How to hold your AGM

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What is a STAR **Burst!?**
A STAR **Burst!** is a mini guide
with advice on how to run various
areas of your activity!
This leaflet, along with the others in the series, is designed to give facts
and tips that you need to know in order to successfully run your group.

Why hold an AGM?

There are a number of reasons why we ensure that every student
group holds an AGM. These are:

1. **They provide an ideal opportunity to present your groups achievements to your members**. You should summarise your year's activities and inform your members of how their finances have been spent.
2. **To agree changes to your constitution.**
3. To give your members an opportunity to **question your committee.** Your members may wish to ask questions about how the society is developing or anything else!
4. **To elect new committee members** - you have to be replaced at some point!

All groups should hold an AGM to:
• Present your group's achievements to your members
• Agree changes to your constitution
• Give members a chance to question your committee
• Elect new committee members

When you plan the date of your AGM bear in mind that the more people
that attend the better, it may help to organise it before a regular meeting
or social to get more people along.

Before your AGM you will need to:
• Advertise it – make sure your members know and encourage them to stand for positions on the committee

- Assign a Returning Officer – who will be impartial and responsible for making sure all elections and fair and held properly. This is usually your secretary
- Get nominations – encourage your members to stand for positions on the committee
- Prepare your ballot papers (more on this in a bit!)
- Decide as a committee on any changes you need to make to your constitution – these must be agreed at your AGM
- Prepare reports – each committee member should write a short report on their activities during the year and be prepared to answer questions from members

One of the most important parts of your AGM will be electing your successors. As a Students' Union group, you must use the Single Transferable Vote method.

Firstly, you need to advertise your elections ensuring that you advertise a deadline when nominations will close. Each nomination must have a proposer and a seconder who are not on the committee.

There should be hustings for all candidates where the following rules apply:
- Equal speaking time for all candidates
- A random speaking order rotating from question to question
- All questions must be relevant to all candidates and the position for which they are standing
- No candidate may demean another candidate's persona
- No candidate may try to gain an unfair advantage through association (eg by claiming the support of a current committee member)
- All votes must know that they can also vote for Re Open Nominations (RON)

Ballot papers should be prepared before the AGM (an example is in the handout they will get at the end of the session).

Everyone who votes must be a fully paid up member of your group.
Voters do not have to vote for every candidate.
RON can be given a preference at any stage.

Counting the votes:

1. Check that the number of votes collected matches number of votes supposed to be cast.
2. Divide up the votes according to first preference, i.e. which candidate has received the '1'. Ignore the other numbers at this stage. Remember that throughout the counting process, 'R.O.N.' is classed as

a candidate that can be eliminated or elected like any other.

3. Any votes without a clear indication of preference are counted as spoilt papers (this includes those with no marks at all).

4. Count these votes and check that the total tallies with total number of votes, to ensure that none have been misplaced.

5. Deduct the number of spoils in the first round from the total to get the 'total valid vote'. Halve the total valid vote and round up to the nearest whole number, or add one if it already is a whole number. The result is your 'quota'. The quota will not change during the count.

6. Compare the number of votes for each candidate with the quota.
 - If anyone has reached the quota they are elected.
 - If no-one has reached the quota you must eliminate the candidate with the least votes.

7. Take the votes this candidate received and redistribute them to the next preference on each paper. If the next preference has already been eliminated the vote goes to the following preference. Any ballot paper with no further preference will be counted as spoilt, but this will not affect the quota.

8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 until the quota is reached, or there is only one remaining candidate.

Ties: When you come to eliminate a candidate, you may find that the two or more lowest candidates have the same number of votes. In this case, add up their votes - if the total is less than the next lowest candidate (meaning that they can never catch up), then eliminate all tied candidates. If they have more votes, then eliminate the candidate who had less votes in a
previous round.

If this is the first round, or they have been tied throughout, (indicating that the voters have clearly expressed no preference between these candidates)
eliminate one candidate on the toss of a coin.

Software is available that can count your votes by STV electronically – contact the Democracy and Communications Officer on
sudemcomms@nottingham.ac.uk to find out more.

Announcing Results: Results should be announced to the candidates first, and only then to the membership. The details of the new committee must be filled in on a Students' Union Committee List and handed in. Make sure you bring this from to your AGM and fill it out there and then!

Disclaimer: This leaflet provides general guidance only. It cannot be relied upon as a complete statement of how to run your group. The Students' Union will not accept liability for any claims or inconvenience as

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