

## **Process for nomination as candidate for election to the Administrative Panel of Seanad Éireann.**

Explanatory note:

On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February a notice will be placed in The Irish Times seeking suitable applicants to apply on or before 5pm on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February.

The Administrative Panel nominating bodies, who have so far agreed to use this shared process, have a two stage procedure. Firstly, to determine the number of applicants who are suitably qualified and secondly to present the qualifying candidates to the participating Nominating Bodies, for final selection as a nominee by those bodies. This selection process will take place by way of an election to the nomination process, as outlined below.

An Applicant Assessment Committee will review the applications for the purpose of determining the number of applicants that are suitably qualified. The Committee will make its decision on or before Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Applicants can request feedback from this Committee regarding its decision in relation to their application. The ballot paper will be drafted by the Returning Officer on or before Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March and forwarded to the qualifying panel members by 4pm on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March. The vote is by way of proportional representation by the single transferable vote. The qualifying panel members will have to deliver their completed ballot paper to the Returning Officer by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 1300hrs. The count then takes place at 1400hrs on that day.

### **Stage 1. Determining qualification for nomination**

1. For the purpose of this nomination process a ‘qualifying panel member’ is a Nominating Body of the Administrative Panel which has also agreed to honour this process for nomination
2. An Applicant Assessment Committee will be established to determine which applicants are sent forward for election for nomination.
3. The Applicant Assessment Committee shall consist of three representatives from the qualifying panel members and two external persons appointed by agreement between the panel members.
4. Save as provided for in these rules, the Applicant Assessment Committee may determine its own procedures.
5. In the event that a member of the Applicant Assessment Committee is deemed to be unable to engage with or continue to engage with the process, the Applicant

Assessment Committee may continue with its business with the remaining members

6. One of the external members of the Applicant Assessment Committee shall be chosen for appointment as Chairperson of the Applicant Assessment Committee by agreement of the qualifying panel members.
7. Any applicant that the Applicant Assessment Committee determines as fulfilling the candidate requirements as set out by the panel members will be put forward for election for nomination
8. The decision of the Applicant Assessment Committee shall ideally be by agreement of all members but where necessary shall be by majority vote
9. In the event of any tied decision by the Applicant Assessment Committee the chairperson shall have a casting vote.
10. The Applicant Assessment Committee shall inform the panel members by way of email of its determination on or before 5pm on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 and in any event prior to or simultaneous to its informing the applicants
11. Applicants will be informed by email on or before 5pm on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 whether or not their names have been sent forward for election for nomination
12. The Applicant Assessment Committee shall give feedback to any applicant if so requested by that applicant. Any such request for feedback has to be made by email no later than Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016
13. The Applicant Assessment Committee shall forward the list of successful applicants to the Returning Officer on or before 5pm on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016
14. Applicants sent forward to the Returning Officer shall be referred to as 'candidates'

## **Stage 2. Election and Voting process**

15. The electorate shall consist of the qualifying panel members and each shall have one vote
16. A Returning Officer shall be appointed by agreement between the qualifying panel members. The Returning Officer shall be independent and shall not be connected to any of the panel members. The Returning Officer shall appoint scrutineers as he/she deems fit
17. On or before 4pm on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016 the candidates' names shall be placed on a ballot paper in alphabetical order. This ballot paper shall be drafted by the Returning Officer and forwarded to each of the qualifying panel members on or before 4pm on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016 together with any supporting documentation received from the candidates in their application

18. Voting shall be by way of proportional representation by the single transferable vote
19. The qualifying panel member (at times hereinafter referred to as the 'voter') shall mark the ballot card in order of preference by putting number 1 beside the voter's first choice candidate, number two beside the second choice and number three beside the third choice. If the voter so wishes the voter may continue to place a fourth and subsequent preferences beside the remaining candidates.
20. Following a count of the number of valid votes cast, the quota shall be determined by the Returning Officer.
21. Regarding votes, when it comes to counting, only one of the preferences is active at any one time, starting with the number one.
22. In the event that the candidate that has been marked by a voter as number one, or first preference, is eliminated or else is elected without needing said vote (i.e. they have already met the quota, or minimum level of votes required), then the second preference is activated. If the candidate is still running (i.e. has not been eliminated or elected yet), then the vote for that candidate is counted. In the event that the second preference candidate has already been eliminated or elected before counting the vote, then third preference is activated. This process continues down the line until all the candidates required are selected.
23. Qualifying panel members shall ensure that their completed ballot paper is delivered in a manner specified by the Returning Officer and to a location specified by the Returning Officer on or before 1300hrs on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016
24. The counting of the votes shall commence at 1400hrs on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March
25. A candidate who reaches the quota is deemed to be elected. In the event that two or more candidates attain the same number of votes without reaching the quota and one or more vacancies remain, then the voting process will be repeated until the vacancy or vacancies has or have been filled. Nothing in this section shall invalidate the election of a candidate or candidates who have been deemed to be elected.
26. The qualifying panel members shall agree upon the number of candidates to be forwarded as the nominated persons. This number shall be given to the Returning Officer at some time prior to the counting of the votes. The aforementioned number of Candidates shall be elected and the names of the elected candidates shall be forwarded as the nominated persons.