

Elections

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1.0 Purpose

This policy is made under section 26AA of the Griffith University Act 1998 (the Act) which requires the University Council to make an election policy about the conduct of elections under section 15 of the Act. This policy must be read together with the Elections Procedure and the Electoral Code.

Under the Act, elections are required to fill various membership categories on the University Council. Additionally, some University committees require elections to fill various membership categories in accordance with their constitutions.

This policy is intended to:

- comply with the Act, University committee constitutions and other relevant University policies,
- support the fairness and transparency of elections and the election process,
- ensure the integrity and security of the voting system, and
- outline who is eligible to be elected as a member of the University Council, the Academic Committee, and other University committees.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all University staff and students and to elections held at the University conducted by the University's Returning Officer as listed.

- University Council (under section 15 of the Act)
- Academic Committee
- Research Committee
- Senior Promotions Committee
- Group Promotions Committee
- UniSuper Consultative Committee.

Elected members of the University Council and the University committees listed above may consist of academic staff, professional and support staff, and undergraduate and postgraduate students.

This policy does not apply to other elections conducted by, or on behalf of, student organisations or to elections conducted by Groups, schools, departments, or institutes, however, in the absence of another policy it may be used to guide good practice.

3.0 Policy Statement

The University will conduct elections with integrity and fairness, using an open and transparent election process and a secure voting system.

3.1 Conduct of Elections

3.1.1 Timetable for Elections

Elections for the purposes of this policy will be held twice a year as required for:

- Council member positions under section 15 of the Act
- University committee member positions in accordance with their respective constitutions.

3.1.2 Notification of Forthcoming Election

When an election of a University Council member or a University committee member is necessary, the Returning Officer will notify all persons on each relevant electoral roll that an election will be conducted, the period during which the election is to be held, and the procedure and timing for nominations and voting (as set out in section 3.2 of the Elections Procedure).

3.1.3 Returning Officer

The Returning Officer is responsible for the conduct of elections and ensuring candidate conduct during an election complies with the Electoral Code.

The Chief Operating Officer will appoint the Returning Officer for University Council and University committee elections and may appoint persons to assist the Returning Officer.

3.2 Eligibility for Nomination and Election

3.2.1 Call for Nominations

The Returning Officer will call for nominations, and the due date for nominations must be between 14 and 28 days (inclusive) from the date of the notice of the election.

3.2.2 Eligibility for Council Elections

A person who is a member of one of the class of persons listed in section 15(2) of the Act is eligible to be nominated to stand for election as a member of the University Council provided that person is also:

- eligible to vote in the election, and therefore must be on the relevant electoral roll (as prescribed in section 3.3 of this policy)
- nominated in the manner prescribed by the Returning Officer and by the prescribed due date and time.

3.2.3 Eligibility for University Committee Elections

A person who is a member of one of the class of persons listed in one of the University committee constitutions as covered by the scope of this Policy is eligible to stand for election as a member of that University committee provided that person is also:

- eligible to vote in the election, and therefore must be on the relevant electoral roll (as prescribed in section 3.3 of this policy)
- nominated in the manner prescribed by the Returning Officer and by the prescribed due date and time.

3.3 Electoral Rolls

3.3.1 Creation of Electoral Rolls

Each electoral roll will contain the name of each person entitled to be on that roll. The Returning Officer will request the creation of electoral rolls for Council and University committee elections for each class of elected member, as prescribed by:

- the Griffith University Act 1998 for Council
- University committee constitutions for University committees covered by this policy.

Class of Elected Member	Reference	Persons Eligible to Vote
Academic staff	The Act s15(2)(a) Academic Committee Constitution	The academic staff of the University who are at Level A, B, C, D or E, on current contracts of six months or more, and employed at 50% or above.
General staff	The Act s15(2)(a) Academic Committee Constitution	The professional and support staff of the University who are on current contracts of six months or more, and employed at 50% or above.
Undergraduate student*	The Act s 15(2)(c) Academic Committee Constitution	The full-time and part-time undergraduate students of the University, including online students.
Postgraduate student*	The Act 15(2)(d)	The full-time and part-time higher degree by research candidates and coursework postgraduate students of the University, including online students.
Coursework postgraduate student*	Academic Committee Constitution	The full-time and part-time coursework postgraduate students of the University, including online students.
Higher Degree by Research candidate*	Academic Committee Constitution	The full-time and part-time higher degree by research candidates of the University.
Professoriate staff	Research Committee Senior Promotions Committee	The full-time members of the professoriate staff (Level E) on current contracts of six months or more.
Group academic staff	Group Promotions Committee Constitution	The academic staff of the University of the Group at Level D or above, on current contracts of six months or more and who are employed at 50% or above.
Academic staff UniSuper	UniSuper Consultative Committee	The academic staff of the University who are current members of the UniSuper Defined Benefit Plan or Accumulation (2) Plan.
Professional staff UniSuper	UniSuper Consultative Committee	The professional and support staff of the University who are current members of the UniSuper Defined Benefit Plan or Accumulation (2) Plan.

*A person whose name appears on either the Academic Staff Roll or General Staff Roll is not eligible to be elected as a student member.

3.3.2 Closure and Amendment of Electoral Rolls

The electoral rolls will close on the date and time prescribed by the Returning Officer, which will be a maximum of 5 days before the close of nominations.

The electoral rolls may be amended by the Returning Officer as per section 3.3.2 of the Elections Procedure.

3.4 Voting

3.4.1 Eligibility to Vote

A person is entitled to vote in an election if, at the time of voting, the person's name is on the relevant electoral roll and provided they are an eligible person to vote for that class of elected member (as specified under section 3.3 of this policy).

3.4.2 Voting System

Electronic voting will be conducted as a secret ballot via the University's secure electronic voting system. This voting method ensures:

- the integrity of the election,
- voting is done by secret ballot, as specified in section 26AA of the Act,
- only eligible voters can vote in the election (for Council elections as specified in section 26AC of the Act),
- eligible voters can only vote once in each election.

3.4.3 Voting Period

For every election, the Returning Officer will prescribe the voting period, which will be an interval between 7 and 21 days from the commencement of voting to the close of voting.

3.4.4 Voting Procedure and Issuance of Ballots

The procedure for voting is set out in section 3.5 of the Elections Procedure. Ballots will be issued electronically via the secure electronic voting system as set out in section 3.4.2 of this policy.

3.5 Notification of Results

The results of an election will be published electronically by the Returning Officer a maximum of 3 days after the result of an election has been declared. The successful and unsuccessful candidates will be notified as soon as practicable following the declaration of results.

3.6 Electoral Code

The Electoral Code (the Code) sets out the conduct required of candidates before or during an election campaign. It also includes provisions to ensure that no person who is eligible to vote is improperly influenced as per section 26AA of the Act. The Code forms part of and is an addendum to this policy.

3.7 Casual Vacancies

If a casual vacancy arises in the office of an elected member on the University Council (as per Section 20A of the Act) or a University committee, the Returning Officer will appoint to the vacancy the one person, if any, who:

- was a candidate for the office in the election; and
- was not elected; and

- received the highest number of votes of all the candidates who were not elected; and
- is eligible, under the University committee's constitution, to be a member; and
- is willing to be, and available to perform the functions of, a member.

The person appointed will serve for the balance of the term of the casual vacancy.

In the event there is no eligible appointee, the vacancy will be the subject of an election at the next round.

3.8 Complaints

A person may lodge a complaint with the Returning Officer about the way an election has been conducted or about the behaviour of individuals (including a candidate) during an election. Complaints may be lodged via email to elections@griffith.edu.au.

A person who is dissatisfied with the Returning Officer's decision about their complaint or who is dissatisfied with the conduct of the Returning Officer during the election, may request a review of the Returning Officer's decision or make a complaint about the Returning Officer's conduct to the Chief Operating Officer via email to complaints@griffith.edu.au.

The decision of the Chief Operating Officer, with respect to the review of the Returning Officer's decision or complaint about the conduct of the Returning Officer, is final.

4.0 Roles, responsibilities and delegations

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Vice Chancellor	Approving authority of the Electoral Code.
Chief Operating Officer	Appoints a Returning Officer for University elections. Considers and makes decisions regarding complaints about the conduct or decisions of the Returning Officer.
Returning Officer	Maintains the electoral rolls and amends them as appropriate. Notifies all persons on electoral rolls of forthcoming elections. Conducts fair and accurate University elections using the University's designated electronic voting system. Publishes election results no more than three days after a result has been declared. Advises successful and unsuccessful candidates of election results. Receives and considers complaints about any aspect of the election process or results (except complaints about their own conduct).

5.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Academic Staff means academic staff who are at Level A, B, C, D or E, on current contracts of six months or more and who are employed at 50% or above.

General Staff means all professional and support staff of the university who are on current contracts of six months or more and who are employed at 50% or above.

Member means a member of the University Council or a University committee.

Returning Officer means the staff member of the University appointed under section 3.1.3 of this Policy.

Student means both full-time and part-time students enrolled at the University.

University means Griffith University, established by the Griffith University Act 1998.

6.0 Information

Title	Elections Policy
Document number	2023/0001040
Purpose	This policy outlines who is eligible to be elected as a member of the University Council, the Academic Committee, and other University committees, and prescribes key elements of the process for conducting elections to those positions.
Staff	Staff; Students
Category	Governance
Subcategory	Governance
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal/s: 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
Approval` date	14 August 2023
Effective date	14 August 2023
Review date	2026
Policy advisor	Head, Corporate Governance
Approving authority	University Council

7.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	Griffith University Act 1998
Policy	Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy Code of Conduct Facilities Management and Campus Access and Use Policy Information Technology Code of Practice Student Charter Framework Student Misconduct Policy
Procedures	Campus Access and Use Procedure Electoral Code Elections Procedure Student Misconduct Procedure
Local Protocol	N/A
Forms	N/A