Supplementary Rules to Bye-Law 2 Referenda
Pursuant to Bye-Law 2, these rules were agreed by the Elections Committee on 12/03/2020
for application to the SU Officer Elections 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Returning Officers</th>
<th>Activities Officer Martha Evans, Welfare Officer Beren Maddison, Geography Councillor Alex Adams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Returning Officer</td>
<td>The National Union of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting Officer</td>
<td>Jaki Booth (Students’ Union Chief Executive) or their nominee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Advisory Staff | Kathryne Fraser (Deputy Director of Membership Engagement)  
Amy Thornton (Head of Student Groups Support)  
Sarah Pugh (Democracy Coordinator) |

Pursuant to Bye Law 2, 1.3, the timetable for these Referenda is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publish the proposal and date(s) for the referendum, seeking any alternative or related proposals and statements for and against the proposals, within 5 days.</td>
<td>10am Thursday 20th February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cease accepting alternative or related Referendum proposals</td>
<td>10am Thursday 27th February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish the Referendum proposal, with any alternative or related proposals, and the arrangements for meetings required to debate it.</td>
<td>10am Friday 28th February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Opens</td>
<td>10am Monday 9th March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Closes</td>
<td>5pm Wednesday 11th March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Announced</td>
<td>7pm onwards Thursday 12th March 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Always use your common sense and try to resolve issues with other campaigners through compromise, courtesy and respect, and ask where you are unsure about a campaigning rule or if you are not sure if something is permitted.

General queries, not complaints, can be directed to the Returning Officers via elections@sheffield.ac.uk.

1. GENERAL RULES

1.1 All referendum campaign team members agree to abide by the following rules as a compulsory requirement. Campaigners are responsible for all those acting in support of them and their campaign.

1.2 Bye-Law 16, and these supplementary rules shall be interpreted and enforced by the Returning Officers in response to any matter relating to the referendum. The Returning Officers shall be guided by the principles of reasonableness and proportionality in applying all referendum rules.

1.3 No person involved in a referendum campaign, shall hold a position involved in the planning, administering, overseeing or providing coverage of the referendum for the duration of the election period.

1.4 During a referendum all campaigners, and all members of the Union shall act in the interests of a fair and properly conducted election, in which all members are able to cast a vote, by secret ballot, for their preferred outcome, without influence or pressure from any other individual or group, and in which all campaign teams have a fair chance contesting, and being elected to their position.

2. CAMPAIGNING AND CANVASSING

2.1 Though not exhaustive nor exclusive, “campaigning” or “canvassing” will mean any of the following, engaged in as part of any Students’ Union Referendum:
   2.1.1 Distributing physical materials, such as posters or leaflets, in public locations
   2.1.2 Public communications including via social media
   2.1.3 Public interviews with any news or media outlet
   2.1.4 Acting in any other way so as to solicit votes in the SU Referenda, as determined by the Returning Officers.

2.2 It is the campaigners responsibility to obtain permission to carry out campaigning activities in public or University spaces. Campaigning around the concourse area of campus is permitted, but please note that materials which are likely to cause damage to buildings and structures are not permitted. This will include, but not be limited to, stickers and sellotape.

2.3 Campaigners may not:
   2.3.1 Undertake and public campaigning activity, as defined by section 2.1 of these rules, before the referendum proposal is published at 10am on Thursday 20th February 2020.
   2.3.2 Seek to influence or deliberately observe a member who is engaged in the act of voting on any device, nor provide voters with a voting platform (e.g. a smartphone, tablet, etc.)
   2.3.3 Obscure, tamper with or remove the publicity of any other campaign.
   2.3.4 Make any “false statement of fact” in relation to another campaigner’s personal character, campaign or conduct.
2.3.5 Engage in behaviour that may harass, intimidate, abuse, threaten and/or discriminate. This will usually mean unwanted behaviour which violates another's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

2.3.6 Continue to engage with a member once a request for them to cease has been made.

2.3.7 Induce or gain votes through any financial means, meaning the offering, giving, solicitation or the acceptance of any inducement or reward including, but not limited to, the use of currency in any form, physical or digital payment or benefit. (e.g. amazon vouchers, pop tarts tickets, random prize draws of money or goods)

2.4 The above rules shall not interfere with the freedom of all campaigners to express lawful views and opinions that may offend, shock or disturb. Freedom of speech and expression, within the law, is a human right which underpins a democratic society. It is not an absolute right and can be restricted in circumstances where it is legitimate and proportionate to do so.

2.5 Campaigners may not exceed the agreed spending limit for campaign teams. All campaigners must provide all proof of expenditure related to their campaign by 5pm on the day of the close of voting, which will be scrutinised by the Returning Officers following the close of voting. Items freely available to any and all students at no cost do not need to be accounted for in declaration of expenditure.

2.6 Reasonable adjustments to permitted spending may be provided to campaigners with a disability in order to facilitate their engagement with the referendum process. Such adjustments will be proportionate to the resources available to run the referendum as a whole.

2.7 The above are neither exclusive nor exhaustive, and the Returning Officers have the right to deem any method of campaigning inappropriate.

3. REFERENDA COMPLAINTS PROCESS

3.1 Any referendum related complaint will only be considered when submitted using the Elections Complaint Form: https://forms.gle/4XNMaPfPr9SxKvrP6. Candidates must not attempt to submit complaints by any other means. Incomplete complaint forms will not be considered by the Returning Officers.

3.2 All rules will only be enforced based on the available facts and supporting evidence provided as part of a complaint.

3.3 The Returning Officers shall usually make rulings on any properly submitted complaint within one working day of receipt.

3.4 In addition to being able to penalise campaigners and postpone or nullify the result of a referendum, The Returning Officers may also apply the following penalties:

3.4.1 Issue a caution to a campaigner,

3.4.2 Require a specific action by a candidate (e.g. a formal apology, the removal of certain campaign materials etc.)

3.4.3 Issue a formal warning, which may be made public to all candidates and voters,

3.4.4 Apply a campaign ban for a specified period,
3.5 At any point during the referendum the Returning Officers may seek advice from the Senior Returning Officer, the Counting Officer or Students’ Union advisory staff.

3.6 Any appeal against a decision of the Returning Officers must be submitted in writing according to the following time restrictions:

- 3.6.1 Before the opening of polling: within 24 hours of the decision being communicated.
- 3.6.2 During polling: within 5 hours of the decision being communicated.

3.7 The University Secretary will be notified of serious breaches of the Regulations.
Appendix:

**Bye-Law 2**

**REFERENDA**

1. **ORGANISATION OF A REFERENDUM**

1.1 The President should be responsible for organising a referendum when instructed:

1.1.1 by a petition of 1,000 Full Members, in relation to the policy of the Students' Union, changes to the Students' Union's Constitution and Bye-Laws, the removal of Officers or other elected officials and the removal of specific duties from an Officer or other elected official;

1.1.2 by a decision of the Students' Union Council, in relation to the policy of the Students' Union, changes to the Students' Union's Constitution and Bye-Laws, the removal of Officers or other elected officials and the removal of specific duties from an Officer or other elected official in accordance with Bye-Law 3. In the case of a referendum called to remove a Students' Union Officer or other elected official, or to remove specific duties from a Students' Union Officer or other elected official, the decision of Students' Union Council shall require a two thirds majority of those present;

1.1.3 by a decision of Student Executive Committee, in relation to a disagreement with Students' Union Council, in accordance with Clause 1.2 of Bye-Law 3;

1.1.4 by a decision of a Discipline Panel (convened under the procedures set out in the Employment Handbook) to recommend removal of an Officer or the removal of specific duties.

1.2 The Referendum shall be held not sooner than 12 days and not later than 22 days following the decision of the Students' Union Council, or receipt of the petition, or at such other time as may be mutually agreed by the proposers of the referendum and the President.

1.3 The referendum shall be arranged in accordance with the following timetable (of days prior to the first day of voting):

- 12 days: Publish the proposal and date(s) for the referendum, seeking any alternative or related proposals and statements for and against the proposals, within 5 days
- 7 days: Cease accepting alternative or related proposals
- 6 days: Publish the proposal, with any alternative or related proposals, and the arrangements for meetings required to debate it.

1.4 An alternative or related proposal shall be considered on receipt of a petition of 500 Full Members. It shall be worded so that it can stand alone from, or alongside, the original proposal.

1.5 In the case of any dispute regarding the wording of proposals, or if it deems necessary, Students' Union Council shall be empowered to revise the wording of proposals in order to ensure that those voting in referenda are presented with clear choices and decisions.

2. **GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS**

2.1 Any decision or petition for a Referendum shall specify a single proposal or separate proposals each of which shall not exceed 200 words, except in the case of Constitution or Bye-Law amendments.

2.2 In the case of proposed amendments to the Constitution or Bye-Laws the full wording of the amendments shall be clearly displayed adjacent to the Polling Station.

2.3 Students' Union Council shall determine the financial arrangements for publicising referenda. Such arrangements shall ensure that all referenda held within each academic year receive equal funding.

2.4 Prior to the Referendum, it shall be the responsibility of the President to organise at least one meeting, open to all Full Members, to debate the proposal.

2.5 A minimum of 1,000 Full Members shall be required to cast votes in the Referendum for the decision to be binding.
2.6 The Returning Officers shall actively seek statements for and against referenda proposals to assist those voting to consider the issues involved. If more than one statement is submitted, the Returning Officers shall decide upon which one is published, or may prepare a new statement combining different statements.

2.7 The proposers and opponents of a referendum shall be entitled to produce a statement of not more than 200 words, and proposers and opponents of alternative or related proposals a statement of not more than 100 words, for publication in accordance with Bye-Law 17.

3. **CONDUCT OF THE REFERENDUM**

3.1 The Referendum shall be conducted by means of a ballot open to all Full Members.

3.2 Polling shall be held on at least one day for at least 8 hours in the Students’ Union Buildings, and at least 2 hours in such academic areas and halls of residence as may be determined by Students’ Union Council.

3.3 The Referendum shall be conducted in accordance with the general regulations covering cross-campus ballots, as laid down in the Bye-Laws.

4. **NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS**

4.1 A referendum shall be held annually to consider the affiliation of the Students’ Union to the National Union of Students.

4.2 This referendum shall normally be held concurrently with the elections for Students’ Union Officers.