

Frequently Asked Questions about the elections in the 2026 summer semester

These FAQs relate to the elections for the Senate, the faculty conferences and the SHK representatives, as well as the election of the central student representative for the Equal Opportunities Officer (the candidate to be proposed to the Senate for election to this post). The dates and deadlines set out in the election notices are binding.

This document was translated by DeepL.

What is being elected?

1. Which elections are taking place in the 2026 summer semester?

In the 2026 summer semester, the Central Election Office will conduct **elections to the Senate and the faculty conferences, the representatives for student assistants** in the faculties and central institutions, as well as the election of the (candidate to be proposed to the Senate for the office of) **central student deputy to the Equal Opportunities Officer**.

Elections will also be held for the Student Parliament (<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/uni/einrichtungen-organisation/studierendenparlament/index.xml>), the BiSEd Conference (<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/bised/bised/struktur-und-gremien/wahlen/>), the ISR and the Law Students' Council. Information on these elections can be obtained from the respective election committees.

2. How are the elections conducted?

The elections will be held in person, i.e. voting takes place at a polling station in the university hall. If you are unable to attend in person during the election week, you may alternatively apply for a postal vote.

3. How are the deadlines and regulations applicable to the electoral process announced?

All important deadlines and regulations can be found in the First Election Announcements, which will be published in April 2026. These will be uploaded to Bielefeld University's election portal.

All staff and students will also be informed about the election procedure via email and the University's social media channels.

Eligibility to vote

4. Who is eligible to vote in the elections for the Senate, the faculty conferences and the SHK representatives?

All members of the University who, on **the cut-off date (27 April 2026)**, belong to one of the University's member groups i.e. the group of university lecturers, academic staff, technical and administrative staff or students, and who, on the cut-off date, are properly enrolled or employed on a full-time basis (i.e. with an average regular weekly working time of at least 19.5 hours) and are not on leave of absence for more than six months.

Members who meet these criteria are listed in the register of eligible voters and are therefore entitled to vote and stand for election (active and passive voting rights). Questions regarding the register of eligible voters or eligibility to vote should be addressed to the Electoral Office.

For students studying multiple subjects, their affiliation with a faculty (and thus their eligibility to vote in elections for the faculty conference and the SHK representatives) is usually determined by the main subject specified at the time of enrolment. If there is any uncertainty regarding which faculty a student is assigned to for electoral purposes, this can be checked whilst the register of eligible voters is on display.

Students who are simultaneously employed full-time (i.e. for more than 19.5 hours per week) at the university are, for electoral purposes, first assigned to the group of academic staff or the group of staff in administration and service. As a rule, positions as student or research (BA) assistants are not considered full-time.

This does not affect eligibility to vote in the Student Parliament election.

Changes to voting eligibility are possible if several options exist. However, there may be waiting times if a change is to be made only at the polling station. Verification of whether the desired voting eligibility applies can often only be carried out in the respective academic departments.

5. Who is eligible to vote in the election for the central student representative of the Equal Opportunities Officer?

All female members of the University who, on **the cut-off date (27 April 2026)**, belong to the student body, are duly enrolled on the cut-off date and have not been on leave of absence for more than six months are eligible to vote. Female students who meet these criteria are listed in the register of eligible voters and may therefore vote and stand for election (active and passive voting rights). Questions regarding the register of eligible voters or voting eligibility should be directed to the Election Office.

6. How can I check whether I am on the electoral roll?

The register of eligible voters will be available for public inspection at the Election Office (B1-214) from **5 to 11 May 2026 (between 9 am and 3 pm each day)**. The staff of the Election Office can provide information regarding your entry in the register of eligible voters and your allocation to a member group or faculty on site, by telephone or by email (to zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de). If you wish to view the register in person, please contact us in advance to arrange an appointment.

List and candidate nominations

7. Where can I find the forms for a list or candidate nomination?

The forms for list and candidate nominations can be found on the election portal, under the heading 'List forms' for the relevant office or body:

- Senates (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/senat_fakultaeten/index.xml#accordion-comp_000065fa513e_00000011d1_6e98) and faculty conferences (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/senat_fakultaeten/index.xml#accordion-comp_000069b8c3bd_0000006016_32a5)
- SHK representatives (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/shk/index.xml#accordion-comp_00005cbfc322_0000002c28_7686)
- Central Student Representative to the Equal Opportunities Officer (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/gleichstellung/index.xml#accordion-comp_00005cbfc322_0000002bdc_7686)

8. What information should be included on the list proposal?

List proposals must always be completed in full. Any missing data or signatures may be submitted within the (extended) deadlines. If, for example, no list spokesperson is named, the person listed as number one on the list proposal is deemed to be the list spokesperson. Similarly, if there is no list title, the list proposal is named after this person.

Each candidate or supporter must confirm their candidacy or support for a list proposal once with their own signature. Further information on this can be found under Question

9. How and by when can I submit a list proposal?

Complete list proposals may be submitted in person or by post to the Election Office (UHG B1-214, B1-210 and B1-216) **by 3 pm on 18 May 2026**, or alternatively sent electronically to zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de. For all elections, the original signature of the list spokesperson must be submitted.

Should you encounter any difficulties or have any questions, please contact the Election Office. Further information on submitting the declarations and signatures of additional candidates or supporters and possible alternatives can be found in Question 12.

10. What needs to be taken into account regarding gender parity on lists?

In accordance with Section 11b of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz NRW), the requirements for gender parity representation must be observed when appointing members to committees and drawing up lists. The Senate of Bielefeld University has passed a resolution regarding the detailed implementation of these requirements. This resolution is available on the election portal (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/senat_fakultaeten/index.xml) (under the heading 'Erläuterungen und Vorgaben zur Erstellung von Listenvorschlägen' German version only). If a list submitted

to **cannot be composed in accordance with these gender parity guidelines**, the list spokesperson must submit a **written explanation** – even **without an explicit request** from the Central Election Office – setting out the reasons for failing to meet the guidelines applicable to the respective body and member group, as well as the efforts undertaken. If no justification is provided, or if the justification is insufficient, it is incumbent upon the Election Committee to reject a list under certain circumstances and not to admit it to the election.

Further information on gender parity in committees can be found here (<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/uni/profil/gleichstellung/verpflichtet/gremien/>).

11. How and by when can I submit a nomination for the election of the central student representative to the Equal Opportunities Officer?

Complete nominations may be submitted in person or by post to the Election Office (UHG B1-214, B1-210 and B1-216) by 3 pm on 18 May 2026, or alternatively sent electronically to zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de. The candidate's original signature must be submitted.

Should you encounter any difficulties or have any questions, please contact the Election Office. Further information on submitting declarations and signatures from supporters, as well as possible alternatives, can be found in Question 12.

Further information on the roles of the Equal Opportunities Officers and their central deputies can be found on the Equal Opportunities Office website (<https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/uni/profil/gleichstellung/gleichstellungsbuero/index.xml>). The Election Support Group (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/gleichstellung/index.xml#accordion-comp_0000626f3b25_0000003bad_08d6) is also happy to advise on any queries.

12. What can I do if, as a candidate or supporter, I am unable to sign the original list?

If a signature cannot be provided on the original list proposal or nomination form, or on an original list of supporters, it may also be provided on a copy of the original document.

To simplify the procedure for submitting list proposals, the signature may alternatively be sent to the list spokesperson or the candidate in digital form (i.e. scan, photo, etc.) or by means of a declaration of consent. This declaration of consent to stand as a candidate (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/_doks/Einverständnis-zur-Kandidatur-auf-einem-Listenvorschlag.pdf) and the declaration of support for a list proposal (https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/_doks/Unterstützung-eines-Listenvorschlags.pdf) can also be found on the subpages alongside the relevant list forms or requested from the Election Office. They may also be sent to the list spokesperson or the candidate in digital form (see above) for submission to the Election Office.

The **original** signature of the list spokesperson or the candidate for the office of central student representative to the Equal Opportunities Officer **must always be submitted**. However, upon request by the Electoral Office or the Electoral Committee, the list spokesperson or candidate must also be able to submit the original signatures of the candidates or, where applicable, the supporters.

Election campaigning

13. What options are available for campaigning for my list/candidacy?

As in previous years, each list or nomination has the option of presenting itself online via a PDF document created by the list itself. All submitted documents may be published via the election portal (www.uni-bielefeld.de/wahlen) at the earliest with the second election notices for the approved lists and nominations (no later than 1 June 2026). This election portal is exclusively for election campaigning for the elections to the Senate, the faculty conferences and the SHK representatives, as well as the elections for the Equal Opportunities Officer and her central deputies.

The document must clearly state who is responsible for its content, which list it concerns (list name) and for which body it is standing. The Central Election Office will only review the document in relation to the above requirements and, where applicable, content relevant to criminal law. PDF documents must be submitted electronically to the Central Election Office (zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de).

Lists may also put up posters in the university buildings or distribute leaflets in the university canteen in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Postal voting

14. How and by when can I apply for a postal vote?

All eligible voters at Bielefeld University have the option of applying for their postal voting documents via an online form. This can be used, for example, if you are not in Bielefeld during election week and are therefore unable to visit the polling station. The link to the form can be found on the homepage of the election portal (www.uni-bielefeld.de/wahlen). The application must include: your name, first name, matriculation number or university ID, and, as a mandatory requirement, the address to which the documents are to be sent. Only applications that are complete and can be clearly identified can be processed.

Applications may be submitted until 8 June 2026, 12:00 noon. For details regarding the dispatch date, see point 18.

15. To which elections does this application for postal voting apply?

This application for postal voting can be used to request documents for the following elections:

- Senate,
- Faculty Conferences,
- SHK representatives,
- Central Student Representative for the Equal Opportunities Officer,
- BiSEd Conference (for the student group).

Every eligible applicant will automatically receive all the ballot papers for which they are eligible along with their postal voting pack. These will be sent out by the Central Election Office or the BiSEd Election Office.

Information on the options for postal voting in other elections (e.g. the StuPa election) can be found in the relevant first election announcements.

16. What can I do if I encounter difficulties or technical problems when completing the postal vote application?

Should technical problems (for example, with screen readers) arise whilst completing the postal vote application, please contact the staff at the Central Election Office by email or telephone. This also applies to the readability of all other documents published on the election portal.

17. Why do I have to provide my Uni-ID (matriculation number)?

The University ID (matriculation number) is requested for the purpose of clear identification and verification in the register of eligible voters. This ensures that a person can only submit a postal vote application on their own behalf and that the documents are sent only to that person. Every student and member of staff has an individual and unique matriculation number or Uni-ID, which can be found on their student ID card or staff ID card. The Uni-ID and the number on the library card are identical, but the number on the library card has an additional digit (please do not include this on the application form).

18. When and to which address will my postal voting documents be sent?

The postal voting documents will be prepared in calendar week 23. Earlier dispatch is not possible due to other deadlines that must be met. If, despite having applied in time, you have not received the postal voting documents by the end of calendar week 24 (12 June 2026), please contact the Election Office by telephone or email.

The documents will be sent to the address provided on the application form. This may differ from the address provided to the University for communication purposes. To ensure that the postal voting documents requested via actually reach you at the location where you are staying at the time of the election, providing an address is a mandatory requirement.

Due to the short deadlines, it cannot be guaranteed that postal voting documents sent abroad, in particular, will reach eligible voters in time and be received by the Election Office within the deadline.

19. When is the deadline for returning the postal voting documents?

The postal voting documents must be received by the Election Office **by 4 pm on 18 June 2026**. Documents may be returned by post or via the internal post system; they may also be handed in in person at the Election Office (UHG B1-214, B1-210 and B1-216) or at the polling station during opening hours to the election officials.

20. Can I also hand in my postal voting documents at the polling station, or change my mind at the last minute and vote in person after all?

If you have applied for postal voting documents but then change your mind and would prefer to vote in person at the polling station, you may do so during the polling station's opening hours. If possible, please bring with you all the documents sent to you after applying for a postal vote, as well as your staff or student ID card or another valid official photo ID. You will be given new ballot papers at the polling station and can then vote in person.

You can also hand in postal voting documents that have already been completed and sealed to the polling station staff.

21. Will I, as a voter, incur any costs when voting by post?

No, there are no costs for voters; returning the postal voting documents is free of charge for voters.

22. Can I receive the postal voting documents in English?

No, it is not possible to receive postal voting or election documents in English, as these are official documents that must be written in German. If you have any difficulties understanding the documents or have any questions, you can contact the Election Office (Question 28).

Polling station

23. Where, how and when can I vote in person (at the polling station)?

The polling station will be open **from 9 am to 4 pm** between **15 and 18 June 2026** and is located between sections D and V in the hall of the main university building. Signs on site will indicate where, for example, you can collect your ballot paper or find the various ballot boxes.

24. Which (other) elections are taking place at the same time at the polling station?

The following elections will take place at the same time at the polling station, although opening times and election days may vary:

- Elections to the Senate and the faculty conferences in all member groups
- Elections for student assistant representatives,
- Election of the central student representative for the Equal Opportunities Officer,
- Elections to the Student Parliament,
- Election to the BiSEd Conference (student group),
- where applicable, election of the ISR team,
- where applicable, election to the Law Students' Council.

Election results

25. When will the election results be finalised?

The counting of the election results for the Senate, the faculty conferences and the SHK representatives, as well as the election of the central student representative for the Equal Opportunities Officer, will take place publicly **from 8.30 am on 19 June 2026** in S0-501. The election results will be published on the election portal in the Third Election Announcements as soon as possible thereafter.

26. Where can I find the election results?

The election results will be announced in the Third Election Announcements, which will be published on the election portal.

Further questions

27. How will my personal data be processed?

The data collected in the course of conducting the representative body elections is used solely for the purpose of conducting the elections to the Bielefeld University Senate, the faculty conferences, the SHK representatives, the BiSEd Conference within the student body, and the election of the central student representative to the Equal Opportunities Officer. Your personal data will be treated confidentially and accessed only by staff at Bielefeld University who are responsible for conducting the committee elections. Data will not be disclosed to third parties, particularly outside the university. Further information can be found in the privacy policy (German Version only, https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/_doks/2025-04-01_Datenschutzhinweise_Wahlen.pdf).

28. How can I contact the Central Election Office?

Personal communication with the Central Election Office, for example regarding questions about eligibility to vote, difficulties in applying for postal voting or submitting list proposals, etc. can take place in person on site, by telephone, or via personalised university email addresses ending in “@uni-bielefeld.de” (or, for certain faculties/institutions, including their corresponding abbreviation, e.g. @math.uni-bielefeld.de or @cebitec.uni-bielefeld.de). For enquiries from voters, the date of birth will be requested for verification purposes. Personal communication via functional email addresses, to which more than one person usually has access, is not possible.

You can find the staff of the Central Election Office here (https://ekvv.uni-bielefeld.de/pers_publ/publ/EinrichtungDetail.jsp;jsessionid=C56E1FE31D4229999909E8A0BADF50FE?orgId=82592896). Please feel free to send any questions to the email address zentraleswahlamt@uni-bielefeld.de.

29. Where are the Central Election Office's offices located?

The Central Election Office has moved to the first building section. The new offices are B1-210, B1-214 and B1-216. From the main hall, the best way to reach the offices is via the staircase between the student office [Studierendensekretariat] and the Fachsprachenzentrum [Language Centre] offices. Coming from the main entrance, walk past SOWLS towards the facilities management office and then use the staircase located in front of the BITS offices. This staircase can also be accessed directly from outside.

It is not possible to reach the Central Election Office rooms from the library.

30. I need support filling in the ballot papers – may I ask someone for support?

Anyone who, due to a physical disability, is unable to fill in the ballot papers themselves may seek support from another person. The prerequisite for this is that the supporter must be at least 16 years of age. They must sign the declaration on the polling card. Furthermore, the supporter is obliged to maintain confidentiality regarding any information they have gained whilst supporting the vote.