

Dear Graham,

This correspondence, on behalf of the electoral commission, pertains to the issue of school representatives for this coming academic year. In short, there has been a restructuring of the 'school' system in TU Dublin; it has transitioned from 30 single-campus schools to 25 pan-university schools. The constitution currently states that "There shall be one School Representative for each school listed in Schedule A and they shall be elected by the Class Representatives in that School." Schedule A currently lists the legacy 30 single-campus schools within specific campuses.

The names of these schools, as well as their 'locations', have changed. This presents several difficulties. Primarily, at a minimum, it is not currently possible to elect school representatives in accordance with the constitution (due to inaccurate names and locations). This means that we are missing nearly 1/3 of our student council positions (30/101). Therefore, it will be difficult to have any constitutional referendum as the maximum number of council positions currently stands at 63/101 (due to no school representatives and missing certain part-time officers). While there are potential remedies around the idea of changing relevant Schedules (so that the schools are realigned once again), several other issues remain.

Firstly, school representatives were traditionally elected at Class Representative meetings (which are campus-specific). This can no longer happen, without incurring an unfair disadvantages to particular students in different campuses due to the meeting location. Furthermore, even with online elections, there is a question around campus representation (i.e. will city campus students have an unfair advantage compared to students in Blanchardstown and Tallaght). As well, more importantly, it is arguably unreasonable to expect a school representative to represent students across all three major campuses. Based on these issues, it will be unlikely that we can elect a sufficient number of students in a manner that is not entirely tokenistic.

As such, electoral commission has come with a recommendation that could allow for optimal representation without potentially problematic election processes. The recommendation is for a derogation to be enacted, where the ex-officio council positions for school representatives are instead simply reallocated as additional student councillor positions. The number of positions could be reallocated in a manner identical to the current school representative structure (i.e. 24 reallocated to city, 3 to Tallaght, 3 to Blanch). This derogation would only take place for the academic year 22/23.

Such a derogation would allow for a far easier (and more fair) election process, would avoid the issue of positions being pan-university, and would reduce the complexity of students who want to be involved in democracy. While perhaps a significant derogation, it is the opinion of the electoral commission that this is the best solution in order to maintain student representation and democracy, with the expectation that a constitutional referendum would rectify these issues in subsequent years.

If this is not something that the Chair believes is possible, the electoral commission would appreciate your thoughts on an alternative path that we could take to avoid this issue for the academic year 22/23. The electoral commission is also available and happy to discuss this matter in greater detail with the Chair if he wishes.

Yours sincerely,

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*Brian Jordan*

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