ECU STUDENT GUILD ELECTIONS
Voting System and Casting a Valid Vote

All elections for ECU Guild Senators use an Optional Preferential System of voting and counting.
For NUS elections, votes are cast in the same way but the counting uses a more complicated system, usually known as Optional Preferential Proportional.

OPTIONAL:
This means that it is the voter's choice as to how many of the candidates they write a number against.
A vote can be valid even if not all the boxes are numbered.

PREFERENTIAL:
A voter indicates their order of preference as to which candidate they would like to be elected.
Number '1' is their first preference, number '2' is their second and so on.
In effect, the voter is saying "If my number 1 choice isn't going to get enough votes to be elected, then I'd like my vote to be transferred to my number 2 choice", and so on.

COUNTING VOTES:
Where only one position is to be filled, votes are progressively redistributed from the candidate with the fewest '1' votes to whoever is numbered next on each Ballot Paper. This action is carrying out the wishes of the voter in the order of their preference.

After all the votes of the candidate with the fewest votes are redistributed, the votes of the candidate who **then** has the lowest vote tally are redistributed to the remaining candidates in the same way.
The candidate with the fewest votes at each step of counting is eliminated from the contest at that point.
Eventually only two candidates will be left. The one with the greater number of votes is the one elected.

For the South West officer position, where there are 2 vacancies, exactly the same process is followed but the counting and redistribution finishes when there are 2 candidates remaining. Those two are elected.

TO CAST A VALID VOTE:
The number '1' **must** appear **once** on the Ballot Paper **[BP].**
One, and only one, candidate must be marked with the number '1'.
Other names on the Ballot Paper should then be marked in sequence, '2', '3', '4' and so on.
Each number should be written once only.
It is not necessary to number all candidates on the Paper.
However,
In the redistribution process a Ballot Paper will become "Exhausted" if the last-preferred (highest numbered) candidate on that BP is eliminated. That vote cannot be transferred because the voter has not indicated where it should go next. The vote lapses or is "exhausted" for lack of preferences.
Also
If a number is shown twice on a BP, that BP will also become exhausted if the redistribution process reaches the duplicated number because it is not clear where the vote should then go.
And
If the number '1' is shown more than once, that vote is "INVALID" immediately because it is not clear where it should go at the very first step.

NUS VOTE COUNTING
For NUS elections, the more complicated Optional Preferential Proportional counting system is used.
It is too complicated to explain in simple terms here, but it uses a 'quota' system to elect numerous candidates to fill numerous vacancies from a single poll. That is, voters each fill only one Ballot Paper at one visit to the Polling place.

EXAMPLES OF GUILD SENATOR VOTING
Examples of various Formal and Informal votes for typical single-vacancy Guild Senator elections are shown overleaf.