

HUU Elections Report 2017

Context

This report, and the recommendations included, have been developed using information drawn from SUMS voting data, complaint data, feedback provided through the exit poll and the candidate survey.

Nomination Period

The notice of election was publicized on the [HUU website](#) on Monday, 27 February 2017. Nominations were open online from 8-15 March 2017. Throughout the entire duration of the elections, students were kept informed through all-student emails, Social Media posts and posters around campus. Close working with the University Marketing and Communications team improved the visibility of elections throughout the voting period with the use of banners displayed on a key route through campus.

Information meetings were held before nominations opened on Tuesday, 14 February and Monday, 27 February to inform interested candidates about the available roles, their duties and what campaigning would entail. These were attended by about 30 students in total.

All interested students and candidates were provided with a candidate handbook comprising more information about the roles, tips on how to run a successful campaign, and ideas about what previous Officers have achieved. The HUU elections website included a [hub for candidates](#) with detailed role descriptions for each position, the handbook, the election rules & regulations and useful candidate resources to provide more background information for candidates' manifestos.

Table 1. Nominations Received

Position	2017			2016	
	Full-time Officer positions (5)	Part-time Officer positions (29)	School Reps (32)	Full-time Officer positions (6)	Part-time Officer positions (32)
Nominations received	19 (2 withdrawn)	16	9	14	23
Contested positions	5	2	2	4	2
Uncontested positions	0	10	5	2	18
No nominations received	0	17	25	0	12
Total	35 (44 with School Reps)			37	

Campaigning and Budgets

Campaigning opened after the All Candidates Meeting on Friday, 17 March and ended with the close of voting on Friday, 24 March 2017 at 5pm.

All Student Officer candidates were entitled to a budget of £75 of which 100% were reimbursed by HUU. All other candidates were entitled to a budget of £35 with no reimbursement claims.

The daily report by the Returning Officer Team detailing the submitted complaints is available [online](#). The External Returning Officer for this election was Antonia Rossiter-Eaglesfield, Student Voice Manager at Birmingham Guild. Two formal complaints were received during the voting period, both were investigated and no action taken.

Support for Candidates

All candidates were invited to the All Candidates Meeting on Friday, 17 March where they were briefed on the election rules and essential campaign tips. This meeting was mandatory for all Student Officer candidates and optional for all other candidates.

All Student Officer candidates were also required to attend one-to-one meetings with the Assistant Returning Officer to discuss their manifesto and campaign plans before the close of nominations. All candidates were invited to drop by the Membership Services Area with any queries at any time during office hours throughout the elections period.

During campaigning, all candidates were able to access the Disabled Students Officer office as a space to leave any campaign materials or relax from campaigning. This was welcomed by all candidates.

During voting week, free tea & toast was offered to all students who had voted but also to all candidates. Student Officer candidates also received free pizza on the second last day of voting.

Candidates were satisfied with the support they received during elections from the Returning Officer Team. Candidates noted that they appreciated the shortened campaign period in comparison to previous years. Student Officer candidates also welcomed the return of Question Time and the opportunity to debate their manifestos in a public forum.¹

Voting and Turnout

Voting opened online on Monday, 20 March at 9am and closed on Friday, 24 March at 5pm. All candidates had to stand against Re-Open Nominations (R.O.N.) and Single Transferable Vote (STV) was used to determine the winner.

In addition to the general elections marketing campaign, HUU engaged students in the importance of the elections by encouraging them to vote at voting booths specifically set up for this purpose in the Library and HUU from 11am-3pm every day during voting week and mainly staffed by student staff.

¹ This feedback was collected informally in communication with the ARO and through a Candidate survey sent out to all candidates after voting had closed.

Table 2. Voter turnout

Year	Voting period	Turnout (%)	Number of unique votes	Number of total votes cast
2017	20/3-24/3 (5 days)	14.8	2,631	21,797
2016	29/2-4/3 (5 days)	15.6	2,808	31,965
2015	24/2 – 5/3 (10 days)	19.7	3,559	20,901
2014	28/2 – 6/3 (7 days)	20.9	3,771	63,870

Table 3. Number of total votes for Student Officer races

Position	2017		2016	
	Number of votes for winning candidate	Number of votes for race	Number of votes for winning candidate	Number of votes for race
President	1349 (7.6%)	2257 (12.7%)	1346 (7.9%)	2116
VP Education	837 (4.7%)	1893 (10.7%)	896 (5.3%)	1980
VP Activities	681 (3.8%)	1933 (10.9%)	1236 (7.3%)	1954
VP Sport	1036 (5.8%)	1766 (10%)	866 (5.1%)	2341
VP Welfare & Community	725 (4.1%)	1896 (10.7%)	1778 (10.4%)	1866

Despite the increase in nominations for Student Officer positions, this positive development did not translate into an increase in voter turnout. In addition, nominations for part-time Officer positions experienced a significant drop. School rep elections were run at this time for the first time, however the number of nominations stayed well below expectations. Overall turnout decreased slightly compared to 2016, however there was a significant drop in the number of total votes cast suggesting that students voted for less races than in the previous year. Anecdotal evidence from conversations with students at voting stalls suggests that students did not choose to vote because they could not see the impact the current elected representatives had made on their student experience.

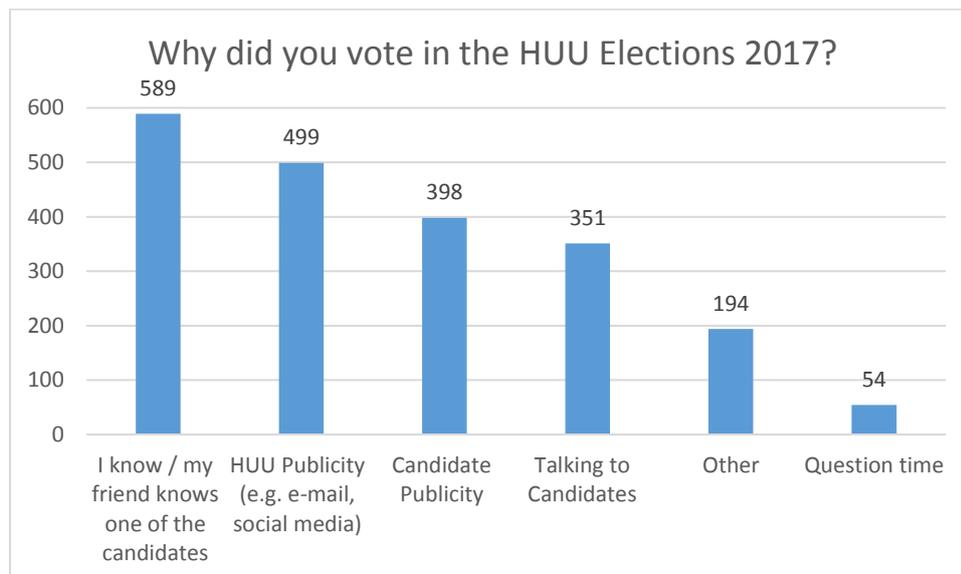
HUU continues work to address these challenges as part of the ongoing Governance Review to ensure that HUU's representational structures are effective, transparent and accessible to all students.

Results and Feedback

The full results are available [online](#).

After submitting their vote students had the opportunity to take part in an exit poll asking why they had voted in the election. They were able to choose as many answers as they wished (as detailed in Table 4) as well as leaving free text comments. 2085 individual responses were recorded. 42% of respondents indicated that they voted in the election because they or their friend knew one of the candidates. 36% responded that they voted in the election because they received information about it through HUU publicity via emails, Social Media or posters. Candidate publicity was rated lower than HUU publicity in encouraging turnout at 29%. 25% of the respondents noted that talking to candidates made them vote in the elections. Finally, recurring reasons to vote in the free text comments were that it is everyone's democratic right to participate in elections and that students want to have a say in who represents them.

Table 4. Exit poll: Why did you vote in the HUU Elections 2017?



Recommendations for 2018

- To involve all staff at HUU in some capacity in the promotion of elections and ensure that elections are the organisation's priority for that time period. This includes having permanent members of staff at the polling stations during the voting period as well as introducing a 'buddy' system for candidates with Membership Services staff.
- To strengthen the working relationship with the University in the lead up to and during elections in order to ensure consistent communication to students.
- To update our Data Sharing Agreement with the University to receive data on PGR and PGT students separately rather than just for PG students.
- To keep the budget of Student Officer candidates at £75 each with 100% of this budget being reimbursed to ensure that all Student Officer candidates can spend the same amount on their campaign regardless of their personal financial circumstances. To consider giving this budget to all candidates as cash advance to ensure candidates

do not have to spend their monthly allowance on campaign material instead of food or other necessary items.

- To consider giving out vouchers to all Student Officer candidates for the campaign week to ensure that they eat and can afford to do so on a regular basis.
- To reduce the budget for part-time Officer candidates to £15 and reimburse 100% of that budget.
- To keep the period for nominations, campaigning and voting at two weeks total to reduce the stress on candidates campaigning for an extended period of time.
- To start advertising and marketing of the elections in semester 1 with a teaser about the timeline and available positions. At least one information meeting should be held before the Christmas break.
- To explore how to make elections material provided by HUU fully accessible for students with disabilities.
- To retain Question Time in the format held this year as a way for voters to engage with all Student Officer candidates and their manifestos.
- To retain the room for candidates to provide a space for them to store materials and relax during campaigning.
- To consider closing voting at 10pm each evening and reopen at 6am to improve candidate welfare and avoid unnecessarily extended campaign periods.
- To include the Lawns and other halls of residences in the marketing campaign, especially when driving voter turnout.

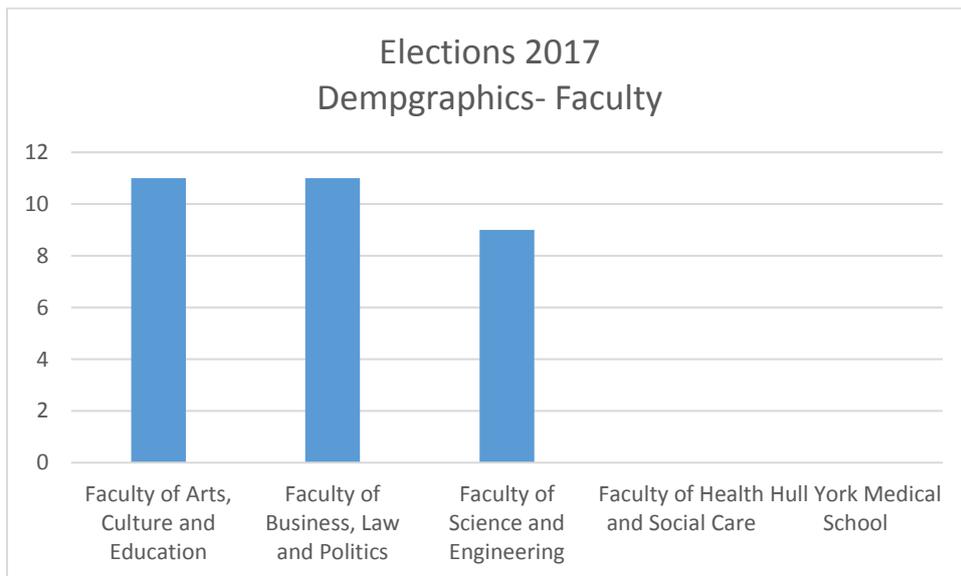
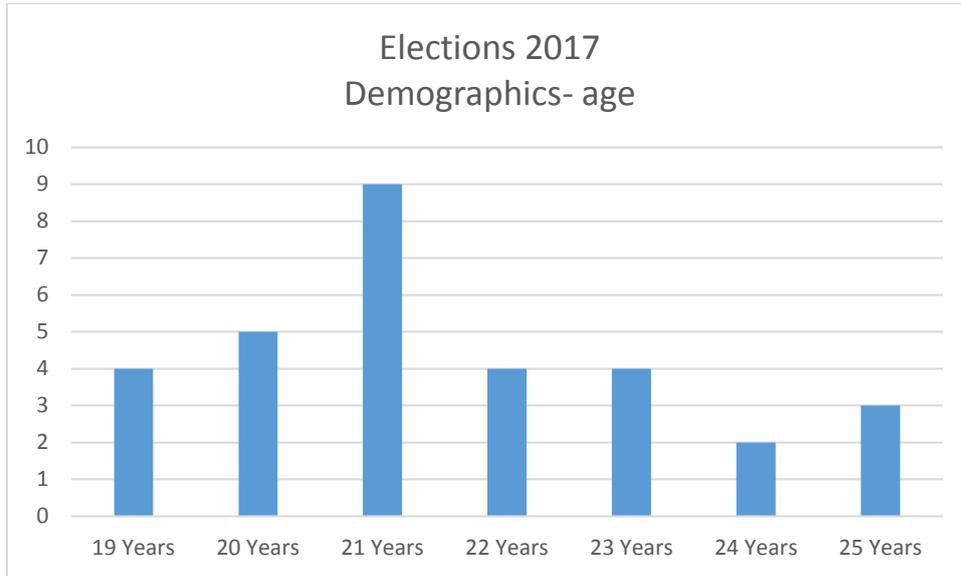
Tania Struetzel

Democracy & Governance Co-ordinator

5 April 2017

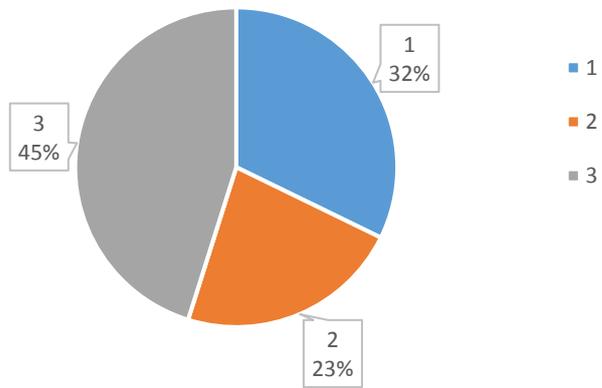
Appendix

Tables 5.1-5.9 Demographics of candidates²

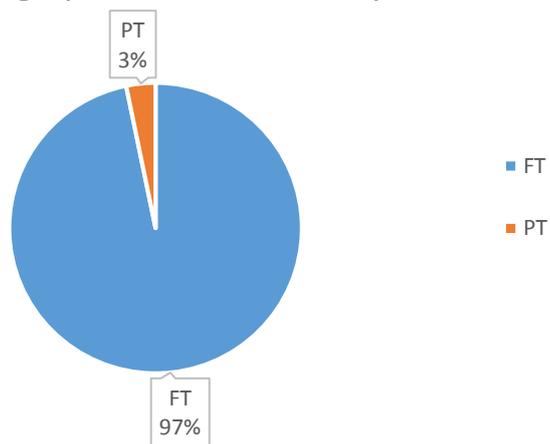


² This survey only captures 31 of the 44 candidates due to having to manually add a number of candidates to the elections portal who were then not able to complete this survey.

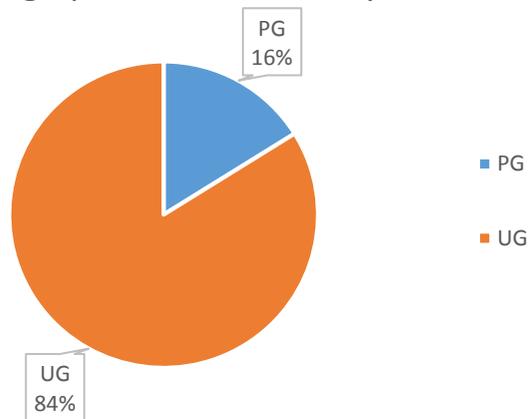
Elections 2017
Demographics- Year of Study



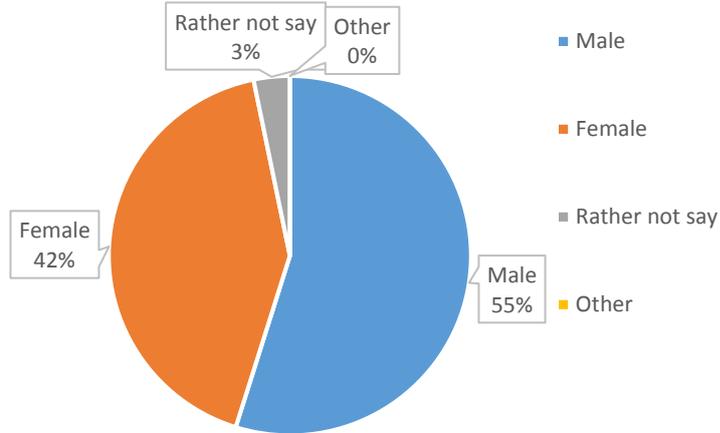
Elections 2017
Demographics- Mode of Study



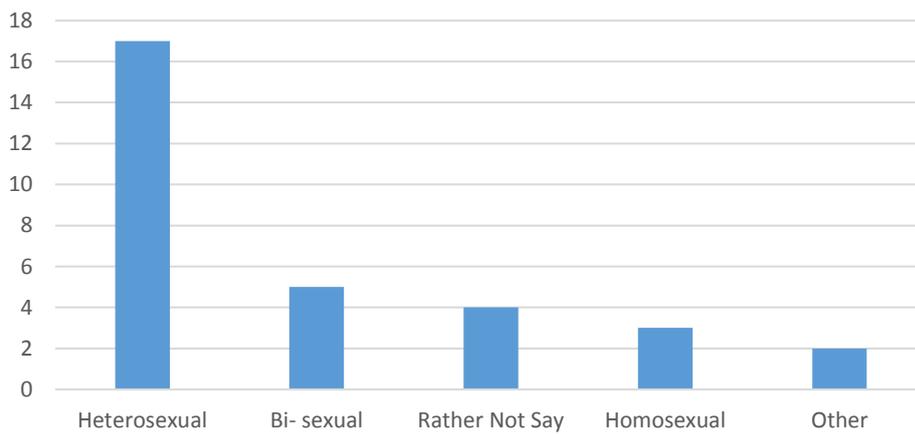
Elections 2017
Demographics- Level of Study



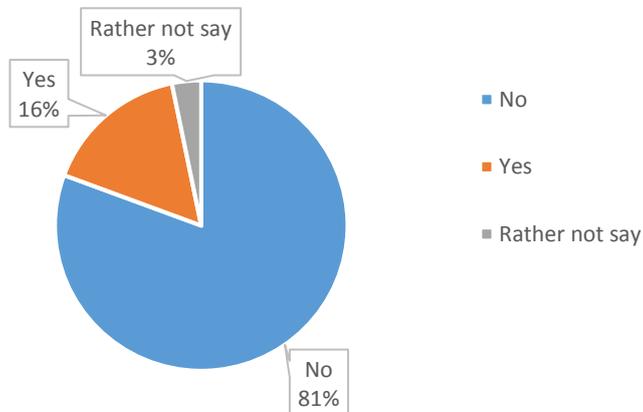
Elections 2017 Demographics- Self defined Gender



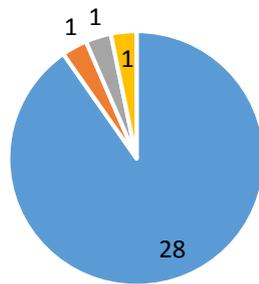
Elections 2017 Demographics- Self defined Sexuality



Elections 2017 Demographics- Do you self-define as disabled?



Elections 2017
Demographics- Nationality



- White - British
- Mixed - Other
- Black/Black British - African
- Asian – Asian British - Pakistani

Table 6. Voter turnout by Faculty

Faculty	Turnout
Non-departmental /Central Administration	57%
Faculty of Science and Engineering	22%
Faculty of Arts, Culture and Education	15%
Faculty of Business, Law and Politics	14%
Hull York Medical School	5%
Faculty of Health and Social Care	3%

Table 7. Voter turnout by Year of Study

Year of Study	
Year of Study	Turnout
3	19%
4	18%
2	16%
1	12%
5	1%

Tables 8. Voter turnout by Societies

37% Society Turnout	
Top 5 Societies	
Society	Turnout
Unicef On Campus	100%
Stand Up To Racism	100%
Jewish Society	100%
Conservative Future Society	89%
Barbershop and Acapella	88%
Socialist Students Society	83%
New Movement for Christ	72%
Labour Club Society	72%
Performing Arts Society	71%
Foundation On Christ Society	71%
Politics Society	71%

Doctor Who Society	71%
Amnesty International Society	71%
Masonic Society	71%
AfroStreet Dance	67%
Conflict and Diplomacy Society	67%
Jewish Society	67%
Liberal Democrats	65%
English Society	62%
History Society	62%
Drama Society	61%
Barrister Society	60%
GPS and Gospel Choir Society	59%
Physics Society	59%
Women Empowered Society	59%
Scouts and Guides	58%
Sci-Fi Society	58%
Afro-Caribbean Society	56%

Debating Society	54%
Harry Potter Society	53%
Board Game Society	52%
Biochemistry	50%
Photography Society	50%
Marrow Society	50%
Law Society	48%
Gilbert & Sullivan Society	47%
Psychology Society	47%
Tamil Society	47%
Food and Dining	46%
Real Ale Society	46%
Anime Society	46%
Aquatic Science Society	46%
Catholic Society	45%
Chemistry Society	44%
War Studies	44%

Friends of Palestine	44%
Zoology Society	42%
Feminist Society	41%
Film Society	41%
Mental Health Society	40%
War Games and Role Playing Society (WARPS)	40%
Computer Society	40%
Yoga and Wellbeing	39%
Swing Dance Society	38%
Rooted in Christ Society	38%
Crystal Clear Society	37%
Pool & Snooker Society	37%
Investment and Trading Society	36%
Poker Society	36%
Arts and Crafts Society	35%
Pokemon Society	35%
Language and Culture Society	35%

Sexpression: UK Hull	35%
Geography Society	34%
Hull Uni Breakdance Society	33%
Chess Society	33%
Secularist, Atheist, Humanist Soc	33%
Rock Society	31%
Bioscience Society	31%
Public Speaking Society	31%
Seventh-Day Adventist Students on Campus	29%
Hindu Society	29%
Engineering Society	29%
Big Band Society	28%
Darts Society	27%
Music Society	27%
Student Action For Refugees	27%
Archeology Society	26%

Mathematics	24%
Japanese Society	21%
Harker Society	20%
Historical Battle Re-enactment Society	18%
MedSoc	16%
Korean Culture	16%
Islamic Society	15%
Horror Society	13%
Hong Kong Society	10%
Midwifery Society	10%
Wilderness Medicine Society	8%
Surgical Society	4%

Table 9. Voter turnout by Sports Club

43% Sport Team Turnout	
Top 5 Sport Teams	
Team	Turnout
Cricket Women	91%
Basketball Ladies	89%
Wheelchair Basketball	85%
Hockey Ladies	78%
Dancesport	77%
Rugby Union Womens	74%
Football Ladies	69%
Netball League	65%
Ultimate Frisbee	65%
Cricket	62%
Ice Hockey	60%

Basketball Mens	55%
Pole Fitness	53%
Volleyball	52%
Trampoline	52%
Hockey Mens	51%
Lacrosse Womens	49%
Dance Squad	47%
Boxing	46%
Water Polo	45%
Jujitsu	44%
Swimming	44%
Badminton	43%
Cheerleading	43%
MMA	42%
Baseball	42%
Surfing	42%
Mountaineering	41%

Lacrosse Mens	41%
Fencing	40%
Go-Karting	40%
Figure Skating	40%
Golf	40%
Netball Squad	40%
Athletics	39%
Sub Aqua	35%
Karate	35%
American Football	34%
Riding	33%
Rugby League	33%
Rugby Union Mens	32%
Football Mens	32%
Ski & Snowboarding	32%
Clay Shooting	30%
Squash	29%

Squash	29%
Archery	29%
Boat Club	27%
Cycling	27%
Tennis	26%
Canoe	24%
Table Tennis	20%
HYMS Sport	13%