

Ruling (1) of the Returning Officer

This ruling codifies the Returning Officer's approach to various situations that are not adequately covered by the Regulations.

Endorsements by clubs, societies and other groups

1. Clubs and societies by and for University of Melbourne students are permitted to endorse candidates or tickets on whatever terms they see fit. UMSU-affiliated clubs are presumed to have sufficient student members to be student clubs. For clubs that are not UMSU affiliated, candidates and tickets may rely on a club's endorsement only if that group is predominantly University of Melbourne students.
2. Clubs endorsements must be decisions made by the club by their usual decision-making processes (e.g. a motion of the committee). A copy of this motion must be provided to us by an appropriate officer of the club (President, Secretary, or equivalent) before the endorsement is advertised.
3. Publicity produced by clubs that relates to the election must be registered in the usual way, and carry the name and student number of the person who takes responsibility for the material.

Bulk contact lists

4. Subject to the exception below, bulk electronic messages can be sent only to lists where explicit consent has been obtained from each recipient. Electronic messages include emails, SMS messages, and direct messaging features (however described) on social media. Campaigners, tickets and candidates must be able to demonstrate, on request, to the Returning Officer that they have obtained explicit consent from the recipients.
5. Nothing in this ruling affects obligations a campaigner has under University policy (or the law). Compliance with this ruling does not relieve you from obligations to comply with University rules. In particular, the Returning Officer draws campaigners' attention to the Rules for Student Email and the Provision and Acceptable Use of IT Policy. Enforcement of this policy, and therefore questions regarding it, are a matter for the University.
6. Clubs may email their membership using the appropriate UMSU facilities. Any such bulk email must carry a clear statement that inclusion of the election message is approved by the club's committee. As with all election material, a copy must be sent to the Returning Officer for registration.
7. Clubs relying on this exception may not send more than two emails to their members relating to their endorsement before or during the voting period.
8. Any bulk message must have an effective unsubscribe feature.

Phonebanking

9. Based on the number of complaints received last year about phonebanking (that is, systematically calling a list of phone numbers to canvass for votes), our default position is that phonebanking is not permitted.

10. A ticket or candidate wishing to phonebank must discuss their plan in advance with us, in which case we may make a supplementary ruling laying out acceptable parameters for phonebanking.

Adhesives used in postering

11. If postering, do not use wheatpaste, or any adhesive that damages the surface to which the poster is applied, or which means the poster cannot be easily removed without damage to the underlying surface.

12. Compliance with this ruling does not relieve the posterer from the requirement to comply with University policy in relation to postering.

Stephen Luntz
Returning Officer

(originally made 28 August 2025)