

UOS Students' Union Officer By-Elections 2023

Candidates Handbook

Thank you for running in the Students' Union Elections! This booklet will outline everything you need to know.



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Introduction

Officers represent students across the university, and work as part of a team of other representatives to discuss and decide on the direction of the SU and University based on student leadership.

The Students' Union runs because of students like you, volunteering your time to improve the student experience, so thank you.

As a staff team we're here to make sure the elections run as smoothly as possible, and that once in post that you are supported to improve the student experience.

This guide will give you all the key info you need to run in the elections, but if you have any further questions, please email su.democracy@uos.ac.uk

Good luck!



Key Dates

Nominations

9am, **27th**
September - 9am
16th October

Voting

9am, **23rd October -**
5pm, 26th October

Results announced

27th October 2023



Arran Cottam

Deputy Returning Officer

Contact me with questions and complaints -
a.cottam@uos.ac.uk

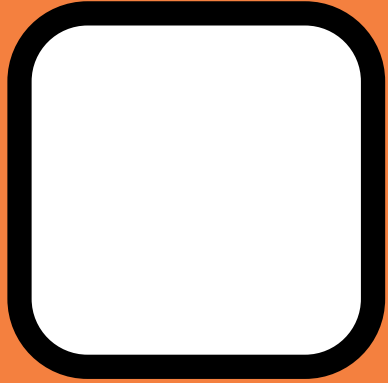


**Peter Robertson,
NUS Charity Director
Returning Officer**

To appeal a decision made by the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), an NUS appeals form should be filled out and emailed to the DRO, who will pass this onto NUS. Appeals forms can be found here:

<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/ud/elections-hub/elections-support-service/election-appeals>

Elections Checklist



Do your research on key issues you want to address as officer



Write your manifesto



Write a campaign plan

Checklist



**Set up social media
pages**



**Design your
promotional materials**



**Go Out & Get
Votes**

Manifesto Tips

Be Concise:

Stick to the point and make your manifesto short and clear. Too much information might put students off reading it all.

Be Informative:

Avoid vague statements! Tell voters directly why you'd be the best candidate for the role, how you would support course reps, one key priority you want to work towards in your department/liberation group, how you'd achieve this, and when you'd want to achieve it by.

Keep It Simple:

Use simple language to get your ideas across as plainly as possible - the more you link it to what can offer, the more votes you'll win!

Be Relevant:

Think specifically about the role you're running for and the responsibilities you would have, if elected. Consider times you've shown skills that would help you excel in this role.

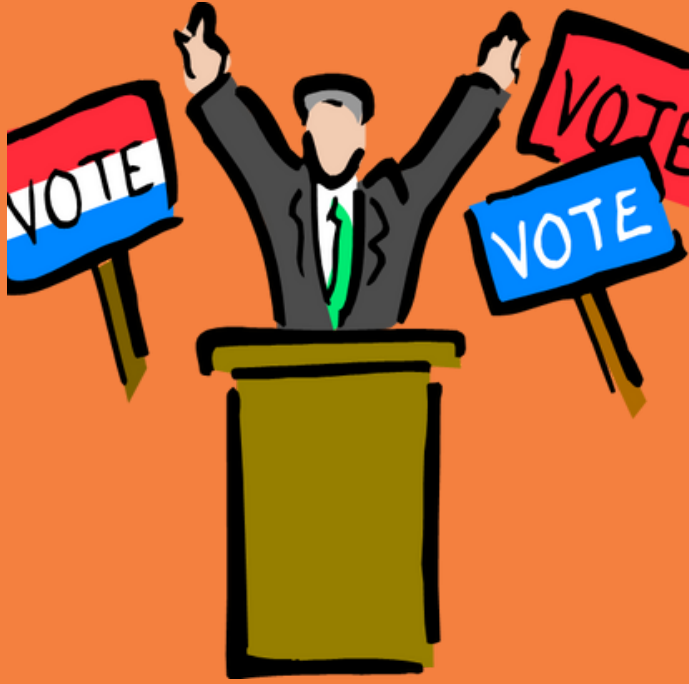
Be Realistic:

Set out achievable goals. If elected, you'll be answerable to the student body.

Be Interesting:

Make your campaign stand out! Say something different to your opponents that will make you memorable and unique.

Campaigning Tips



Posters:

- Design clear and eye catching posters to explain what you would do if you were elected.
- Keep them informative and to the point.
- Tell people how they can vote and include the SU logo in the bottom corner (found on the SU website)

Use Social Media:

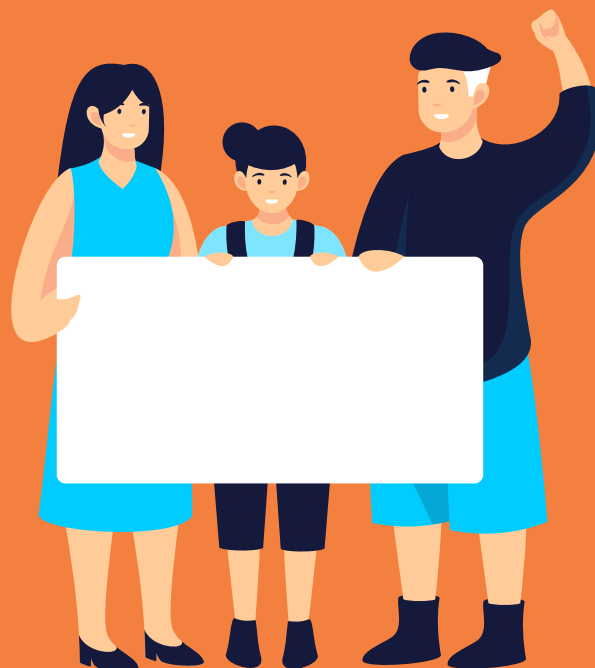
- Use social media platforms to promote your campaign.
- Publish diverse content.
- Post links to the voting page to ensure your likes are translated into votes.

Campaigning Tips

Creating a campaign plan

Ahead of voting week, plan out as much of your campaigning as you can:

- Ask friends and classmates to be on your **campaign team** - get a group of people with a wide group of skills to help you! (you can tell a small number of people you are running before voting week, but you can't announce it a way that could be considered as campaigning)
- Consider what your **core message** is - what is one thing you want every student during voting week to know about you and your campaign?
- Plan **where, when and how** you want to campaign during voting week - which part of campus, with what materials?



CANDIDATE BRIEFING

CANDIDATE BRIEFING - ALL CANDIDATES MUST ATTEND! (Thursday 19th October, 12-1pm)

This is a mandatory session for all candidates, where you'll receive key info on dates for the election, the rules and regulations that you'll have to follow as a candidate and a chance to ask any questions you might have.

If you cannot attend please email su.democracy@uos.ac.uk to arrange an alternative time

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_Njg5MzgzMjgtMzZmNy00N2FjLTlmMmMtOGFmZTA0NTM3MGM5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22ee265dd9-04ad-41b7-b409-e6699705d35d%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2237d0f6bd-ca94-4070-9199-89a544ab0d4f%22%7d

Deadlines

Please submit your manifesto (by uploading on the nominations page of the SU website) by the deadline of

9am ,16th October 2023.

You need a manifesto - without one you will not be able to stand.

All posters and graphics must be approved by the Deputy Returning Officer before use, and must contain the SU logo somewhere on them (email if you need this providing) by emailing them to su.democracy@uos.ac.uk

Please also email su.democracy@uos.ac.uk with a link to any social media sites you intend to use for your campaign.



Budgets

As a candidate in the elections you'll get a budget to run your campaign with.

For President candidates this budget is £50, for volunteer officer roles the budget is £35.

In addition to this budget, the SU will cover printing costs for 100 A4 sheets of paper (for example, this could be used on 150x a5 leaflets and 25x A4 posters)

This is the money you can spend on your elections campaign. The SU will reimburse this money to you if you keep a track of what you've spent and send in receipts (drop into the SU Office or email them to su.democracy@uos.ac.uk) but it is also a **spending limit** - you cannot spend more than this amount of money on your elections campaign.

If you need money up front to cover certain expenses, please email su.democracy@uos.ac.uk and we can help.



Welfare Support

We know running for election and campaigning can take a lot of work and we want you to feel supported during and after the election campaign. Below we've put together some top tips for looking out for your welfare during the elections, as well as guidance on where to go if you're struggling or have any concerns.

Self-care top tips

- Stay hydrated – whatever your preferred drink is, water, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, but make sure you do not consume too much caffeine!
- Support team – make sure you have a team of friends to support you as you run and campaign
- Stay active – Staying active is good for your mood and general wellbeing. So, walk, jog, run or participate in your favourite sport or workout to keep active. Don't forget the SU runs a variety of social sport activities too!
- Take regular breaks – we are all spending more time online these days, but it is important to take regular breaks from our screens, make that cuppa, go for a short walk, or do nothing for a bit to recharge
- Keep talking – make sure you keep in touch with family, friends, colleagues during this time, and of course all of us at the SU!



SU Advice and Wellbeing team

Your SU Advice and Wellbeing team are here to support you. We will be available throughout the campaign so if you fancy a chat, need support with your wellbeing, or would like signposting to a specialist service you can get in touch with us: su.advice@uos.ac.uk

Conduct:

- 1) All candidates must abide by the Students' Union's policies and procedures including the Equality & Diversity Policy which is available from the Students' Union website and by request from the Returning Officers.
- 2) All publicity material shall be approved by the Student Representation Coordinator prior to use to ensure it adheres to SU policy. Publicity material will not be approved if it:
 - Refers negatively to any individual Students' Union member or staff member (past or present) by name
 - Contains factual inaccuracies
 - Contains opinion expressed as fact
 - Advocates discrimination
 - May be prejudicial to the fair running of the elections.
 - Campaigning as a team is permitted
- 3) Candidates must take reasonable steps to ensure that their supporters' actions comply with the election rules at all times and must be able to demonstrate this in the event of a complaint against them.
- 4) Bribes or inducements may not be offered in any form to any person. If in doubt speak to the Student Representation Coordinator.
- 5) All candidates and campaigners are responsible for ensuring that in any area they are campaigning that there is freedom of access for any student who needs it and that doors, stairwells and passage ways are not blocked or made difficult to pass through.
- 6) All candidates and their election agents should attend one of the Candidate's Briefings. Candidates may request a meeting with the Student Representation Coordinator if they cannot attend either briefing.
- 7) Candidates should attend any further meetings called by the Student Representation Coordinator during the course of the campaign or make alternative arrangements to meet with them.
- 8) Candidates should, at all times, act as directed by staff and raise any concerns directly with the Returning Officers.

Campaigning

- 1) No campaigning of any sort should be done outside of the schedule. Campaigning starts once voting opens on October 23rd, 9am.
- 2) All candidates may make use of social networking websites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Paid digital promotion within the budget is permitted.
- 3) Any social media groups created for campaigning, whether private or public, need to have a member of the Democratic Procedures Committee as a member to monitor the the Students' Union rules and regulations.
- 4) No campaigning may take place in the Library or Students' Union Offices. Campaigning may take place in the Social space.
- 5) Candidates must not campaign in lectures without permission from the lecturer, and must not cause disruption to lectures.

- 6) Candidates and campaign teams may only alter, move or remove their own campaign publicity.
- 7) Once a student has begun the process of voting, no candidate or campaigner should make any attempt to speak to them or to influence or interfere with their decision in any way. For the avoidance of doubt – “helping” a voter or “showing them how to vote” will be regarded a breach of the rules. If a voter needs assistance with voting then campaigners should refer them to polling station staff or to the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 8) You are prohibited from spending your budget on alcohol.

A full list of all governance around elections can be found in bye-law 1, found here:

<https://www.uosunion.org/yourvoice/howwerun/bylawsandstrategy/>



Complaints

- 1) Any complaints regarding the conduct of any candidate or campaigner should be made to the Deputy Returning Officer in writing or by email to a.cottam@uos.ac.uk
- 2) No complaints will be accepted more than one hour after the close of polls.
- 3) Complaints will be dealt with at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer but all will be addressed by the final meeting of the Democratic Procedures Committee which takes place after the final deadline for complaints.

If candidates are in any doubt the interpretation of these rules they should ask the Deputy Returning Officer for clarification.

Breaching the rules

In an event of a rules breach, the Democratic Procedures Committee will deliberate and decide on one of the following consequences which will be imposed on the candidate:

- 1) Removal of publicity material in question (for example a poster or a social media post)
- 2) A ban on campaigning for specific time period
- 4) Removal of the individual's candidacy
- 5) A proven malicious / false complaint from a candidate (or their campaigner) will be treated as a breach of election conduct.

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STUDENTS' UNION

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Good luck!

**Any questions email:
su.democracy@uos.ac.uk**