

STUDENT ELECTIONS

NOMINATIONS GUIDEBOOK



Highlands and Islands Students' Association
Student Elections 2019
Nominations Guidebook

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KEY DATES

Date	Event
Friday 1 February (12noon)	Nominations open (open for 21 days) - 2019 Student Elections website launched
Thursday 21 February (4pm)	Nominations close - Nominations will automatically close online
Monday 25 February (12noon)	Candidate Training - Training is your best opportunity to learn about how to become a strong election candidate. Attendance is advantageous, but not compulsory
Wednesday 27 February (5pm)	Candidate training (mop-up) - If you are unable to attend Candidate Training on Monday 25 February, time is available here to attend training
Thursday 28 February (12noon) Submissions to: returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk	Candidate Statement, Poster, Photo, Mini-Statement Deadline - Your candidate statement must be submitted by this point. It will be uploaded on to the HISA website. - Your poster must be submitted by this point. It will be uploaded on to the HISA website. - Your mini-statement must be uploaded to the voting system - Your photo must be uploaded to the voting website AND sent to returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk
Monday 4 March (10am)	Supported Campaign Period - HISA displays and distributes all candidate material and voting promotion material
Throughout Voting Week	Daily Briefing Breakfasts - From 8:15-9:00am at each academic partner
Monday 11 March (10am)	Voting opens - All students can vote online
Friday 15 March (2pm)	Voting closes - No students can vote after 2pm
Friday 15 March (3:30pm)	Expenses Submitted - Candidates must submit their expenses to - returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk
Friday 15 March	Announcement - Results are announced

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! By opening this candidate pack, you have taken the first step to becoming an elected officer of the Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA).

HISA is an organisation led by students, for students. Every year, students elect from amongst themselves the new leadership team of HISA. This is a great opportunity for you to represent your fellow students and change the student experience for the better.

HISA is the students' association that exists to represent all students in the Highlands and Islands – whatever you study, wherever you study. There are a range of different roles available where you can leave a legacy for students in our region and where you learn.

For more information about HISA, visit www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk

HISA elected officers represent the voice of students. They sit on the highest decision-making bodies of UHI and its academic partners, meet with local and national politicians, and campaign for change. They do all this to change people's lives.

To become a HISA officer, you don't need to submit a CV, attend an interview or have prior experience. To become a HISA officer, all you need is a vision of how being a student can be better, and to secure the support of your fellow students in an election.

This candidates' guidebook will help to guide you through the key things you need to know for the elections, including:

- What is HISA,
- What positions are open for elect
- How to become a candidate,
- How the election works,
- Key dates.

Deciding to run in the elections is a fant and we'd like to wish you the best of luc

William Mohieddeen, Depute Returning
returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk



WHAT IS HISA?

The Highlands and Islands Students' Association is the legally recognised representative body for students studying at the University of the Highlands and Islands and each of its academic partners. Its role is to ensure that students' voices are heard. This can be in terms of the teaching and learning experience, the support you get and the services you need.

It also represents students on issues that UHI or its academic partners doesn't control – such as travel, housing, and health. HISA officers meet regularly with MPs and MSPs and work with the National Union of Students to influence decisions that affect students.

All students aged 16 and over become members of the Students' Association as soon as they are enrolled.

HOW IS HISA RUN?

The Students' Association is a member-led organisation – meaning it is students that run it. Only students may run in its elections, and vote for its officers. This ensures that when it comes to speaking for students, it is the students who do so. HISA is run by students, for students. Democracy is a key value of the Students' Association. Every year elections are run to choose the leadership of HISA. This means that those that lead HISA are representative of the student body and are recognised by UHI and its academic partners as having a legitimate mandate to speak on students' behalf.

It is important that students continually inform the work of HISA and its officers. Local Officers regularly engage with class reps where they study to gain an understanding of the broad experience of being a student. Local Officers also have a role on the HISA Executive Committee so that their experiences shape the work of HISA and assist the Regional Officers.

Every year, HISA runs an event called Regional Council. This is HISA's annual conference where student representatives from across the region meet to discuss the experience of being a student and shape HISA's work. HISA also provides opportunities for students to engage with NUS Scotland and other national agencies so that important decision-makers are influenced by our fellow students' experiences.

HISA has a team of around 15 members of full-time and part-time staff. Their role is to ensure the smooth running of the organisation and to provide direct support to every Regional and Local Officer in HISA. The staff help every Officer with Officers' work to deliver the highest possible success for UHI students.

WHY BECOME A HISA OFFICER



"Best experience of my life"

Sorcha Kirker, Vice President (Higher Education) 2017-19

The job of a HISA officer is a job like no other. You do not need prior experience as you will have a team of dedicated staff who will support you. Furthermore, being a HISA officer is the best way to make a positive impact for all those that study at UHI and its academic partners.

HISA has a track record of success in changing students' lives, inside and outside of the classroom – from learning quality, housing to student finance. In every case, this change has been led by students like you.

If you have a vision for how being a student can be better, and a passion for making the experience of being a student better, there is a HISA officer role for you.

"Being an officer is not just a job it's a lifestyle"

If you are interested in knowing more about what officers do, email returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk and ask about local HISA officers at your academic partner.

THE ROLES

There are two categories of roles available in the election – regional and local. Regional Officer roles are all full-time positions that represent all students in the Highlands and Islands. Local Officer roles are lead student representatives at each of the academic partners of UHI. These roles vary depending on the nature of the academic partner.

Regional Officers can work from any UHI Academic Partner.

Full role descriptions for all roles are found on the HISA elections website www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/elections

REGIONAL OFFICERS

President

The President is the leader and figurehead of the students' association. As President, you will be responsible for the work of HISA and lead its priority campaigns. The role requires the ability to lead your fellow student officers, and to inspire students to get behind the work of HISA. The President chairs the Executive Committee and acts as delegate leader to external organisations.

Vice President (Further Education)

The Vice President (Further Education) – or VPFE – is responsible for leading HISA's activities, campaigns and work around further education (FE) to continually inform and improve learning and teaching and the experience of FE students across the Highlands and Islands. Further Education courses are those up to and including SCQF level 6. Candidates must study an FE course to be eligible to stand for this position.

Vice President (Higher Education)

The Vice President (Higher Education) – or VPHE – is responsible for leading HISA's activities, campaigns and work around the academic experience of higher education (HE), to continually inform and improve learning and teaching, and the experience of HE students across the Highlands and Islands. HE courses are those at SCQF level 7 and beyond. Candidates **must** study a HE course to be eligible to stand for this position.

LOCAL OFFICERS

At each academic partner there is a student officer with responsibility for representing students on a local basis. Local Officers are lead student representatives at each academic partner. The nature of these positions varies at each academic partner, and is explained further in this guidebook – however if you feel you can make a change, there is a position for you!

Local Officers are responsible for ensuring the voices of students are heard by their academic partner. They engage closely with class reps, represent the student voice to senior management, and organise events. Local Officers have a seat on HISA's Executive Committee, ensuring student voices are shaping HISA's work.

You will be the recognised student leaders for where you are taught. As HISA Regional Officers are responsible for representing students across the region, Local Officers are responsible for representing students at their academic partner.

HISA Local Officers are called Depute Presidents, except for Inverness College and Perth College, where Local Officers are titled President and Vice Presidents. Depending on size, some academic partners have more than one officer.

Term of Office

Candidates that are elected, do not take up post immediately after the election, however Candidates that are elected are called "Officers-elect", and receive an honorary title. For example, if you were elected to the role of President the title would be "President-elect." Officers-elect take up the post for the next academic term.

There will be a full schedule of training and induction for officers to support them in their role. Officers-elect must undergo a successful Disclosure Scotland PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) check to be able to carry-out the role.

HOURS AND PAY

The **Regional Officers** are full-time sabbatical positions, and offer a salary of £17,049.

Students who are elected as Regional Officers take a year's break from their studies to perform the role. The position can involve working evenings due to meetings and other HISA commitments, including occasional weekend travel and events.

Local Officers are paid, part-time positions (with the exception of Perth College UHI President position which is full-time). They are paid an hourly rate of £9.36 which is the same hourly rate as the Regional Officers. This number of hours that the Local Officers work is dependent on the academic partner. They are as follows:

Academic Partner	Role	Hours
Argyll College UHI	Depute President	12 hours
Highland Theological College UHI	Depute President	4 hours
Inverness College UHI	President	15 hours
	Vice President Education	10 hours
	Vice President Activities and Welfare	10 hours
Lewis Castle College UHI	Depute President	12 hours
Moray College UHI	Depute President Education	14 hours
	Depute President Activities and Welfare	14 hours
North Highland College UHI	Depute President	12 hours
Orkney College UHI	Depute President	10 hours
Perth College UHI	President	35 hours (full-time, sabbatical)
	Vice President Education and Engagement	10 hours
	Vice President Activities and Welfare	10 hours
SAMS UHI	Depute President	4 hours
Shetland Islands	Depute President	7 hours
West Highland College UHI	Depute President	12 hours

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

This section explains what positions you are eligible to run for.

Students can only run for election in one position only. Students can only run for Local Officer Roles at the Academic Partner to which they are a student. Furthermore, a candidate may only run for a Regional Officer role or a Local Officer role.

To be eligible for a position as a HISA officer, Officers-elect must successfully undergo a Disclosure Scotland PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) check.

REGIONAL OFFICERS

All roles are full-time, paid sabbatical positions. If you are successful, you shall take a year's break from your studies to fulfil the duties of the position. Students who are in their final year and are due to graduate will be eligible to stand as well, as long as they are registered as a student at the time of the election.

President

To be eligible to stand for President, you must be registered on any course at the University of the Highlands and Islands or any of its academic partners.

Vice President (Further Education)

To be eligible to stand for Vice President (Further Education), you must be registered as a student at any of the academic partners, studying a course at further education (FE) level at the time of the election. N.B. if as part of your studies you will be progressing to higher education level in the next academic year, you will be eligible to run for VPFE as your student status is that of an FE student at the time of election.

Vice President (Higher Education)

To be eligible to stand for Vice President (Higher Education), you must be registered as a student of the University of the Highlands and Islands, at any academic partner, studying at higher education (HE) level at the time of the election. N.B. if as part of your studies you are a further education student that will be progressing to higher education level in the next academic year, you will be not eligible to run for VPHE as you will be a further education student at the time of election.

If you are unsure whether you are a further education student or a higher education student, you may contact the Depute Returning Officer returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk

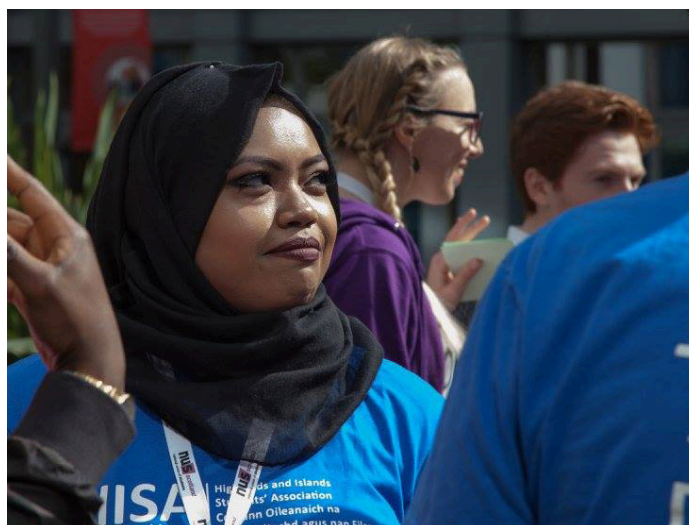
LOCAL OFFICERS

At your academic partner, you may run for a local officer role to lead the student voice where you study.

In order to stand for election as a Local Officer, you **must** be registered as a student at the academic partner you wish to hold the position for.

If you are successful, you **must** also be a student at same time as the term of the Local Officer role. The term of a part time Local Officer is from 1 August 2019 – 30 June 2020. If you do not continue as a student in 2019-20, you will not be able to carry out the role of a local officer.

If you study at Perth College UHI, the position of HISA Perth President is full-time. Therefore, as it is a sabbatical position, you do not need to be a student in 2019-20 to take on this role. If you are due to continue as a student, you will take a break from your studies to carry out this role. Students that have been in a paid officer position for two years will not be eligible to stand in the HISA Student Elections.



Nurina Sharmin, HISA Perth Vice President for Education and Engagement 2017-18 at NUS Scotland conference

NOMINATE YOURSELF

Nominating yourself for a position is easy.

To become nominated for the HISA officer role you want to run in, you need to complete an online form on the HISA website.

Go to www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/elections

You will then select the position you wish to apply for. Once you have selected the position, you will be presented with an online form that will ask for your:

- name,
- student number,
- contact details

Once you submit the nomination form, it will be sent to the Returning Officer who shall ensure that you are eligible to run in the position you have selected. After the check is complete, the Depute Returning Officer shall send a confirmation email to your student account.

Nominations **must** be received before the deadline, which can be found in the Key Dates section of this Guidebook.



Gabbi Starr, HISA Inverness President 2017-18 at BBC studios

CAMPAIGNING ESSENTIALS

For every position, each candidate must submit the 5 aspects listed below. The **deadline** dates for each aspect are outlined in the **Key Dates** section at the start of this pack.

- 1) Candidate's name
- 2) Profile picture
- 3) Candidate Statement
- 4) A mini-statement
- 5) A Poster

Here's what each aspect is and how each aspect is used by HISA

Candidates' Name

This is used on the online voting system, the HISA website and the voting booklet to inform voters that you are standing for election

Profile picture

This should be a 'head and shoulders' photo of yourself that you will upload as part of the nomination process. It is used on the online voting system and the HISA website next to your name, to help voters identify you.

What is a candidate statement?

The candidate statement is the basis of your campaign and expresses why students should support and vote for you, and what you will do if elected to that position. It is one of the most important ways for students to understand what you have to offer them, particularly those students you may not get the opportunity to meet during campaigning. The candidate statement will be uploaded on to the HISA website.

Examples of what you may wish to include is a short introduction of who you are, what you pledge to do if you are elected and your views on any important issues.

There is a 350-word limit for the candidate statement. **However this is a limit and not a target.** You do not have to write 350 words, if you do not want to. You may wish to think about whether you want to write a detailed and lengthy statement, or a statement that is short and succinct.

Consider the use of paragraphs and bullet points in your candidate statement to break up what you want to say, and to list what you want to tell people voting in the election.

What is a mini-statement?

The mini-statement is a smaller version of your candidate statement. When we email students information on the election, and post information on the online voting system, these are “tasters” for each candidate. This is an opportunity for you to quickly catch the eye of possible voters.

There is a 50-word limit to the mini-statements.

The campaign poster

A poster is a great visual way to promote your campaign and catch the eye of potential voters. Your poster will be displayed in a booklet of candidates, which will be available to students at polling stations, as well as on the HISA website.

You can design your own poster. Posters **must** be submitted in pdf or jpeg formats only. If you have any queries regarding the poster, please contact the deputy returning officer at returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk

If you are not confident designing your own poster, you can request a HISA template poster. You will only need to submit key information and choose a colour scheme, and the HISA team will make a poster for you. Please note, this will be of a standard design format. The information to submit is:

- Your name
- Position applying for
- Your mini-statement

A poster template request form is available from www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/elections



CANDIDATES TRAINING

All candidates will be invited to attend a candidates' briefing. The dates for each are in the **Key Dates** section. Where possible, candidates should attend the first session, to give themselves as much time as possible to put together their campaign ahead of voting opening.

Candidates' Training is not compulsory to attend, however, it is highly recommended that you do so.

The candidates training will cover essential information that will help you in your campaign including:

- The rules governing the election
- How to campaign
- What tools are available to help you
- Your campaigning budget
- How students can vote for you

Candidates will also receive the Candidates' Guidebook. This will contain key information that supports the information you will get at Candidates' Training.

ELECTION RULES

All HISA elections are governed by Schedule Six of the HISA Memorandum and Articles of Association (schedule six) – this is the rules for the elections and is available online at www.hisa.uhi.ac.uk/elections. All candidates **must** abide by the University's policies and procedures and those of their academic partner. All candidates **must** obey the law.

Returning Officer

The elections are overseen by the Returning Officer, who is responsible for the good conduct and administration of the elections and shall have the final interpretation of the election rules. The Returning Officer is assisted by a Deputy Returning Officer who will be contactable throughout the election period through returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk

The Deputy Returning Officer is William Mohieddeen, Senior Student Association Coordinator, HISA.