



# HUU BY-ELECTIONS REPORT OCTOBER 2018

## Nomination Period

The [notice of elections](#) was publicised on the HUU website on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018. Nominations were open online between 17<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

Throughout the duration of the elections, students were kept informed through email newsletters, social media posts and posters around campus.

The election consisted of a by-election for part-time Officer positions that had not been filled in the spring 2018 election.

Nominations were again open for a two week period (weeks 0 and 1) to ensure that both new and returning students had the opportunity to find out about the vacant positions and submit nominations. Election nominations were promoted through a range of social media, the Welcomefest app, face-to-face on campus by four Student Voice Assistants and the Student Voice Manager, through lecture shout-outs and engagement activities led by the President Team.

The elections section of the HUU website included information for prospective candidates such as detailed role descriptions for each position and the election rules & regulations.

One-to-one support and information was offered to all candidates by the Student Voice Manager, in the position of Assistant Returning Officer.

Table 1. Nominations received for Part-Time Officer positions (17 positions available)

Position	Number of nominations
BAME Students Officer	1
Women's Officer	3
International Students Officer	0
Postgraduate Research Students Officer	0
Postgraduate Taught Students Officer	1
Mature Students Officer	2
Part-time Students Officer	0
Chair SEC	3
Councillors for Scrutiny (9 positions)	6



Contested Positions: 3

Uncontested Positions: 8

Positions with no nominations: 6

Total nominations received: 16

## Academic Rep Recruitment

This year, the recruitment of all academic reps was managed separately from the election process. As a result of the experience and recommendations from the previous year, nominations for course reps and subject reps opened before the end of the 2017/18 academic year via a survey link on the HUU website, removing the voting stage and therefore simplifying the process for students to become academic representatives.

Following changes voted through at Union Council, Faculty Rep positions were recruited through an application form and interview process during spring 2018 rather than through elections. The aim of this was to attract a greater number of high quality applicants who would be well-skilled and enthusiastic about the role, but would not have put themselves forward for an elected position. All four positions were successfully filled through this process, with three out of the four positions contested.


## Campaigning and Budgets

Campaigning opened on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September, and candidates were eligible to claim reimbursement of campaign spending up to a maximum of £15. Just one candidate claimed campaign expenses, with other candidates campaigning on a smaller scale using social media and face-to-face engagement without any printed materials or boosted posts.

The Returning Officer for this election was Lydia Blundell, Head of Voice and Insight at Huddersfield Students' Union. No formal complaints were received.

## Voting and Turnout

Voting opened online on Monday 1st October 2018 at 9am and closed on Friday 5th October 2018 at 3pm. All candidates had to stand against Re-Open Nominations (RON) 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 stalls in the Library and Student Central during voting week.

A total of 984 votes were cast by 284 unique voters in comparison to 2,215 total votes cast by 588 unique voters in the October 2017 by-elections. This is a decrease of 304 unique voters; similarly there was a decrease of 357 unique voters between the October 2016 and 2017 by-elections demonstrating a significant downturn in the number of students engaging in the by-elections process.

It is important to note that this decrease was not seen during the March elections, where the proportion of HUU members voting remained the same at 14.8%.

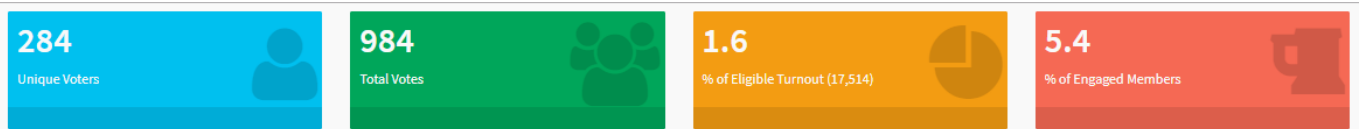
Unfortunately some technical issues came to light during the nomination and voting periods which adversely affected the number of students able to both nominate themselves and vote.

Firstly, there were issues of delay in all registered students' details being transferred between the University and HUU, meaning that some students were unable to log onto HUU's website in order to nominate themselves and/or to vote. In addition, with HUU having launched a new website, some of the functionality was not working on all devices immediately. When these difficulties were identified, they were addressed and fixed in as timely a manner as was possible.

A small number of students contacted the Student Voice Manager to explain that they were unable to submit their nominations and in these cases, their nominations were sent in by email and then uploaded by staff to the website via SUMS, our content management system.

In addition, it was identified halfway through the voting period that the data provided for postgraduate taught and research students was formatted differently from the 2017 data; because of this, postgraduate students had been unable to access the elections for Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students Officer positions. This was rectified by opening up the elections to all postgraduate students for the last three days of voting.

Table 2. Voter turnout



Voting By Day

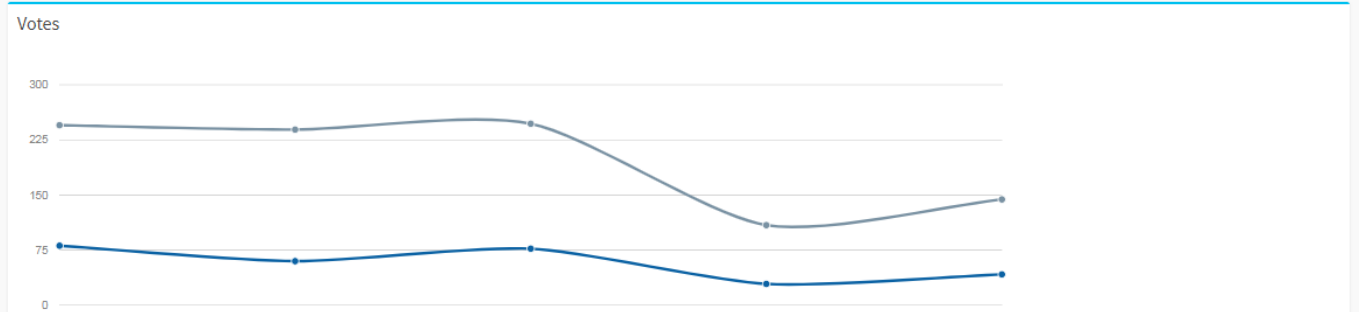


Table 3. Turnout by Faculty

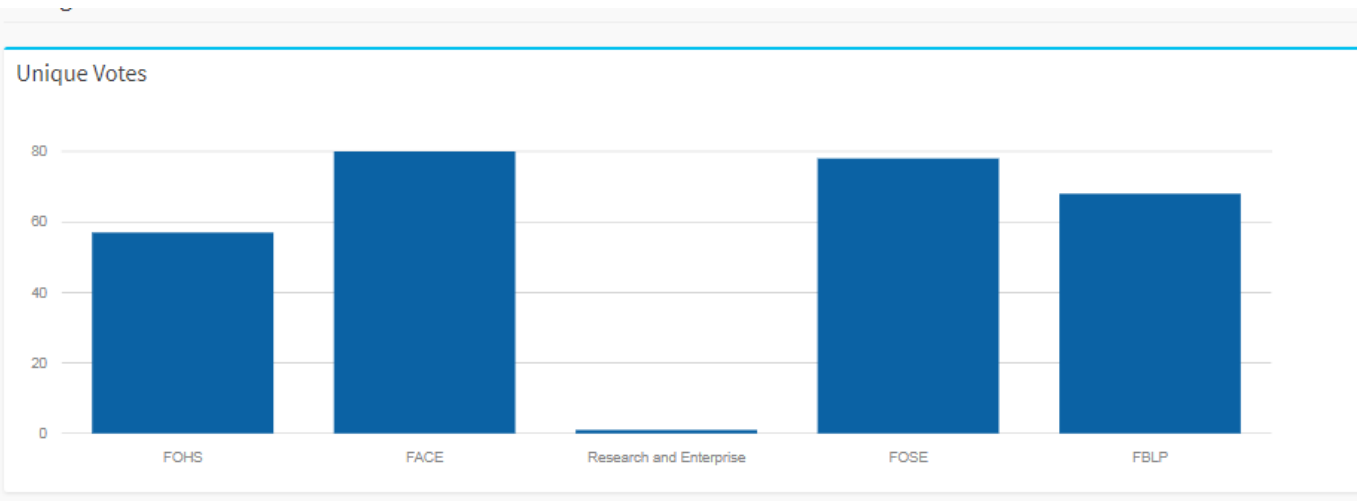


Table 4. Turnout by Year of Study

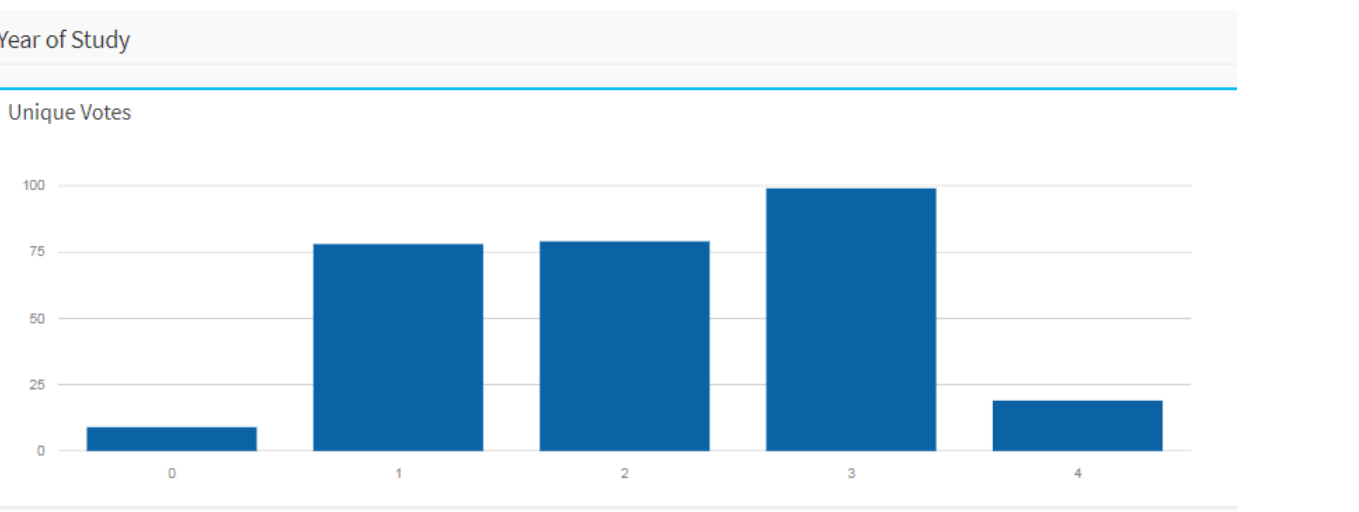


Table 5. Turnout by Level of Study

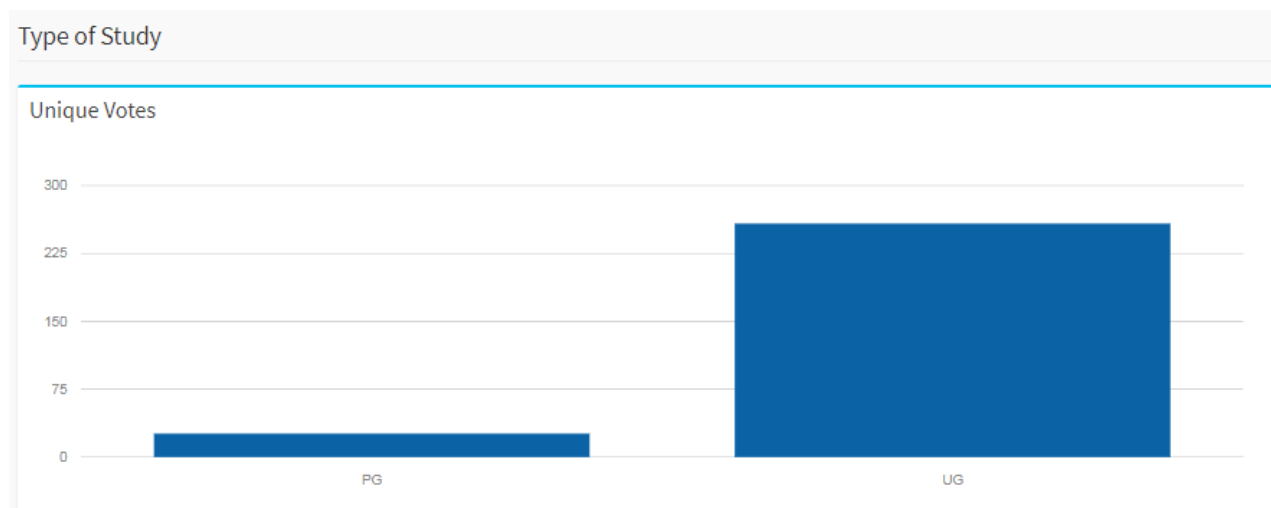


Table 6. Number of total votes for Part-time Officers

Position	Votes 2018	Votes 2017	Votes 2016
BAME Students Officer	7	83	N/A
Women's Officer	126	N/A	N/A
Postgraduate Taught Students Officer	11	0	72
Mature Students Officer	16	N/A	N/A
Chair SEC	175	370	N/A
Councillors for Scrutiny (Governance)	150	411	348
Councillors for Scrutiny (Education)	161	0	350
Councillors for Scrutiny (Activities)	171	384	324
Councillors for Scrutiny (Welfare & Community)	167	0	0

## Results

The results for the by-election of part-time Officers are available [online on the HUU website](#).



## Recommendations for 2019

- To create new clear messaging about elections and by-elections at HUU – in particular the different roles available and the STV voting system for students.
- To run information sessions for prospective candidates for Part-time Officer positions in the by-elections, similar to those provided for the spring election period.
- To maintain the simplified process for course rep recruitment allowing students to sign up via a simple form on [hulluniunion.com](http://hulluniunion.com) that opens during spring/summer 2019 and remains open until midway through Trimester 1.
- To review and evaluate the process for Subject Rep nominations; whilst using a similar self-sign up process as for course reps has been successful at attracting more interested individuals, there has been some confusion amongst some students about the difference between the two roles and in some cases three or four people have signed up for one role.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Faculty Rep interview and appointment process and for this to inform any changes to the procedure in 2019.
- To improve the engagement and retention of academic reps by increased focus on the academic rep experience, specifically through the development of a bespoke training programme throughout the year by an Education Coordinator dedicated to this work; enhanced visibility of reps and their impact on student experience; and an overhaul of the reward and recognition of academic reps by an Education Coordinator dedicated to this piece of work.

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October 2018