

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION PROCESS

1. OVERVIEW

Each year, the Jávea U3A are required by their Statutes to hold elections to choose those Members that will constitute the following year's Executive Committee. Any Member of the Association can stand for election to any of the Executive Committee Roles (positions). The Membership is permitted to vote for the Candidates of their choice.

This document describes the Process that the Jávea U3A will follow each year in order to facilitate such elections. By capturing the *Process*, it makes the organisation of the Election much simpler and avoids each Committee having to re-invent the wheel: it enables a predictable, documented sequence of events that can be understood and supported by the Membership.

1.1. KEY EVENTS

The Election Process comprises the following stages:

1. Appointment of an Election Auditor.
2. The Nomination of Candidates.
3. Voting for the Executive Committee.
4. by the Jávea U3A Membership.
5. The Announcement of the Voting Results.

Throughout this document, the term *Jávea U3A Member (or Member)* is used to refer to a person that is a current (paid up) Member of the Association. The Executive Committee Election Process starts in the autumn and concludes at the end of March. It therefore spans two subscription years. So it is in fact necessary for those people who wish to participate in the Election Process to be Members in both these years. Failure to renew by the end of February will render their involvement null and void.

2. THE ELECTION AUDITOR

The KEY person in the Election Process is the Election Auditor.

This person must be a Jávea U3A Member, must not be a member of the current Committee, or have been on the Committee in the previous three years.

The out-going Committee must be confident that the person to be appointed will perform in an independent, unbiased manner and is capable of fulfilling the tasks associated with the role. In particular, that the person can be present at all the General Meetings where Election activities are required and is capable of using the Online Election Facilities which underpin the Election Process.

In practice, the amount of work required by the Election Auditor is not onerous or complicated. However, this person is essential to the integrity of the election.

3. NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

Any Jávea U3A Member may stand for election to any one of the Executive Committee posts (roles).

Information will be posted on the WebSite with the details of how to apply to be a Candidate. A large banner from the NewsFEED page will direct Members to this information.

3.1. HOW TO BECOME A CANDIDATE

Nomination is a Paper-based activity and, as such, requires the resultant Paper Form to be handed to the Election Auditor.

To be accepted as a Candidate for the Executive Committee Elections, the Candidate must be **nominated** and **seconded** by two other Jávea U3A Members. All three Members (i.e. Candidate, Nominator and Secunder) must **sign** the Nomination Form. Blank Nomination Forms will be available on the Jávea U3A WebSite for download and printing, and printed Nomination Forms will be available at the relevant General Meetings.

The completed Nomination Form must be passed to the Election Auditor at one of the relevant General Meetings. The Nomination Form can be handed over by anybody as it is signed by the Candidate, the Nominator and the Secunder.

3.2. THE NOMINATION PERIOD

The Nomination Period will start on the day of the September General Meeting, and close at the end of the November General Meeting. This will give three opportunities for a Candidate to *handover* their Nomination Form, or to get someone to hand it over for them.

The nomination of Candidates is not secret, and the WebSite will, at all times, present an up-to-date list of all currently accepted Candidates and the roles that they are applying for.

Once the Nomination Period is closed then no further changes can be made to the list of Candidates.

Candidates cannot withdraw their Nomination once the Nomination Period has closed.

3.3. ELECTION AUDITOR

The Election Auditor will take the Paper Nomination Forms received at each these General Meetings and input them (within three days) into the Online Election Facility. This will automatically cause the list of Candidates on the WebSite to be updated.

It will also automatically send emails to the Candidate, Nominator and Secunder confirming the acceptance of the nomination.

The Election Auditor will contact the Candidate should the nomination be rejected by the Online Election Facility.

The Election Auditor will keep all the paper Nomination Forms and hand them over to the incoming Secretary after the March AGM.

3.4. CANDIDATES

3.4.1. WITHDRAWING A NOMINATION

It is accepted that a Members may put themselves forward for an Executive Committee Role and then, at some later time, decide to withdraw. There are facilities to enable the Election

Auditor to remove a Candidate's nomination. The withdrawal is audited and communicated by email to the Candidate, Nominator and Secunder.

3.4.2. CHANGING A NOMINATION

There may also be circumstances where a Candidate wants to change some of the details of a previously accepted nomination. For example, perhaps to do with issues related to the Nominator or Secunder or where the Candidate decides to stand for a different Committee Role. In these circumstances, the Candidate must fill in a **new** Nomination Form and get a Nominator and Secunder.

3.4.3. RULES REGARDING CANDIDATES

A Candidate may only be nominated for one Role, although they can change the Role by submitting a new Nomination Form (as mentioned above).

On every Nomination Form, the Candidate, the Nominator and the Secunder must be three different Members.

A Candidate is allowed to Nominate/Second other Members' Nominations.

4. MEMBERSHIP VOTING

All Jávea U3A Members are permitted to vote. They can vote for their chosen Candidates for each of the Committee positions. Each Voting Form will allow the Voter to select their preferred Candidate for each of the Committee Roles.

There are no "NO" votes or abstentions (other than just leaving the vote clear).

4.1. ONLINE VOTING

Just prior to the Voting Period, the WebMaster will put up on the WebSite a page describing the Voting Process and the Online Voting Form. Again, a banner from the NewsFEED will direct Members to this page.

Access to this form will be via a username / password that will be distributed to all Jávea U3A Members via Email.

All Members that have access to the Internet are required to vote via an Online Voting Form. They will not be allowed to submit Paper Voting Forms.

4.2. PAPER VOTING FORMS

For those Members that do not have the access to the Internet, their only means of voting is to come to one of the General Meetings, fill in **and sign** a Voting Form and hand it to the Election Auditor.

A small number of Paper Voting Forms will be available at the General Meetings where Paper Voting is allowed. Paper Voting Forms will NOT be available from the WebSite.

The Election Auditor will strictly control the issue of Paper Voting Forms (using a pre-prepared list of all the Members that do not have email addresses registered in the Membership Database). Members that have access to the internet will NOT be allowed to vote via Paper Voting Forms.

The Voter must fill in the Paper Voting Form and then hand it back to the Election Auditor, who will check it and ensure that it is signed. Paper Votes can only be submitted by the person whose name is on the form, i.e. it must be done *in person*.

After every General Meeting during the Paper Voting Period, the Election Auditor will **manually** input the Paper Votes into the Online Election Facility. This operation will be securely audited.

It is the responsibility of the Election Auditor to keep all the submitted Paper Voting Forms and hand them over to the incoming Secretary after the March AGM.

4.3. RULES REGARDING VOTING

The following rules apply to all Jávea U3A Members with respect to voting.

1. A Member can only vote once.
2. A Member can only vote in their own name, they cannot submit votes for other Members.
3. There are no proxies either via Paper or Online Voting.
4. Once accepted, votes cannot be withdrawn or changed for any reason.
5. If a Member is deleted in February due to non-renewal of subscription, then their vote will be discarded automatically by the Online Election Process.
6. During the Voting Period, none on the Committee will have access to the votes being cast.

4.4. VOTING PERIOD

4.4.1. ONLINE VOTING

The Voting Period for Online Voting will commence on the Monday of the week of the January General Meeting.

The Voting Period for Online Voting will close ONE WEEK before the March AGM.

This provides a total Voting Period of about 9 weeks.

4.4.2. PAPER VOTING

For those Members that do not have access to the Internet, there will be two opportunities to vote:

1. at the January General Meeting.
2. at the February General Meeting.

The January General Meeting, being an Open Meeting, provides well over 2 hours for Members to obtain and submit a Paper Voting Form.

At the end of the February General Meeting, the Voting Period for Paper Votes will close and no more will be accepted.

Paper Votes are not accepted between these General Meetings, only at the General Meetings.

5. RESULTS ANALYSIS

Once the Voting Period is closed then the Election Auditor has the time to ensure that the information required at the March AGM is in order and ready for presentation.

The Results will be produced automatically by the Online Election Facility when the Election Auditor requests it. This will include both Paper Votes and Online Votes.

The Online Election Facility will automatically discard Candidates and Votes that are not in order (e.g. no longer Members).

The Results Analysis of the Online Election Facility will present the total for each valid Candidate. It does not report on abstentions (a blank vote for a Committee position).

6. COMPLETION OF THE ELECTION PROCESS

Once the Election is over and the incoming Committee takes “office”, then the Election Auditor will hand over all the all the paper forms to the incoming Secretary.

At some stage, when the dust settles, the incoming Committee will declare that there are no outstanding issues with the Election and take steps to clear the Online Election Data. This will be in preparation for the next Election.