

CUSU Elections Committee

Tuesday 3rd March 2020, 10am

1. Welcome and apologies

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

1. Candidate video

* Video of a candidate engaging in abusive language has been shared on social media.
* EPH: Unclear whether it was shared by supporters of the candidate.
* JF: Doesn't breach any rules as far as we can tell.
* EPH: We can reply to the complaint saying "we recognise the video contains unpleasant and abusive language. But as we understand it, it was filmed before the start of the elections, so EC cannot act on the issue without evidence that the video is being shared by the candidate's campaigners."

1. Complaint against Jess O’Brien

* Jess O'Brien was invited in to discuss the complaint.
* Jess O'Brien stated that she had given the login details of her alternative account (which is named Isceá Aloisia Ó Briain; Jessica Alicia O’Brien) to someone else so they could message Cambridge Zero Carbon, Marxist Society and Cambridge Defend Education with concerns about a candidate. Jess acknowledged that she had seen the message at the weekend.
* EPH: Regardless of whether someone else used the account, Jess was aware that the account would be used to campaign against a candidate in another election. Jess had seen the message and chose not to raise it to Elections Committee.
* JF: This definitely breaches the spirit of rule 3.3 and breaches the letter of the rule if RON is considered to be a candidate in the election.
* EPH: There are concerns about the implications of a breach of Standing Orders under G.4.v, and made the decision to refer this breach to the CUSU President.
* Ruling: "It was brought to the attention of Elections Committee that a Facebook account in the name of Isceá Aloisia Ó Briain (translated as Jessica Alicia O’Brien) had messaged the Cambridge Zero Carbon Facebook page encouraging them not to endorse a particular candidate in one of the Sabbatical Officer elections and instead endorse RON. When asked, O’Brien confirmed that the Facebook account belonged to them. According to O’Brien, they had given the log in details of the Facebook account to another student who had expressed a desire to message three Facebook pages (Cambridge Zero Carbon, Cambridge Defend Education and Cambridge Marxist Society) to anonymously raise concerns about a particular candidate. O’Brien claims they were not aware which candidate or election this concerned. According to O’Brien, they became aware of the content of the messages on the weekend 29th February/1st March. They did not attempt to contact Elections Committee to raise concerns. They were invited in to discuss the messages with Elections Committee on Tuesday 3rd March.

“Elections Committee has ruled that this is a breach of Election Rule 3.3: candidates cannot campaign for candidates in a different election, cannot share resources with other candidates and cannot endorse any other candidates. If Elections Committee were to accept the candidate’s explanation, giving another person access to their alternative account for the purposes of campaigning would constitute campaigning for another candidate and sharing of resources. These are both rule breaches under rule 3.3.”

* Elections Committee has issued a one-day campaign ban (midday Tuesday 3rd March to midday Wednesday 4th March) and a final formal warning to Jess O’Brien.

1. AOB

* No other business