media.**
- 14.2. **You are also free to create and share any other video content on social media**, provided it does not breach any of the rules stated here; however, ENSA will not share or post videos to social media on your behalf.

15. Campaigning at University Accommodation

- 15.1. **You, or your supporters, are permitted to have a presence on-site at University Accommodation any time between 10am and 10pm during Voting Week.** However, access to any property must be provided by residents following a full disclosure of the purposes for which you are requesting access.
- 15.2. **No additional posters should be placed in University Accommodation sites**, and doing so will immediately lead to sanctions.
- 15.3. **Flyers may only be distributed in-person, directly to students**, and must not be left in piles, put into mailboxes, or posted under doors.
- 15.4. Any unauthorised distribution of flyers at University Accommodation is prohibited, and any such material shall be destroyed.
- 15.5. University Accommodation buildings are residents' homes, and any issues with conduct of campaigners on these premises shall be addressed promptly and may lead to sanctions.
- 15.6. **Any candidate asked to leave a University Accommodation property by a resident must do so immediately.**

Section E: Support & Endorsements

16. Supporting Other Candidates (Running on a 'Ticket' or 'Slate')

- 16.1. **Any candidate can choose to support other candidates running in the Student Elections.** This can be known as running on a 'Ticket' or 'Slate'.
- 16.2. You can endorse other candidates by sharing their materials on personal or campaign social media accounts, verbally when speaking to students, or by campaigning together.
- 16.3. **You must not pool your financial allowances** to increase your spending power.

17. Endorsements

- 17.1. You cannot be publicly endorsed or supported at any time by any member of:
 - The ENSA Board of Directors (except Sabbatical Officers, see 19)
 - ENSA Staff (except Sabbatical Officers, see 19)
 - Any company or business
 - Any commercial or political organisation
- 17.2. You cannot be publicly endorsed or supported by any Edinburgh Napier University staff whilst they carry out the duties for which they are employed, or where their position is explicit or implied. This includes directly campaigning for, or wearing or displaying publicly, any candidate.

18. ENSA Sports Clubs & Societies

- 18.1. **Candidates are permitted to seek endorsement from ENSA Sports Clubs & Societies.**

- 18.2. Candidates, and their supporters, may request to attend in-person or online Sports Clubs & Society meetings, club training sessions or any other event to promote their campaign.
- 18.3. **Candidates and their supporters must seek permission in advance from the Sports Club or Society Committee before attending any Sports Club or Society meeting.** Evidence of permission should be retained, and a failure to be able to provide this evidence upon request will be deemed a breach of election rules.
- 18.4. **If any candidates, campaign teams or supporters are asked to leave a Sports Club or Society meeting or event by the members or committee, they must do so immediately.**
- 18.5. Candidates, campaign teams, or supporters must not use official campaign social media accounts to tag Sports Clubs or Societies, unless prior consent has been expressly given by the Sports Club or Society. Evidence of permission should be retained, and a failure to provide this evidence upon request will be deemed a breach of election rules.
- 18.6. Social media posts from candidates, campaign teams or supporters may be subject to removal at the discretion of the Sports Club or Society.
- 18.7. ENSA has no responsibility for any campaign materials posted, shared, or deleted by any Sports Club or Society on any social media channels.
- 18.8. **ENSA Sports Clubs & Societies are free to endorse any candidate that they wish, provided that no candidate has ‘admin rights’ for their social media accounts during the campaign.**

19. Restrictions on current Elected Officers

By virtue of their position, current Elected Officers may have specific advantages during the election process which need to be mitigated to prevent any abuse of the power of their office and to 'level the playing field' between candidates.

This includes the actions of a current Elected Officer to further their own campaign, support another candidate or act to the detriment of any other campaign.

- 19.1. **Elected Officers must not use email addresses, mailing lists or any other listings, or accounts, which are used in connection with an ENSA role (i.e. anything that carries their title or is used to communicate with constituents/members) for election purposes.** This applies to all Elected Officers, whether they are a candidate or supporting another candidate.
- 19.2. **Elected Officers shall not use ENSA resources** to support any campaign (e.g. office equipment, stationery, all-student emails, or use ENSA offices as a campaign base).
- 19.3. **Elected Officers shall not use any photographs or videos created by ENSA** as part of their campaign or in support of another candidate.
- 19.4. **Elected Officers shall not use ENSA-branded clothing, acquired by virtue of their role or which specifically identifies them as Elected Officers, when supporting or opposing any candidate or campaign.**
- 19.5. **Sports Club 'kit' is permitted to be used, provided it does not identify the committee role of the candidate.**
- 19.6. **If Elected Officers are engaged in ENSA campaigns or activities during the campaign team, they must not use these opportunities to engage in election campaigning** either for themselves or to support another candidate.
- 19.7. Elected Officers will be subject to a period of restricted public activity between the close of applications and the close of polling, where their ability to take part in public campaigns or events will be restricted and monitored.

- 19.8. **If a Full-Time Elected Officer is standing as a candidate, they must not campaign during working hours.** Arrangements to take annual leave, if required, must be made in advance with the CEO. Leave will not be granted in retrospect without penalty. If Elected Officers campaign during the working day without taking leave, this will result in disqualification.
- 19.9. For the avoidance of doubt, current Full-Time Elected Officers are allowed to support other candidates or run on a 'ticket' or 'slate', however this must be outside of working hours and use of ENSA resources, in any form, is strictly prohibited.

Section F: Election Officials

20. Responsibilities of Election Officials

- 20.1. **All Election Officials shall maintain strict neutrality between candidates and provide a free and fair election process**, aiming to ensure a 'level playing field' for candidates and preventing, or addressing, any unfair advantage by:
- Publicising the electoral positions and receiving applications
 - Creating a fair applications process and checking the status of nominees to ensure that they meet eligibility criteria
 - Creating, disseminating, and explaining the rules of campaigning to all election candidates
 - Setting up a voting process that permits students to cast their electoral votes securely and in private, usually using an electronic voting system administered by the University over several days
 - Publicising election week to the student body
 - Dealing with complaints and queries about the rules of campaigning from candidates, and other students, and referring these to the Returning Officer where appropriate

- Adjudicating any disputes that may arise over elections, enforcing the rules and applying any penalties against candidates who breach the rules
- Validating the vote count and organising the declaration of results

21. Who are the Election Officials?

- 21.1. Returning Officer – An individual external and independent of ENSA who has responsibility for ensuring that the Student Elections are conducted fairly and democratically. They have the final decision over decisions related to the election, including complaints and appeals resolutions. This person interprets the rules of the campaign and is referred to for the adjudication of major disputes and/or serious acts of misconduct. In the event of a misconduct claim being upheld, the Returning Officer will decide the appropriate penalty for the candidate.
- 21.2. Deputy Returning Officer – An appointed member of ENSA staff who oversees the election process to ensure it is compliant with ENSA policies. They handle the day-to-day running of the Student Elections, including dealing with election complaints.
- 21.3. Assistant Returning Officers – Members of ENSA staff who assist the Deputy Returning Officer with the running of the Student Elections, and who may handle complaints in their absence.
- 21.4. The Deputy Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officers have the authority to impose an interim sanction based on the available evidence and severity of the rule breach, pending referral to the Returning Officer for a formal decision.
- 21.5. ENSA staff, acting as Assistant Returning Officers, may investigate and report any potential breaches of the rules observed during their normal duties. Candidates and their supporters must comply with any requests made by ENSA Staff members.
- 21.6. ENSA staff may be assigned to university sites during the campaign period to respond to any queries and to ensure conduct is in accordance with the election rules.

Section G: Enforcement, Penalties & Queries

22. Breach of the Rules

- 22.1. **If candidates, or their supporters, wish to complain about an alleged breach of the rules, they must do so to the Deputy Returning Officer, or Assistant Returning Officers.**
- 22.2. **To be considered valid, any complaint must be in writing on an official ENSA Complaint Form, citing the specific rule broken and providing specific evidence of the breach (i.e. a screenshot of a social media post, message, photographs or videos).**
- 22.3. Complaint Forms can be found at
<https://www.napierstudents.com/elections/electioncomplaintform/>
- 22.4. **Verbal complaints will not be considered** by the Deputy Returning Officer. Only complaints submitted using an official ENSA Complaint Form, with accompanying evidence, will be considered and investigated.
- 22.5. **No candidate must take steps to personally remedy an alleged rule breach.**
- 22.6. Multiple complaints must not be grouped on a single ENSA Complaint Form, and **each complaint must be submitted individually** on a separate complaint form for every alleged breach of the rules.
- 22.7. Complaints must be submitted as soon after the breach as possible. Any delay in submission may negatively impact the consideration of the case by Election Officials.
- 22.8. Submission of a complaint will not normally cause a campaign to be suspended whilst complaints are investigated or decided.
- 22.9. **Any complaints deemed to have been filed maliciously or vexatiously to damage another candidate's campaign, rather than to pursue a genuine grievance, may incur a penalty to the candidate who submitted such a complaint.**

- 22.10. Submission of **repeated complaints, unnecessary complaints, complaints that show ignorance of the rules, or repeated verbal complaints, may incur a penalty** to the candidate who submitted the complaint or their campaign team.
- 22.11. **Election Officials may punish any breach of the rules and do anything considered necessary to ensure electoral fairness** (i.e. to ‘level the playing field’ and ‘address an unfair advantage’ between competing candidates, including the disqualification of a candidate.
- 22.12. **Election Officials may issue a warning for minor misconduct and/or take appropriate action to mitigate any ‘unfair advantage’ gained through a breach of the rules**; it is also possible for any breach of the rules that has been deemed to have impacted the outcome of the election to result in disqualification.

23. Right of Appeal

- 23.1. **Candidates have the right of appeal against any decision by the Election Officials.**
- 23.2. **Any appeal must be made in writing, addressed to the Returning Officer, and submitted to either the Deputy Returning Officer or a designated Assistant Returning Officer, within 24 hours of the decision or sanction being sent to the candidate, or up to 1 hour after the close of polls (whichever is sooner).**
- 23.3. The campaign will not normally be suspended while complaints are investigated or decided, so there is no advantage in delaying submission.
- 23.4. **Any post-declaration appeal against an election ruling must be lodged with the Chair of ENSA’s Board of Directors, no later than 3 working days after the declaration of the result.**
- 23.5. Post-declaration appeals will be dealt with in line with the [ENSA Constitution \(Schedule 4\)](#). During consideration of appeals, the declared results shall continue to be valid.
- 23.6. The Board’s decision on an appeal shall be final.

24. Declaration of Results

- 24.1. The results of the election shall not be declared until all outstanding complaints and appeals have been resolved. This may lead to a delay in announcing the results for individual, or all, positions.