

University of Cumbria Students' Union

Election Complaints, Decisions & Issues 2020

This report acts as a record of the actions of the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) throughout the 2020 Elections. It is an account of all informal and formal complaints received, issues raised, and decisions made. Individual candidates, students, and staff have been anonymised.

Formal Complaints

No formal complaints were submitted.

Informal Complaints, Decisions & Issues

Date	Incident	Action	Outcome	Sanction
10/02/2020	Candidate used official Officer photo in nominations, including UCSU logo.	Candidate advised to change photo.	Candidate changed photo.	n/a
13/02/2020	Candidate asked how to evidence expenditure for train travel bought online.	Candidate advised to attach email confirmations in email (with expenditure form) to DRO, or print confirmations and attached to printed copy of form.	Candidate agreed to proposed solutions.	n/a

17/02/2020	Candidate queried if they could ask a lecturer to email their students to promote thier candidacy.	Candidate advised that if other candidates are able to access that support, then they are permitted to request such an email be sent on thier behalf. If this opportunity is proven to not be available to other candidates (at the descretion of the academic member of staff) then this may need to re-assessed.	Monitor email. Catch-up with candidate to confirm availability of opportunity to other candidates.	n/a
17/02/2020	Nominee missed deadline for nominations. References recent hopsitalisation and confusion regarding the 5pm deadline (rather than assumed midnight deadline). Message sent to DRO on 16/02/2020 at 22:33pm explaining error.	Nominee permitted to submit nomination. Asked to email name, photo & manifesto to DRO.	Await nomination via email. Email received 17/02/2020. Nomination submitted manually.	n/a
20/02/2020	Candidate asked if they were able to campaign at Energus (Workington) campus.	Candidate advised initially that they are students and are eligible to vote. Staff in Energus to made aware of likelihood of campaigning activity.	Monitor activity and impact of Energus campaigning activity. Ensure campaigning not inhibited by site or staff.	n/a
20/02/2020	Candidate asked if able to use friends' home printer (for free) and asked if a similar resource could be reasonably expected to be accessible to other candidates.	Candidate informed or past ruling regarding hom printing: to be accounted for at same rate as University printing.	If candidate uses home printer, to account in Expendittrue Form at University printing rate.	n/a
24/02/2020	Candidate asked if they could form more than one slate with different groups of candidates.	Candidates informed that they are free to work with any candidates they wish.	Remind candidates that they are responsible for their own agreements with each other.	n/a
24/02/2020	Candidate raised concerns about their ability to update their photo online.	Candidate invited to send images to DRO to update throughout website.	n/a	n/a

24/02/2020	Candidate raised concerns about other candidates' "stealing manifesto" points.	Candidate asked for more details but informed that only the candidate and the DRO have access to manifestos at this point. Candidate stated that they had shared their manifesto with a candidate which was now part of a competing slate.	Advised not to worry. Invited to amend their manifesto (if they wish).	n/a
24/02/2020	Candidate requested details of member of University staff responsible for campus screens.	Candidates advised that they will need to contact University Marketing department.	Offer support to SU Staff to ensure they remain impartial. DRO contacted by University Marketing department regarding candidate request. Advised that the decision is theirs, as long as they apply the same rule to all candidates. Advised that they could (and possibly should) set a cap on the number of candidates who can use the screens on a first-come-first-served basis. Marketing asked for numbers of candidates, shared (25/02/2020).	n/a
24/02/2020	University Campus Manager contacted DRO regarding a request from a candidate for them to send out email communications promoting the candidate to all students on their site (and share the email with all other Campus Managers).	Advised that the decision is theirs, as long as they apply the same rule to all candidates. Advised against sharing message out to other Campus Managers.	Monitor communications from University staff during voting period. Provide support and guidance where necessary.	n/a
03/03/2020	Staff suggested that come candidate had raised concerns regarding the ability of one candidate to contact	Staff informed that both candidates were present at the same training event so they had contact before the publication of candidate details.	Timings to be reviewed for next election, bearing in mind existing priority of candidate welfare and discouragement of withdrawals.	n/a

	another before the publication of candidate details (to facilitate slates).			
03/03/2020	Member of University staff (using personal account) observed commenting in support of a candidate on social media.	No action taken.	Activity of candidate and member of staff to be monitored, no concerned to date.	n/a
05/03/2020	Member of University staff observed removing candidate poster.	Staff informed DRO that candidates using sellotape to affix posters against recently implemented University rules.	Poster put back up using blu tac. Candidates informed that they must use blu tac in future and that they risk having their posters removed.	n/a
05/03/2020	Campaigner for candidate A (who was to attend their lecture to deliver a lecture shout) asked candidate B to not attend lecture shout. Encouraged them to attend lectures later in the day.	DRO in attendance. Candidate B advised to attend later lectures.	Candidate A apologies to Candidate B for the behaviour of campaigner. Interactions between candidates increasingly heated - monitor.	n/a
05/03/2020	Poster removed. Ground floor of Gateway building.	Without knowing where the poster is, or who took it down. No action can be taken.	No further action to be taken.	n/a
05/03/2020	Candidates raised concerns about the conduct of a campaigner for another candidate.	DRO contacted candidate (for whom the campaigner is supporting). DRO raised concerns with candidate. DRO also questioned a tweet sent by the candidate.	No further action needed.	n/a
06/03/2020	Candidate overspent by £0.02.	Candidate formally disciplined in writing.	Due to size of overspend, and options available to DRO, no sanctions to be applied.	None

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