

Student Council Election Regulations

Adopted by the Executive Board on 11 May 2021, also entering into force on that date

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Chapter 1: General provisions

Article 1 General provisions

- 1.1. These Election Regulations regulate the organization of the elections for the University Student Council and the Faculty Student Councils.
- 1.2. The members of the Faculty Student Councils are directly elected according to a list system by and from the students of the relevant faculty who are eligible to vote.
- 1.3. The members of the University Student Council are directly elected according to an individual candidate system by and from the students of VU Amsterdam who are eligible to vote.
- 1.4. The election of the members of the University Student Council and the Faculty Student Councils is carried out by secret ballot.

Article 2 Number of seats per council

- 2.1. The number of seats on a Faculty Student Council is laid down in the faculty regulations.
- 2.2. The number of seats on the University Student Council is 11. One of these seats is earmarked for each faculty.

Article 3 Term of council members

- 3.1. The members of the council are elected for one year, starting on 1 September of a year. They can be re-elected.
- 3.2. Apart from members periodically stepping down, the membership of a council members ends:
 - a. by written resignation addressed to the secretary of the Electoral Committee;
 - b. due to the termination of registration as a student of VU Amsterdam;
 - c. two weeks after a decision by the Electoral Committee to dismiss the council member from his or her seat, referred to in Article 31 paragraph 8, unless an objection has been lodged against this decision; or
 - d. immediately after a decision by the Electoral Committee to dismiss the council member from his or her seat, referred to in Article 31 paragraph 9.
- 3.3. A member who has been appointed to fill an interim vacancy steps down at the time when the member in whose place he or she has been appointed would have stepped down.
- 3.4. A person may only sit on the council if he or she is registered at VU Amsterdam during his or her term and if he or she has been granted the right to stand for election under Article 7 paragraph 2.

Chapter 2: Composition and tasks of the Electoral Committee

Article 4 Setting up Electoral Committee

The elections are held under the responsibility of the Executive Board, which sets up an Electoral Committee for that purpose, consisting of three members. The members are appointed for a period of four years and they can be reappointed. A member who has been appointed to fill an interim vacancy steps down at the time when his or her predecessor would have stepped down.

Article 5: Duties of the Electoral Committee

- 5.1 The Electoral Committee is charged with preparing and carrying out the elections. Its tasks include at least:
 - a. drawing up the register of voters based on the data provided by the Executive Board;
 - b. making decisions regarding requests for changes to the register of voters;
 - c. determining the number of eligible voters for each faculty or university;
 - d. deciding on the validity of candidates' nominations;
 - e. making arrangements to ensure an orderly election process;
 - f. declaring a ballot to be invalid and calling a new ballot;
 - g. determining the results of the elections;
 - h. filling vacancies; and

- i. determining the models of the forms to be used, such as the form for nominations, the ballot paper and the election record.
- 5.2. The Electoral Committee's meetings are public, except in so far as the Electoral Committee holds a meeting regarding a task assigned to it in Article 31.
- 5.3. The Electoral Committee announces decisions of a general nature on the election website of the Electoral Committee.
- 5.4. The Executive Board provides the Electoral Committee with the information it needs to carry out its activities and provides support staff.

Chapter 3: Election timetable

Article 6 Election timetable

Each year, the Executive Board sets out the timetable for the elections on the advice of the Electoral Committee. The Electoral Committee sends this timetable to the councils for information purposes and puts it on the election website. The timetable gives:

- a. the reference date for drawing up the register of voters;
- b. the period within which the register of voters can be inspected;
- c. the final date for submitting requests for changes to the register of voters;
- d. the dates and times for nominations of candidates;
- e. the date and time when the Electoral Committee will decide on the validity of the nominations;
- f. the date and time when the elections will open and close;
- g. the date and time of the announcement of the election results; and
- h. the manner in which decisions will be announced.

In any case, the timetable takes account of the possibility of an extension of the deadline for nominations on the basis of Article 13 paragraph 6.

Chapter 4: Register of voters

Article 7 Voting rights

- 7.1 A person who is registered as a student of VU Amsterdam on the reference date enjoys both active and passive suffrage in relation to the council for which he or she is included as an eligible voter in the register of voters. Through termination of the registration after the reference date, the student loses his or her right to vote and is automatically removed from the register of voters.
- 7.2 Notwithstanding paragraph 1, second sentence, the Electoral Committee can grant passive suffrage to a person who is not registered as a student if that person requested in writing the right to stand in the election prior to the reference date on which the register of voters is drawn up. For this purpose, the applicant shall demonstrate that
 - a. he or she has completed at least one full academic year of education at VU Amsterdam;
 - b. his or her registration as a student at VU Amsterdam did not terminate more than 12 months before the reference date; and
 - c. he or she wishes to stand as a candidate for the council that will sit in the following academic year.

Article 8 The register of voters

- 8.1. The register of voters states for each of the eligible voters listed in it:
 - a. the last name;
 - b. the initials or the first name;
 - c. the student number;
 - d. the councils for which he or she is eligible to vote; and
 - e. the faculty to which the student belongs.

- 8.2. The register for the year in which the elections take place is valid up to the date on which the results of the elections become final.

Article 9 Register of voters open to inspection

- 9.1. During the period indicated in the timetable, every eligible voter is given electronic access to inspect the details that refer to him or her.
- 9.2. During the period indicated in the timetable, every person can make a request to the secretary of the Electoral Committee to inspect the register of voters.
- 9.3. A student can send a request to the secretary, by post or in a message sent by electronic means, for a correction to the register if he or she is of the opinion that he or she has not been correctly listed there or has unjustly been omitted or included in the register.
- 9.4. The Electoral Committee can officially correct the register and will immediately inform the eligible voter concerned of the change.
- 9.5. The Electoral Committee will decide as quickly as possible regarding a request for a correction.

Chapter 5: Nomination of FSC candidates

Article 10 Nomination of Faculty Student Council candidates

- 10.1. The election is conducted according to the list system. To this end, candidates are placed on lists.
- 10.2. The list of candidates includes a description of the group to which a candidate belongs.
- 10.3. The description of the group is a maximum of 35 letters or characters. Any longer name will be abbreviated by the Electoral Committee. The order of the lists is determined by drawing lots.
- 10.4. If a list of candidates does not contain any description as referred to in paragraph 2, the name of the first candidate on the list will be used to identify the group.
- 10.5. A list of candidates can only contain names of candidates who belong to the same faculty as the one for which the list of candidates has been submitted.

Article 11 Further provisions concerning nominations

- 11.1. Nominations are made on the standard forms that are included in Appendix 1 of these Election Regulations. Each year, the Electoral Committee sends the forms to known student parties and the councils. The Committee also ensures wider distribution among the student population.
- 11.2. The name of the candidate or the names of the candidates is/are placed on a list of candidates. If there is more than one name on the list, the names appear in the order in which the signatories eligible to vote expressed their preference.
- 11.3. Each candidate provides a written declaration that he or she accepts his or her nomination and place on the list. The acceptance cannot be withdrawn.
- 11.4. For every nomination, the information requested by the Electoral Committee shall be provided. If more than one candidate appears on a list, it is also indicated how this list should be identified.
- 11.5. The degree programme(s) for which a student is registered can be stated on the nomination for the council.

Article 12 Signing a list of candidates

- 12.1. A list of candidates for the Faculty Student Council is signed by five signatories who are eligible to vote.
- 12.2. The signatory to a list of candidates must belong to the faculty to which the list is related.
- 12.3. The signing of a list of candidates by an eligible voter who is himself or herself a candidate for the council in question is invalid.
- 12.4. The list of candidates is submitted in person by an eligible voter to the Electoral Committee during the nominations period. Upon submission, the Electoral Committee provides proof of receipt with the date and time.

Chapter 6: Nomination of USC candidates

Article 13 Nomination of University Student Council candidates

- 13.1. Candidates can register using forms made available for the purpose, which are included in Appendix 1 of these Election Regulations. The forms can be downloaded from the Electoral Committee website. Each year, the Electoral Committee sends the forms to known student parties and the councils. The Committee also ensures wider distribution among the student population.
- 13.2. The name of the candidate or the names of the candidates is/are placed on a list of candidates. If there is more than one name on the list, the names appear in the order in which the signatories eligible to vote expressed their preference. Lists and the order of appearance on a list only have a role to play in the nominations and have no influence on the distribution of seats after the elections.
- 13.3. Each candidate provides a written declaration that he or she accepts his or her nomination. The acceptance cannot be withdrawn.
- 13.4. For every nomination, the information requested by the Electoral Committee shall be provided. If more than one candidate appears on a list, it is also indicated how this list should be identified.
- 13.5. For each nomination, the faculty where the candidate is registered is stated.
- 13.6. If, on the basis of the registrations, the Electoral Committee judges at 17.00 on the last day of nominations that candidates have been put forward from too few faculties to ensure a proper reflection of the breadth of the University, the Electoral Committee can, after consulting the USC, extend the deadline for nominations once by a period of two weeks. The elections will nevertheless be held according to the timetable in Article 6.

Article 14 Signing a list of candidates

- 14.1. A list of candidates for the University Student Council is signed by 15 signatories who are eligible to vote.
- 14.2. The signatory to a list of candidates must be eligible to vote for the USC.
- 14.3. The signing of a list of candidates by an eligible voter who is himself or herself a candidate for the USC is invalid.
- 14.4. The list of candidates is submitted in person by an eligible voter to the Electoral Committee during the nominations period. Upon submission, the Electoral Committee provides proof of receipt with the date and time.

Chapter 7: Assessment of nominations

Article 15 Examination of nominations

- 15.1. The Electoral Committee examines whether the lists of candidates and nominations meet the requirements set in these regulations. If a list of candidates or a nomination does not meet these requirements, the Electoral Committee informs the person who is first on the list of candidates or the candidate himself or herself as quickly as possible.
- 15.2. In doing this, the Electoral Committee can indicate how and by which date the error or omission can be rectified.

Article 16 Decision on validity of nominations

- 16.1. At the date and time stipulated in the timetable, the Electoral Committee decides on the validity of the nominations.
- 16.2. The Electoral Committee cancels the nomination of any person who
 - a. has not been nominated as stipulated in Chapter 5 or 6 of these regulations; or
 - b. appears on more than one list for the election to the same council.
- 16.3. A nomination is invalid if:

- a. it has been submitted too late to the Electoral Committee;
 - b. it has not been personally delivered by an eligible voter; or
 - c. it appears on a list of candidates that has not been properly signed by the required number of eligible voters.
- 16.4. In a message sent by electronic means, the Electoral Committee immediately informs the candidate against whom a negative decision has been made with regard to the nomination.

Article 17 Publication of candidates and lists of candidates

The Electoral Committee adopts the candidates and lists of candidates for the election and publishes these on the election website.

Chapter 8: Voting method

Article 18 Message to eligible voters

- 18.1. In a message sent by electronic means, the Electoral Committee informs every eligible voter in good time regarding:
- a. the applicable voting system;
 - b. the period in which it is possible to vote electronically.
- 18.2. If the number of candidates for a council is equal to or less than the number of available seats, there is no vote and during the voting period the electronic ballot paper is replaced by a message to inform those eligible to vote.
- 18.3. If no candidates have been nominated for a council within a faculty or the University, the electronic ballot paper is replaced during the voting period by a message to inform those eligible to vote.

Article 19 The electronic ballot paper

- 19.1. Every electronic ballot paper states:
- a. which council the election is for and the number of seats to be filled;
 - b. the following information with respect to the candidates:
 - i) for the FSC, the lists submitted for the council, with a box for each candidate in which to record a vote;
 - ii) for the USC, the lists submitted for the council, with for each candidate the name of the faculty to which the candidate belongs and a box for recording a vote;
 - c. a box in which to record an abstention.
- 19.2. Only one box can be filled in on the ballot paper.
- 19.3. If no box is filled in on the ballot paper, the vote is deemed to be invalid.
- 19.4. After completing the ballot paper, the eligible voter sends the ballot paper by electronic means.

Chapter 9: Determination and publication of the results

Article 20 Determining FSC result

- 20.1. The result is determined in a public session of the Electoral Committee, as indicated in the timetable.
- 20.2. For each faculty, the Electoral Committee establishes the following to determine the result of each list of candidates:
- a. the number of votes given to each candidate on a list; and
 - b. the total number of votes given to each list of candidates.
- 20.3. For each faculty, the Electoral Committee determines the total number of all valid votes and divides it by the number of seats to be filled. This number – rounded up if necessary – is the electoral quota.

- 20.4. As many times as the electoral quota is included in the number of votes referred to in paragraph 1 under b ('vote count'), a seat is assigned to the list.
- 20.5. Of the remaining seats, one seat is successively assigned to the list that received the largest number of remaining votes. Remaining votes means the vote count minus the number that is calculated by multiplying the number of allocated seats by the electoral quota. If the numbers are the same, the decision shall be made by drawing lots.
- 20.6. If by applying this working method to a list, one more seat should be allocated than the number of candidates on that list, this seat will move on to the next list according to the system in Article 20 paragraph 5.
- 20.7. Every candidate on the list who has received a number of votes that is at least equal to the electoral quota is elected. The remaining seats are allocated to the candidates who received fewer votes than the electoral quota. The allocation of the remaining seats within a list of candidates follows the order on the list.
- 20.8. If there is no vote on the basis of Article 18.2., all candidates appearing on the lists of candidates are declared elected.

Article 21 Determining University Student Council result

- 21.1. The result is adopted in a public session of the Electoral Committee, as indicated in the timetable.
- 21.2. A distinction is made in allocating the seats between seats that are earmarked and those that are not.
- 21.3. In assigning the seats to the candidates, those seats that are earmarked on the basis of Article 2 paragraph 2 are allocated first. For each earmarked seat, the candidate from that faculty who has the most votes is assigned the earmarked seat. If two or more candidates have an equal number of votes, lots are drawn to decide the allocation of the seat.
- 21.4. If no candidate has been nominated from a particular faculty, that seat will lose its earmarking on the basis of Article 2 paragraph 2 during the relevant term and will therefore be deemed to be non- earmarked.
- 21.5. After the earmarked seats have been allocated, any non-earmarked seats are allocated. Of the remaining candidates, those who received the most votes irrespective of the faculty they belong to are allocated the non-earmarked seats. If two or more candidates have an equal number of votes, lots are drawn to decide the allocation of the seat.
- 21.6. If there is no ballot on the basis of Article 18.2., all candidates appearing on the lists of candidates are declared elected.

Article 22

The Electoral Committee declares a ballot to be invalid if there is a suspicion of an irregularity that could be of influence on the result of the election for the council.

In that case, the Electoral Committee immediately calls a new ballot for that council.

Article 23 Announcement to elected members

- 23.1. In an announcement sent by electronic means, the Electoral Committee informs the candidates who have been elected or declared to have been elected of their election and of the seat they have been allocated. This announcement serves the candidate as a credential letter.
- 23.2. The candidate is assumed to accept his or her election, unless he or she notifies the Electoral Committee that he or she does not accept his or her election within one month of the announcement of the election having been sent.

Article 24 Announcement of election result

The Electoral Committee informs the sitting councils of the result of the elections in an announcement sent by electronic means.

Article 25 Record of elections

The Electoral Committee makes a record of the determination of the election result, which is signed by the chairperson and at least one Electoral Committee member. It then announces the result and immediately puts it on the Electoral Committee's election website.

Chapter 10: Legal protection

Article 26 Submitting an appeal

- 26.1. Stakeholders can submit appeals to the Executive Board against decisions by the Electoral Committee with regard to the adoption of the register of voters, the nominations, including the list descriptions, the declaration as invalid of a ballot for a council, and the determination of the result of the election of a council, as well as with regard to filling a vacancy on a council.
- 26.2. A refusal to decide is equated with a decision. If a decision is not made by the deadline set for it in these regulations or, in the absence of such a deadline, within a reasonable time, this is equated with a refusal to decide.
- 26.3. The notice of appeal is signed and contains:
 - a. name, address and place of residence of the appellant;
 - b. a clear description of the decision against which the appeal is directed, if possible together with a copy of the decision; and
 - c. the grounds for the appeal.

Article 27

The Executive Board makes a decision within one week after receiving a notice of appeal, having heard the appellant and the Electoral Committee.

Article 28

In cases that are not provided for in these Election Regulations, the Electoral Committee makes an arrangement that is as far as possible in the spirit of these regulations.

Chapter 11: After the elections

Article 29 Filling a vacant seat on FSC

- 29.1. If a candidate does not accept his or her seat on the FSC or if an FSC seat falls vacant during the term, the Electoral Committee allocates the seat to the candidate who is next on the list to which the candidate belongs, after those who were previously declared to have been elected.
- 29.2. If no replacements emerge from this list, the Electoral Committee allocates the seat in accordance with Article 20 paragraph 5 and paragraph 7.
- 29.3. If no replacement emerges from among the remaining candidates, the sitting FSC can decide to organize an application procedure to fill the vacant seat or seats. The Electoral Committee arranges this.

Article 30 Filling a vacant seat on USC

- 30.1. If an earmarked USC seat falls vacant, but a student of the faculty for which this seat is earmarked is occupying a non-earmarked seat, this USC member leaves the non-earmarked seat and takes the earmarked seat. The non-earmarked seat is then filled according to Article 30 paragraph 3.
- 30.2. If an earmarked seat falls vacant and there is no student of the faculty for which this seat is earmarked occupying a non-earmarked seat, the earmarked seat is filled by the candidate from the faculty in question with the highest number of votes who has not yet taken a seat

on the council. If no candidates from the faculty remain or they refuse the seat, the earmarked seat becomes a non- earmarked seat and is filled according to Article 30 paragraph 3.

- 30.3. If a non-earmarked seat falls vacant, it is filled by the candidate, irrespective of the faculty, who has the highest number of votes and who has not yet taken a seat on the council. If no candidates remain or they refuse the seat, the procedure in 30.4 is followed.
- 30.4. If no replacement emerges from among the remaining candidates, the sitting USC can decide to organize an application procedure to fill the vacant seat or seats. The Electoral Committee arranges this.

Article 31 Unsatisfactory performance by council members

- 31.1. If, in the opinion of at least one third of all council members, a member of the council is obstructing or failing to participate appropriately in the council’s work, then the council may request a mediator to intervene.
- 31.2. The mediator will provide guidance to the member concerned and the other members of the council to achieve a satisfactory level of cooperation between them.
- 31.3. The duration of this mediation will, in principle, be one month. If the mediator finds that the guidance provided does in fact improve mutual cooperation, then the mediator may decide to extend the duration of the mediation to six weeks.
- 31.4. If the mediator ceases providing guidance on the grounds that the desired result has not been met, then the council may petition the Electoral Committee to conduct an investigation into the performance of the member concerned.
- 31.5. Prior to submitting a petition as referred to in article 31(4) above, the council will give the member concerned the opportunity to be heard regarding the petition. The council will inform the Executive Board about any petition submitted pursuant to Article 31(4).
- 31.6. The Electoral Committee will appoint a committee of wise persons for the purposes of the investigation referred to in Article 31(4). The committee of wise persons will consist of three members. One member is to be appointed on the binding nomination of the council, one member is to be appointed on the binding nomination of the council member concerned and the third member, who is also the chairperson, is to be appointed on the binding nomination of the two other members of the committee of wise persons.
- 31.7. The committee of wise persons will inform the council, the council member concerned and the Electoral Committee by means of a report of the findings of the investigation.
- 31.8. If the committee of wise persons concludes that the council member concerned is seriously obstructing the council’s work, or is not participating in it or is participating in it to a far too limited extent, then the Electoral Committee may, at the request of the council, remove the council member concerned from office. The Electoral Committee will substantiate its decision.
- 31.9. Both the council and the member concerned may lodge an objection with the Electoral Committee against the decision of the Electoral Committee as referred to in Article 31(8) within two weeks of the decision. Article 26(2) and (3) apply mutatis mutandis. The Electoral Committee will reach a definitive decision within six weeks of receipt of the objection on whether the council member is to be removed from office.

Appendix 1 Model forms

List of candidates [University/Faculty] Student Council [term]

[Name of the Faculty :]

Name of the list :]

CANDIDATES :]

	student number	VUnet ID	surname	initial(s)	first name	m/f	degree programme
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							
13.							
14.							
15.							
16.							
17.							
18.							
19.							
20.							

NOMINATORS:

A list of candidates for the FSC is signed by five eligible voters; a list of candidates for the USC is signed by 15 eligible voters.

	student number	VUnet ID	surname	initials	m/f	degree programme	signature
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							
13.							
14.							
15.							

This form is to be submitted by a voter in person to the Electoral Committee¹

- When : **on [date]**
- Where : **[place]**

Received by the Electoral Committee on:

- Serial number:
- Name of submitter:
- The submitter can be contacted on telephone number:

¹ The Electoral Committee can be reached at kiescommissie@vu.nl

Appendix 2 Declaration of acceptance by

candidate Student Council Elections [year]

The undersigned

Surname :.....

Initials :.....

First name :.....

E-mail address :.....

VUnet ID :.....

Student no. :.....

declares that he/she accepts his/her nomination and – if the nomination is for a Faculty Student Council – his/her place on the list for the student council indicated below

University Student Council

Faculty Student
Council Name of faculty: ...

and is aware of the fact that a declaration of acceptance, once made, cannot be

withdrawn. Date:

Signature:

On the basis of Article 11.3 and Article 13.3 of the Student Council Election Regulations, every candidate shall provide a written declaration of acceptance. This declaration is to be signed by each of the nominated candidates and submitted by a voter together with the list of nominations.