

University and College Union

Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH Tel 020 7756 2500

To	Branch and local association secretaries
Topic	UCU elections 2011-2012: ballot period and guidance notes
Action	For information
Summary	Information about UCU Trustee, General Secretary, Officer and NEC elections, including the upcoming ballot period
Contact	Catherine Wilkinson, Head of Constitution and Committees, email cwilkinson@ucu.org.uk ; Kay Metcalfe, administrator kmetcalfe@ucu.org.uk

Dear Colleagues

1. Vacancies and nominations received

Full details of the vacancies to which nominations were called, and the nominations received, can be found at www.ucu.org.uk/elections and were issued in branch circulars UCU/373 and UCU/385.

2. Ballot period

Ballots will open on Monday 6 February and close on Thursday 1 March 2012.

It is expected that the result of the General Secretary election will be announced on Friday 2 March. The result of NEC, officer and trustee elections will be announced in the following week. All results will be made available at www.ucu.org.uk/elections.

3. Receipt of ballot material

Ballot material will be dispatched by second class post on Monday 6 February. We know that this can take a few days to arrive. If any member has not received the ballot material to which they are entitled by Tuesday 14 February, they should contact the union. The best way to enquire about the non-receipt of ballot material is to contact Kay Metcalfe or Catherine Wilkinson (kmetcalfe@ucu.org.uk; cwilkinson@ucu.org.uk, telephone 020 7756 2500), providing full name, membership number, branch, and the full postal address at which the ballot paper should have been received.

The last day on which duplicate ballot material enquiries will usually be dealt with is Friday 24 February 2012.

Candidates' election addresses are also available at www.ucu.org.uk/elections.

4. The scrutineer

The scrutineer for this election, as previously notified to members, is Electoral Reform Services, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW. (Note that the pre-paid reply envelopes provided for the return of ballot papers will show a different address; this reflects an arrangement Electoral Reform Services has to deal with the very large volume of post it receives. All ballot papers returned in pre paid envelopes, or to the office address above, will reach the scrutineer.)

5. Any other queries

Any enquiries about these elections can be made to Kay Metcalfe or Catherine Wilkinson in the Constitution and Committees team at UCU's head office.

Further information about these elections can be found at www.ucu.org.uk/elections.

6. Officer and NEC elections guidance notes

Set out below and drawn to the attention of branches are the trustee, officer, and NEC elections guidance notes, and the General Secretary election guidance notes which concern campaigning by candidates and promotion of candidates by branches. These have also been available on the UCU website at www.ucu.org.uk/elections since the calling notice for these elections was issued.

Yours sincerely

Terry Hoad

President and returning officer

TRUSTEE, OFFICER, AND NEC ELECTIONS

GUIDANCE NOTES

- 1 Candidates are asked to take note of the Union's wish that their campaign materials and comments, although vigorous and critical, will not be gratuitously offensive, abusive or defamatory, nor refer in a derogatory way to the race, religion, sexual orientation, age or other personal characteristic of candidates.
- 2 It is expected that particular care will be taken not to make any such remarks about members of UCU staff who may not be in a position to reply.
- 3 Candidates are encouraged to campaign through the positive promotion of their candidacy, rather than through negative campaigning about other candidates.
- 4 Points 1, 2 and 3 do not in any way infringe the right of a candidate to write an election address with the content they wish, recognising that all liability for ALL remarks in a candidate's election address rests with the candidate and not the Union.
- 5 The Union will distribute election addresses of candidates along with supplementary trade union service information as part of the ballot material for any ballots held. The Union will make available on its website the election addresses and trade union service information of candidates.
- 6 Other than the specific provision made in paragraph 5 above, candidates are not permitted the use of UCU funds or resources for the purposes of campaigning. Except as permitted by UCU, use by candidates of sensitive personal data held by UCU or any of its officials and/or officers (elected or paid) is not permitted under any circumstances. Breach of either of these clauses by a candidate may result in exclusion from the ballot.
- 7 Email lists which are held by UCU's head offices and regional offices are a resource of the union and cannot be used for campaigning by NEC candidates. Candidates must not approach UCU staff in relation to campaigning in NEC elections. Candidates should not use member email discussion lists administered by UCU (such as the activists' list) for NEC election campaigning. Candidates may have in their possession email lists based on their personal contacts. Such email lists are a matter for the individual.
- 8 The use of email lists held by branches, for contacting all branch members, is a matter for branches. Use of them (or not) for election campaigning must be a decision of the branch, not of an individual who has access to such a list because of their role within the branch.

A branch may wish to promote a particular candidate, and it can do so. However, the NEC recommends and encourages branches to circulate information about all candidates standing in any one election. This allows members, as voters, to make

better informed decisions, and reduces the likelihood of complaints (whether justified or unjustified) or accusations of unfairness.

The language of any communication should be measured. Any opinions expressed about candidates and their suitability for election should be fair and grounded in fact. Branches should note that they are liable for any defamatory statements made about candidates in their communications.

Branches should deal with any emails relating to NEC elections in the usual way that they administer emails to members, and must not release contact details of members, including email lists, directly to candidates.

- 9 The principles of 7 and 8 apply equally to any circulations made in hard copy by the branch, such as local newsletters.

GENERAL SECRETARY ELECTION 2012

GUIDANCE NOTES

- 1 Candidates are asked to take note of the Union's wish that their campaign materials and comments, although vigorous and critical, will not be gratuitously offensive, abusive or defamatory, nor refer in a derogatory way to the race, religion, sexual orientation, age or other personal characteristic of candidates.
- 2 We hope that particular care will be taken not to make any such remarks about members of UCU staff who may not be in a position to reply.
- 3 Points 1 and 2 do not in any way infringe the right of a candidate to write an election address with the content they wish, recognising that all liability for ALL remarks in a candidate's election address rests with the candidate and not the Union.
- 4 The Union will distribute election addresses of candidates along with supplementary biographical information, and make these available on UCU's website, and, in the case of candidates for the post of General Secretary, equal access will be allowed to the UCU members' email list for the purpose of giving all candidates the opportunity of making four electronic communications to all members on this list in the period between the close of nominations and the close of the ballot. The returning officer will issue advice to all candidates on the timing, word limit and other features of any such communications. A candidate may decline all or any such opportunity to make an electronic communication. This will not affect the opportunity of other candidates to make such communications.
- 5 Other than the specific provision made in paragraph 4 above, candidates are not permitted the use of UCU funds or resources for the purposes of campaigning. Except as permitted by UCU, use by candidates of sensitive personal data held by UCU or any of its officials and/or officers (elected or paid) is not permitted under any circumstances. Breach of either of these clauses by a candidate may result in exclusion from the ballot.
- 6 In respect of the General Secretary election, from the date on which nominations close (23 November 2011) until the end of the ballot period hustings meetings may be held, and reasonable travelling and subsistence expenses of candidates paid out of union funds, provided that **all** candidates standing in the General Secretary election are invited to attend such hustings.