

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER STUDENTS' UNION

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1. **General**

A referendum is a vote of the ordinary members of the Union to either set policy, to amend the University of Chichester Students' Union Constitution or Bye-Laws, or to overturn a previous decision of the Students' Union. It takes precedence over resolutions made at Student Council or a General Meeting.

2. **Membership**

Only Ordinary Members of the University of Chichester Students' Union can vote in a referendum.

3. **Authority**

A referendum has the power to set policy, amend bye-laws, pass a motion of no confidence in any Union Officer or Trustee, overturn decisions made by either a General Meeting or Student Council, and, subject to the approval of the University Board of Governors amend the Constitution.

A referendum shall be considered null and void if less than 400 ordinary members have voted.

3.1 A vote of referendum by a simple majority may do the following:

- 3.1.1 Pass Policy;
- 3.1.2 Overrule a decision of a General Meeting or the Student Council; or
- 3.1.3 Affiliate or disaffiliate the Union to or from any external organisation.

3.2 A vote of referendum by a 66% majority may do the following:

- 3.2.1 Pass a motion of no confidence in any Union Officer or Trustee; or
- 3.2.2 Amend or revoke the Bye-Laws and subject to the approval of the University Board of Governors amend the Constitution.

3.3 The Board of Trustees may override any decision and Policy made by the Members in a referendum which the Trustees consider (in their absolute discretion):

- 3.3.1 Has or may have financial implications for the Union;

- 3.3.2 Is or may be in breach of, contrary to or otherwise inconsistent with charity or education law or any other legal requirements (including ultra vires);
- 3.3.3 Is not or may not be in the best interests of the Union or any of its charitable objects;
- 3.3.4 Will or may otherwise affect the discharge of any or all of the responsibilities referred to in Clause 59 of the University of Chichester Students' Union Constitution.

4. **How to call a Referendum**

4.1 A referendum may be called at any time by:

4.1.1 A resolution of the Trustees.

The Board of Trustees can call a referendum at any point by a simple majority vote.

4.1.2 A majority vote of the Student Council.

The Student Council can call a referendum at any point by a simple majority vote.

4.1.3 A Secure Petition signed by at least 150 members.

Ordinary members of the University of Chichester Students' Union can call a referendum at any point by presenting a secure petition signed by 150 ordinary members to the Union President. The petition should have its purpose on the top of every page including the question to be put to a referendum. The referendum should collect the full name, student number and signature of every member that signs the petition for that entry to be valid.

4.2 Any ordinary member who attempts to get policy passed through the Students' Union committee structure but fails will be granted a 50% reduction in the number of signatures required on a secure petition to call a referendum. For this action to take place the student first needs to have taken the proposed policy to a Constitutional Union committee for it to be developed before being proposed to Student Council.

4.3 The persons or body proposing the referendum must propose the question for referendum. Any question put to referenda must be a simple 'YES' or 'NO' question. Any petition or decision for proposal for referendum shall not exceed 100 words unless it is a change to the Constitution or Bye-Laws. The Chair of Student Council may make alterations to a proposed referendum question for the purpose of making the question:

- (i) balanced and not tending towards one response; or
- (ii) to comply with the requirements of the Constitution

5. **Conduct of the Referendum**

The Union President will be charged with organising a Referendum if called, unless they are the person leading the call for a referendum or it is a vote of no confidence in the Union President, in this case the responsibility will fall to one of the Vice-Presidents or the Chair of Student Council.

The referendum shall be held no sooner than 10 working days and no later than 20 working days following the decision of the Board of Trustees, Student Council or receipt of the petition. Any referendum being held should allow members to vote for a continuous period of at least 24 hours.

The referendum shall be organised in the following timetable (of days prior to the first day of voting):

10 days: The proposed question needs to be published along with the date for the referendum. All promotion shall clearly state that any related or alternative proposals and statements for and against the proposals need to be received within 5 days. All alternative or related proposals shall be accompanied with a petition signed by 150 ordinary members. They shall be worded so that they can stand alone from, or alongside, the original proposal.

- 5 days: The Union will stop accepting alternative and related proposals.
- 4 days: The Union will publish the proposal, with any alternative or related proposals, and the arrangements for any meetings to debate it. There shall be a minimum of one meeting to debate the proposed question(s).

All referenda shall be held online to maximise the number of students being able to vote, taking into consideration part time, postgraduate, placement and distant learners.

Operations Committee shall determine the financial arrangements for publicising a referendum and shall ensure that both sides of the debate receive equal funding.

Any individual may campaign for or against a motion providing that it does not take place around a ballot station. For the avoidance of doubt any computer will be considered as a ballot station.

6. **The Result of a Referendum**

The result of any referenda shall be announced within 24 hours of the close of voting. It shall be announced using a variety of Media over all campuses, including the Union website.