

Unit Convention



Estimated time (mins) after each question.

- If you are unsure what Unit Convention is, read the short description now (below). [5]
- In your own words (without looking at the description) say what Unit Convention is all about. [5]
- What are elections? very briefly, describe what happens? [3]
- Is a postal vote as good as being there on the day? [2]
- How and why are elections important? [3]
- What happens if a substantial number of people don't submit a vote? [4]
- We have 50 people in our unit - what would be a good turnout of voting? [3]
- It's nice to vote every time, but sometimes we don't. What are the typical reasons for this? [4]
- How can we overcome these reasons? [4]
- What qualities are we looking to vote for in a delegate? [4]
- What things/qualities in contemporary political elections should we strive to avoid? [4]

Description

Unit Convention may not, at first sight, sound glamorous: however it is one of the most important events of the Bahá'í calendar, and whoever is able to attend it, we advise you to take the opportunity to do so, for the functioning of the Faith in the UK really depends upon it.



The United Kingdom is divided up into geographical areas called Units, each of which have roughly the same number of Bahá'ís in. At the end of every year, the Baha'is of each Unit - that's all of us - gather together (in a "Unit Convention") and elect a delegate, and this delegate along with every other delegate in the UK, then has a day of training and preparation, and some months later (in May) goes on to represent their areas at National Convention, and returns home to report to the community. At this Convention all the delegates from the UK gather together, and vote for a new National Assembly - in casting their vote, each delegate's vote represents roughly the same number of Baha'is. So by coming together at Unit Convention and electing a delegate, you are really voting for the National Assembly for the year. As well as voting for the National Assembly, our delegates listen to presentations and consult throughout several days on various issues, and vote to raise "resolutions". Resolutions are questions and issues that are passed to the National Assembly, which then answers each one. Unit Convention similarly, as well as electing one delegate, has its own consultation period where we send our hopes and issues to the National Assembly, every one of which is individually responded to.

Attending Unit Convention is also your way of electing the Universal House of Justice. Every five years, the National Assembly you have voted for, gathers at Ridván in Haifa with other National Assemblies from across the world to elect the Universal House of Justice, and that will happen again on the occasion of Ridván 2013.

What are the qualities we should be voting for in a delegate, that best make this process work?

In voting for a delegate, we are choosing someone who has a good general knowledge of people and issues in our Unit, and who we feel embodies the spiritual qualities expected of such a responsibility: qualities such as humility, ability to listen and understand, frankness and courage of expression, ability to communicate and consult with others - to name a few. I am sure in reflecting on the delegate's purpose, and election processes generally, we can ponder by ourselves on the qualities needed.

The Unit we are all in has recently been revised, and now covers Edinburgh, East Linton, North Berwick and Penicuik/Loanhead - this is much smaller than was the case until last year, and hopefully will benefit the election process.

Unit Convention will this year be taking place in _____ on _____
and includes a meal together. We hope you will be able to make it, or to send in
your vote by the post.

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