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**Election Rules and Regulations Policy**

**Last Updated By Max Bamford**

**(January 2024)**

**Introduction**

This policy details the expected conduct and operations of elections that occur within the Junior Common Room (JCR), namely those that result in the appointment of JCR members to the JCR Committee. It is supplementary to the University policies and procedures and is in no way meant to be contradictory to them. Where this may occur, the Election Rules and Regulations Policy shall not in any way be interpreted as to overrule the University policies and procedures.

**Nomination Procedure**

Candidates must be nominated by one JCR member and seconded by one JCR member (serving, previous or future JCR Officers and Democracy Committee members may not nominate or second a candidate).

Candidates must submit AND email (snow.jcr@durham.ac.uk) the following to the John Snow JCR Office by the deadline specified on the nomination form: a completed nomination form, a manifesto (maximum 250 words) and a manifesto summary (maximum 50 words).

They must also email a photograph which is a true likeness of them by the deadline specified.

**Hustings**

* Hustings will take place for each position publicly with JCR members being invited to attend. The order of hustings will be decided by the JCR Chair and each candidate’s speech must not exceed **3 minutes**. However, candidates running for the position of JCR President can give a speech which must not exceed **5 minutes**.
* Candidates will be asked to vacate the hustings area whilst other candidates are husting for the same position. Candidates **must not make negative references** to any other candidates during their own speeches.
* Candidates will be expected to answer questions from present JCR members after all candidates for a given position have made their husts.
* Candidates may only begin campaigning **after** all speeches have been delivered and the meeting has officially been closed by the JCR Chair.
* Candidates **must not** campaign during hustings nor have campaign materials with them during hustings.

**Campaigning**

* In relation to campaigning, candidates CAN:
* Place posters on suitable notice boards in college and around campus that cover no more than an area equivalent to three A3 pieces of paper per notice board.
* Place posters in accommodation blocks but only where notice boards are present or other posters are regularly displayed.
* Display posters on their own bedroom doors and the doors of individuals who have given explicit permission for them to do so.
* Place campaign materials on tables in communal kitchens.
* Candidates cannot make any reference to voting for themselves in their campaign material. The statement ‘X for Y role’ is allowed but cannot be a derivative of ‘Vote X for Y role’. Only encouraging voting is allowed.

NB. If campaign materials are not stamped with the official ‘John Snow College’ stamp, there is a risk that they will be removed without warning by college staff.

However, candidates CANNOT:

* Use gifts, incentives or giveaways as part of their campaign.
* Utilize any groups that they are in related to college activities (such as sports and society group chats) to solicit votes.
* Send emails or text messages to solicit votes, or use lists of contact details such as mailing lists of clubs and societies to communicate with large groups.
* Interfere with, alter or damage campaign materials belonging to themselves or other candidates, including the removal or ‘covering up’ of posters and flyers even if to make space for their own materials.
* Make negative reference, implied or explicit, to any other candidate throughout their campaign (even candidates running for a different position to themselves)
* Have more than one form of ‘main campaign’ (i.e candidates may **not** have a facebook page **and** place posters around college)

**Social Networking regulations**

In relation to social networking sites, candidates can:

* Create **EITHER** a single event **OR** group **OR** page to promote their campaign (not more than one) as their ‘main form’ of campaigning.
* Make **GENERIC** posts on ‘John Snow College JCR (Official Group)’ and ‘John Snow Freshers (Official Group)’ to encourage JCR members to vote in the elections.

In addition to their main form of campaigning (i.e poster/page/event), candidates may post personal status updates and ‘stories’ to promote their campaign from their **personal** accounts.

Therefore, candidates **CANNOT**:

* Send private messages or communicate via ‘instant chat’ to solicit votes **and/or** support **and/or** endorsement.
* Post on any other pertinent events or groups (e.g. sports teams groups).
* Post or comment on another person’s account/page to solicit votes.

The rules surrounding social media are not an exhaustive list – the evolving and complex nature of social media shall be taken into consideration when deciding whether an action constitutes a breach of the rules and regulations. Where possible, a breach of these rules and regulations will result in the removal of posts as soon as possible in the first instance.

**Other Persons**

Incumbent JCR (and future[[1]](#footnote-1)) committee members, JCR ‘role’ holders, Agents and Democracy Committee (JCR position holder) must remain neutral throughout the campaigning and voting period. They must not make any endorsements of any candidates and must not encourage others to vote for any particular candidate, but may encourage voting in general.

If the person running for election is an incumbent JCR member, they must not use their position during the time of voting to solicit votes (for example posting campaign materials on JCR officer specific social media accounts, or running an **unnecessary** social media campaign during the voting period to increase voter knowledge of their role)

Non-candidates who do not fit into any of these categories CAN make an **independent** personal decision to support one or more candidates via social media during the campaign period. However, they **MUST NOT** make such decisions at the request of any candidates. Should an independent candidate choose to do this they may only use materials created by themselves or taken from the candidate’s main campaign page. The candidate therefore must not privately supply any materials for non-candidates to share via social media.

If a non-candidate makes such a decision, they **CAN ONLY**:

* Post personal status updates/stories to promote a candidate’s campaign.
* Use materials on their status updates that they have created themselves or have been shared on the candidate’s official campaign page

A non-candidate **CANNOT:**

* Use any authority over a club or society (e.g. As Club Caption of a sports team) to endorse a candidate (e.g. ‘John Snow College Football Club endorses X for the position of Y’, or ‘I as President of John Snow Baking Society endorse X for the position of Y’] . People in these roles may still make endorsements but must make it clear that this is their **personal** view and not the view of the club/society that they represent
* Similarly, whole clubs/exec’s of clubs may not make any endorsement as a whole, although individual members of clubs and club exec’s may make an indorsement in a personal capacity.
* Break the social media and general campaigning regulations
* Make negative reference to any other candidate.
* Solicit votes on behalf of a candidate in private groups they may have access to that the candidate does not.

Any form of support by non-candidates **must** follow the regulations above. Should a non-candidate break these rules, the candidate may be ruled out of order even in the even in the event that they didn’t instruct the non-candidate to partake in this activity. This shall be at the discretion of the chair depending on the severity and perceived impact of the action.

**Infringement**

If you feel that any of the aforementioned rules and regulations have been breached by a candidate, then you may report the incident either by email to snow.jcr@durham.ac.uk or by speaking with the JCR Chair or JCR President. You should not take any personal action.

If a breach of the rules and regulations (as detailed herein or in the JCR governing documents) is discovered or reported, the chair and/or the Democracy Committee has the discretion to take any action deemed appropriate.

Should a candidate or non-candidate (see above) wish to campaign in any way not **EXPLICITLY** stated as being permitted in this document, they should seek the advice of the Chair as to whether this is permitted **before** they begin campaigning in this way. Failure to do this may result in **disqualification** should the chair deem this action out of order. Candidates may therefore not use the excuse that they were unaware that such an action was against the rules, as it is their responsibility to clarify this with the chair before engaging in any campaigning methods that may not be permitted.

If a candidate feels they have been treated unfairly by the imposition of a sanction, they have the right to appeal.

As stated in the JCR Standing Orders Point 19.9.2, **the decisions of the Returning Officer (chair) with regards to election regulations will be final.**

1. Future members are any persons who have been successfully elected into a role but their term of office has not yet begun [↑](#footnote-ref-1)