1. General Information

1.1 The Rector takes office on the first day of the second clear month after his/her election (1 January 2018), and holds office for three years from the date on which he/she takes office. The Rector is (ex officio) a member of the University Court.

1.2 Proposers should note that under the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, Section 11, the office of Rector may not be held by any person who holds an appointment in the University of Aberdeen.

1.3 Expenses incurred by the Rector on travel and accommodation on official University business will be met by the University throughout his/her period of office.

1.4 The Returning Officer will be appointed by and from the Senate. The Senate will also appoint an Elections Committee. The Elections Committee will comprise: two members of Senate; the University Secretary and a student member of Senate, normally the Education Officer. The student member of the Elections Committee will not be permitted to take any other role in the election process. The Elections Committee will oversee the procedures of the election and consider any appeals against decisions of the Returning Officer.

1.5 The organisation of the election is delegated to the Acting Academic Registrar by the Election Committee and the first point of contact for all electoral matters outlined in these rules should be to them or their nominee as outlined on the Rectorial web pages. Where a nominee is named, they shall be permitted to act on behalf of the Acting Academic Registrar for all issues referred to in these rules.

1.6 All documentation, rules and guidance in relation to the election will be made available on the University’s Rectorial web pages – www.abdn.ac.uk/rector/

2. Nomination

2.1 Nominations will open from Monday 2 October 2017 until 1pm Thursday 19 October 2017. No nominations will be accepted after this time. Nomination forms will be available to download from the Rectorial Website from August 2017.

2.2 The nomination and sponsors form must be submitted to the Principal’s named deputy, Nicholas Edwards, marked “Rector’s Election 2017”, within normal office hours (9am to 5pm) and no later than 1pm on Thursday 19 October 2017. You can hand this form into Visitors Reception, University Office, Regent Walk, Aberdeen.
2.3 Each nomination must be signed by 50 sponsors who must be matriculated students of the University in the academic year 2017/18.

2.4 No student may sponsor or propose more than one candidate. Proposers of each candidate are not permitted to sign the sponsorship form for their nominee. If they do, their sponsorship will be deducted from the total number of sponsors. Should this leave less than 50 sponsors the nomination will be unsuccessful.

2.5 Where a proposer or sponsor signs more than one form, the sponsor will be deducted from the total number of sponsors on both sponsor forms. Should this leave less than 50 sponsors the nomination will be unsuccessful.

2.6 The two students who have proposed the Rectorial Candidate will be the main point of contact for communications related to the election and will be responsible for running the election campaign and ensuring adherence to the rules of the election.

2.7 The two proposers for each candidate (and the candidate if available) must attend a compulsory briefing meeting with the University Secretary, or nominee, prior to submission of nomination to enable the Secretary to brief potential candidates on the roles and responsibilities of the post. Details of how to arrange this meeting can be found on the Rectorial website, by downloading the ‘Nomination Guidance’ document.

2.8 The eligibility of nominations shall be scrutinised to confirm their validity.

2.9 Once nominations have been confirmed, Proposers and Candidates, if available, will be required to attend a briefing meeting chaired by the Returning Officer or nominee on Friday 27 October 2017 at 2pm in the Court Room, University Office.

3. Campaigning

3.1 Campaigning may begin on Monday 6 November 2017 at 12.01am. Campaigning of any variety before the campaigning period opens will not be permitted.

3.2 In any campaigns promotional material (including websites), the only names mentioned may be those of the candidate; and names of eligible voters – provided that their consent has been obtained, and that they may be cited only as individuals/students of a given discipline. Endorsements from non-voters are not allowed, nor are direct criticisms of other candidates or their supporters.

3.3 Aberdeen University Students’ Association (AUSA) Sabbatical Officers are not permitted to endorse or campaign for a candidate in their capacity as an AUSA Sabbatical. Should AUSA Sabbaticals wish to endorse a candidate they must do so without mentioning any position they hold at AUSA or any Club or Society affiliated to it.

3.4 No AUSA affiliated Club or Society may officially endorse a candidate.

3.5 Candidates shall be responsible for the conduct of their Proposers and immediate campaign team members.
3.6 Posters must be displayed only within the campus of the University (including partner institutions); be capable of easy removal; and be taken down within 24 hours of the conclusion of voting. If this is not done, they will be removed by Estates and charged as a campaign expense.

3.7 Posters should not be put on any scaffolding or on any construction site on campus. Campaign teams are reminded that the High Street is council property and therefore any posters put up may be regarded as fly posting. The University reserves the right to remove any posters in breach of this rule without notice to the Campaign Team.

3.8 Spoiling of other campaigns posters is not allowed (nor of course material which is defamatory) and any allegations of such activity will be referred to the Elections Committee.

3.9 Each campaign may have only one web presence dedicated to the campaign. This will be the only site advertised by the University and the location of this web presence must be confirmed no later than 5pm on Thursday 2nd November. Candidates may also utilise Social Media platforms as part of their Campaign (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat).

3.10 Campaigns may not use any Society, Sports Club or Schools mailing list or affiliated social media platforms to harvest email addresses, phone numbers, or any other data for campaign purposes. AUSA Officers, and Sports Clubs and Society’s, may not endorse a candidate. Candidates may, however, directly contact students who have signed their sponsorship form.

3.11 Campaign Teams may not use pre-existing websites for promotion.

3.12 Official Campaign Websites may not advertise a candidate’s charity, company or product.

3.13 The Acting Academic Registrar or their nominee will arrange for one email to be sent to all students from each campaign team during the period of campaigning. Emails will be not exceed 500 words in length and may include a link to the approved campaign website. Emails will be approved by the Returning Officer before circulation. No other unsolicited emails are permitted. The deadline for the submission of a proposed email text is 5pm on Thursday 2nd November.

3.14 Campaign teams are not permitted to use any AUSA resources to assist with campaigning, this includes social media platforms and other websites.

3.15 Active campaigning of any variety must not take place within University owned or managed buildings including Halls of Residence, the Students’ Union Building and Aberdeen Sports Village.

3.16 Items of clothing or accessories as indicative of individuals’ affiliation to a campaign, and provided included within the expenditure limit, are permitted – including while voting or
attending classes. Individuals must not undertake active campaigning whilst wearing campaign t-shirts in class or whilst voting.

3.17 The Acting Academic Registrar will make arrangements for the Rectorial Election Hustings to take place during campaigning. This will take place on Monday 13 November at 2pm. Full details will be provided to campaign teams in advance.

3.18 Candidates, campaign team members and supporters are not permitted to provide assistance or seek to influence students in the process of voting.

3.19 Serious and persistent breaches of the Campaign Rules may result in the disqualification of Candidates. All complaints should be directed to the Acting Academic Registrar in the first instance.

4. Campaign Expenses

4.1 Candidates and their proposers will be limited to spending £500 in connection with promoting their own campaign. This includes expenditure on items such as posters, leaflets, advertisements and websites. The University will not refund any expenses individually incurred by a candidate in connection with the Rectorial Election.

4.2 The University will reimburse expenditure of up to £300. Candidates may personally contribute or obtain sponsorship of up to a further £200.

4.3 Evidence of all expenditure, in the form of original receipts and invoices must be submitted within 5 working days of the close of voting. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. This is the only expenditure which will be reimbursed.

5. Voting and announcement of results

5.1 Voting will take place electronically from the University Rectorial web pages from 9am Tuesday 14 November 2017 and will close at 5pm Thursday 16 November 2017.

5.2 Only matriculated students will be eligible to vote, those who have been given temporary registration will not be permitted to vote. Provision will be made for those students unable to vote electronically to submit paper votes by post. Procedures for paper voting will be displayed on the University Rectorial web pages.

5.3 The electoral roll will be compiled as of noon one week before the day voting opens.

5.4 At the close of the poll the result will be determined electronically using software provided by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

5.5 The result will be determined at a venue designated by the Returning Officer. The candidates (if available) and the two student proposers of each candidate must be present at the count. In addition: a representative of AUSA; members (or nominees) of
the Election Committee; and the Acting Academic Registrar (or nominees) are permitted to be present at the count.

5.6 Each voter will be allowed an alternative transferable vote and may indicate the order of preference in which they wished to place the candidates. At the end of the first counting of votes, if a candidate has received 50 per cent plus one of the total votes cast they shall be declared elected. If no candidate has an overall majority then the candidate with the least votes shall be eliminated and each of their votes will be transferred to whichever candidate has been listed second in order of preference. These transferred votes shall each count as one full vote.

5.7 This process shall be repeated until either one candidate has obtained 50 per cent plus one of the total votes cast or there are only two candidates left who have not been eliminated, in which case the candidate of those two with the most votes shall be declared as elected.

5.8 In the event of an equality of votes for two or more candidates at any stage of the count then the candidate to be excluded shall be decided by the relative placing of the candidates at the most recent stage of the count at which their votes were unequal (or if equal at all stages by the drawing of lots).

5.9 The Returning Officer, appointed by and from the Senate, will declare the result of the election.

5.10 In the event of only one nomination being received no vote will take place and the Returning Officer will declare the sole nominee to have been elected at the end of the nomination period.

5.11 Where an election is required, the result of the election will be announced as soon as possible after the close of voting on Thursday 16 November 2017. The two proposers for each candidate (and the candidate if available) must attend the results meeting at 6pm on Thursday 16 November 2017.

5.12 Appeals against any decision of the Returning Officer will be considered by the Election Committee. Appeals must be submitted to the Acting Academic Registrar within 48 hours of the decision being made. Appeals will only be considered on grounds of procedure, competency or prejudice. The decision of the Election Committee will be final and there is no further route of appeal.