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Elections Policy (MPF1146)

1. Objective

The objectives of this policy are to ensure University elections are:

- (a) open and fair;
- (b) comprehensive; and
- (c) scrutinised.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all elections held at the University conducted by the University's returning officer. The policy does not apply to other elections including:

- (a) elections conducted by, or of behalf of, student organisations; or
- (b) elections conducted by faculties, graduate schools, institutes, academic departments, University Services or University departments.

3. Authority

This policy is made under the University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic) and the Council Regulation and supports compliance with University legislation.

4. Policy

Eligibility to vote

4.1. A person is eligible to vote at an election if the person's name is on the relevant electoral roll at the time of the election.

4.2. A person who is on an electoral roll in more than one category may vote in each and every category for which they are eligible.

4.3. In a staff election the electoral roll must only include staff who are:

- (a) on continuing employment;

- (b) on a fixed-term contract of not less than 12 months; or
- (c) employed casually for at least six continuous months before the election date.

4.4. In a student election the electoral roll:

- (a) for undergraduate students, must only include students enrolled in an undergraduate award course at the University;
- (b) for graduate students, must only include students enrolled in a graduate award course at the University.

Eligibility for nomination

4.5. A person is eligible to be nominated for election if the person's name appears on the relevant electoral roll for the election.

4.6. A person can only nominate for one category and can only nominate in the category that is a person's greater load in each election where there is more than one category for nomination.

Eligibility to nominate as an elected member of Council

4.7. To be nominated as an elected staff member of Council, a person must:

- (a) meet nomination eligibility under 4.5 of 4.6;
- (b) be employed at least half of the full time equivalent rate;
- (c) be on an employment contract of more than 12 months duration;
- (d) not be employed casually; and
- (e) satisfy the fit and proper person requirements specified by TEQSA.

4.8. To be nominated as an elected student member of Council, a person must:

- (a) meet nomination eligibility under 4.5 or 4.6;
- (b) have at least 12 months of expected enrolment from the date of the election to complete the relevant award; and
- (c) satisfy the fit and proper person requirements specified by TEQSA.

Eligibility for elections not under University legislation

4.9. For elections not subject to University legislation, Council may, by a resolution of Council, set additional or different eligibility criteria for voting and nomination.

5. Procedural Principles

The returning officer

5.1 The University Secretary has the the functions, powers and duties required by the University returning officer to undertake the role in accordance with the Act, University Statute, Council Regulation and this policy.

Nominations

5.2 A call for nominations must:

- (a) be in the form approved by the returning officer;
- (b) be distributed to all those eligible to be nominated and published on a website or websites as determined by the returning officer;
- (c) be published at least six weeks before the date of the election;
- (d) allow at least two weeks between the call for nominations and close of nominations;
- (e) include the date of the election; and
- (f) allow reasonable time for the notice and conduct of a ballot, if necessary.

5.3 Nomination forms must be:

- (a) substantially in the form of the Nomination Form; and
- (b) available on the website determined by the returning officer.

5.4 Each candidate may provide for publication an electoral statement of not more than 200 words.

5.5 The returning officer may edit a candidate's electoral statement before its publication, for length or to correct spelling and grammar.

5.6 A candidate may withdraw his or her nomination by writing to the returning officer, no later than three days before the start of the voting period.

5.7 Where the number of nominations is the same as the number of vacancies, the returning officer must declare the candidates elected.

5.8 Where the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies, the returning officer must give notice of and conduct a ballot.

Electoral rolls

5.9 The electoral roll for University-wide elections of staff is maintained by the Executive Director, Human Resources and OHS.

5.10 The electoral roll for student elections is maintained by the Academic Registrar.

5.11 For the purposes of a particular election, the electoral roll is the relevant roll on the day that notice of the election is published.

5.12 Information on electoral rolls is subject to the University Privacy policy.

Ballot

5.13 The notice of ballot must:

- (a) be provided to all eligible voters in a form determined by the returning officer;
- (b) state the date when the ballot closes, allowing reasonable time for all votes to be returned;

(c) be distributed to all those eligible to vote and published on a website or websites as determined by the returning officer;

(d) be published at least three weeks before the date of the election; and

(e) where appropriate, include details of the electronic voting website.

5.14 The ballot must include:

(a) the names of candidates in an order chosen by lot; and

(b) instructions for the completion and return of the ballot.

5.15 Electronic voting must be by means approved by the returning officer.

5.16 Except in the case of an election by postal vote only, a person who is qualified to vote but who is unable to access the electronic voting system may apply in writing to the returning officer for a postal vote.

5.17 On receipt of an application for a postal vote, the returning officer must send to the applicant, voting papers comprising:

(a) a ballot paper;

(b) a voter's declaration;

(c) electoral statements (if any);

(d) an envelope for the ballot paper; and

(e) a pre-paid envelope for the return of the completed ballot paper and voter's declaration to the returning officer.

5.18 Voting papers for a postal vote must be sent:

(a) in the case of a staff member who is not on leave at the time of the ballot, to the person's internal University address; or

(b) in the case of a student, or a staff member who is on leave at the time of the ballot, to the person's postal address as shown on the electoral roll.

5.19 Ballots must be:

(a) completed according to any voting instructions provided; and

(b) returned by the time and date provided.

5.20 Ballots that do not comply with the requirements of completion and return are invalid.

5.21 Where an election is conducted electronically but postal votes are allowed, the returning officer must, where applicable, enter the postal votes into the electronic voting system before votes are counted.

5.22 After closing of the ballot, the returning officer:

(a) examines all votes cast;

(b) determines whether any votes are invalid; and

(c) counts the valid votes in accordance with standard preferential system.

5.23 The returning officer may change the manner for counting valid votes provided the changed manner is provided with the ballot.

Scrutineers

5.24 Any person nominated as a candidate may appoint any person other than another candidate as a scrutineer who must:

- (a) not disclose the details of any individual vote; and
- (b) on request by the returning officer, sign a confidentiality undertaking before the counting of the vote.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

<i>Role/Decision/Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Conditions and limitations</i>
Returning officer	University Secretary	
Maintain electoral role for staff	Executive Director, Human Resources and OHS	Roll to be maintained according to this policy
Maintain electoral role for students	Academic Registrar	Roll to be maintained according to this policy

7. Definitions

“**institutes**” means institutes established under section 12 of Council Regulation.

“**Returning officer**” means the University Secretary

“**Scrutineer**” means a person who monitors the entering of postal votes into an electronic voting system and the audit trail of the counting of electronic votes.

“**staff of the University** ” means any person employed by the University and does not include honouaries

“ **University legislation** ” means the University of Melbourne Act 2009, the University Statute and Regulations.

POLICY APPROVER

Council

POLICY STEWARD

University Secretary

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 16 March 2021.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Council	7 Oct 2013	7 Oct 2013	N/A
2	Council	16 Mar 2016	8 Apr 2016	New version arising from the Policy Consolidation Project incorporating the former Election Procedure MPF1258
3	University Secretary	8 Apr 2016	8 Apr 2016	Temporarily revert back to version 1
4	Council	16 Mar 2016	22 Apr 2016	Revert back to version 2
5	-	-	-	Created in error
6	Governance and Nominations Committee as authorised by Council	23 June 2016	21 July 2016	Updated sections 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8.
7	University Secretary	5 Aug 2016	5 Aug 2016	Correction to broken link in section 5.3(a).
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>Created in error.</i>
9	University Secretary	8 February 2022	14 February 2022	Minor amendments to Sections 5.2(a) and 5(3)(a).