

CUSU Elections Committee

Thursday 28th February 2020, 1pm

1. Welcome and apologies

* In attendance: Alex Roberts, Aisha Sobey, Joe Foye, Emily Barker Gibbs
* Apologies: Edward Parker Humphreys

1. Minutes of last meeting

* Approved

1. Appeal to the Junior Proctor

* EC will request to meet the JP on Monday (9th) afternoon at Fitzwilliam College.

1. Questions from Luisa Deragon

* Elections Committee approves Luisa Deragon’s view of the rules relating to posting in groups. Candidates are free to post in MCR groups, as this does not count as an endorsement by the MCR. This also applies to colleges the student is not at. However, MCRs can moderate their groups as they see fit. Luisa is free to forward EC’s ruling to Girton MCR for clarity.

1. Questions from Jess O’Brien

* EBG: Executive Officers cannot endorse at all due to G.4.iii.
* JF: Who counts as an Executive Officer? Standing Orders includes sabbatical officers, PTE, portfolio officers and Heads of CUSU Campaigns.
* AS: In response to Jess’ questions –
  + 1: No endorsements at all from Executive
  + 2: Yes, endorsements from members of campaigns is fine
  + 3: No, Heads of Campaign may not endorse, as Executive members
* All candidates and Executive Committee members to be informed of the ruling and given 24 hours to remove any relevant endorsements.

1. Question from Tamzin Byrne

* EC will inform TB that only voting members of CUSU or the GU can endorse candidates.

1. Hustings planning

* Questions for hustings:
* AEP (PG):
  + CUSU had a big win this year with reforms to the structure of student academic representation passing through Regent House; all academic rep elections will be run on the same platform in the same time frame by Cambridge SU with roles that map onto subjects rather than committees. How are you going to capitalise upon these changes?
  + Will you prioritise campaigning for long term ideological goals over making effective practical changes?
  + How would you deal with the MPhil access issue, where only students who can afford to pay out of their own pocket can come?
* AEP (UG):
  + CUSU had a big win this year with reforms to the structure of student academic representation passing through Regent House; all academic rep elections will be run on the same platform in the same time frame by Cambridge SU with roles that map onto subjects rather than committees. How are you going to capitalise upon these changes?
  + How will you continue to work with colleges to ensure that access work doesn’t end after admissions?
  + Many trans students are admitted to women's colleges through the pooling system, leaving them alienated by constant refrain to terms such as 'ladies' being used within these colleges. How do you understand trans admissions and access, and how would you work with colleges to support these students when they arrive and as they continue at the university, especially as they try to change their names in university systems?
* BME Officer
  + This will be the first time a BME Officer has been elected in any SU for Cambridge University. What’s your vision for the role?
  + Though the disciplinary procedure if often associated with sexual harassment and misconduct, it may also be used by those who have been victims of racism/homophobia and other forms of harassment. Do you think it's important for BME students to use these procedures, and if so, how do you envision encouraging this?
  + Apart from merely holding positions, what work have you done in the past that proves you're a suitable candidate for the role?
* DSO
  + How will you ensure the DSC is a welcoming space for as wide a range of students who identify as disabled as possible?
  + This year's DSO came under criticism when she told students not to cross picket lines unless in the case of an emergency. Do you think her statement was warranted? How would you handle supporting students with disabilities if strikes were to arise again?
  + What is the one thing you would like to change over your year's work?
* President (PG)
  + How do you intend to increase engagement with the new Cambridge SU?
  + Making change in Cambridge can be slow and difficult. What do you think is the most effective way to secure changes at university and college level? How would you use this approach to secure a piece of the policy you are running on?
  + If you were elected alongside an Undergraduate President who you had major policy disagreements with, how would you seek to lead the Union together?
* President (UG)
  + There has been often been debate about whether the SU should have policy on non-student national issues - do you think students should be prevented from bringing policies to the SU Council on national issues that they feel are important?
  + What links do you have with the activist community in Cambridge and what should the relationship between this group and the SU be?
  + If you were elected alongside a Postgraduate President who you had major policy disagreements with, how would you seek to lead the Union together?
* University Councillor
  + How do you intend to make yourself accountable to all students as university councillor?
  + Divestment is promised and no progress is ever made. Are you in favour of divestment and how would you plan to move forward with the university?
  + How would you use your role as University Councillor to prevent future instance of industrial action?
* Welfare & Community Officer
  + Cambridge has a problem with mental health. Whilst counselling provision can help students cope, preventive action is fundamentally needed. What changes do you think would be most effective to achieve this, and how would you go about seeking them?
  + How would you engage with the wider Cambridge community as part of your role?
  + Many post-graduates, particularly phD students, find themselves in uncomfortable relationships with their supervisors, yet because of their isolation in this university struggle to know where to find help. How would you address this?
* Women’s Officer
  + The Women's Campaign has often been seen as an undergraduate space, despite being open to all women and non-binary people. Most of you are undergraduates—how would you work to bring post-graduates into the space?
  + How do you understand the Women's Campaign's relationship to FLY?
  + Your manifestos all touch on a lot of policies. Understanding that the role will be strapped for time, and that problems/scandals throughout the year will derail your plans, what policies will take priority?
* Ethical Affairs Chairs
  + How would you work to grow engagement with the Ethical Affairs Campaign?
  + Divestment is promised and no progress is ever made. How would you plan to move forward with the university?
  + How do you see the role of University committee structures versus student campaigning for making change?

1. Times for future meetings

* Monday: 1pm
* Tuesday: 10am
* Wednesday: 10am
* Thursday: 11am and 5pm

1. AOB