

This guidance applies to roles elected during the Autumn Election cycle. It is made under the By-law, which contains more information as to the technical provisions made for the election.

Welcome to the Autumn Elections!

The annual Autumn Elections is a vital part of the Union's Academic Representation as it is the time of year where we elect over 500 Course Reps, Senators and Committee Members. We want to enable creative campaigning while also ensuring elections are run fairly and properly. To this end, the Elections Project Team and the Returning Officer have set out some guidelines for how elections are run.

Who's who:

- **Returning Officer**

The Returning Officer (RO) is the Vice-President Democracy and Creative Industries, they are responsible for the day-to-day running of the election.

- **Democracy Team**

The Democracy Team consists of two staff members: the Democracy Co-ordinator and the Policy & Volunteer Manager. They will be the first point of call for any questions or queries; you can contact the team via elections@unionsouthampton.org

- **Elections Project Team**

The Summer Elections Project Team consists of relevant union staff, the Democracy team and the Returning Officer. The Project Team is there to coordinate the elections.

General principles of elections

The primary principle is that campaigning should be conducted in the spirit of the elections. It should be positive and friendly, not negative or confrontational. Below are our general principles of the elections:

- A. Campaigning can only happen during the period agreed and published by the Elections Project Team to allow candidates to focus their efforts. A potential candidate's public notification of intent to nominate or statement that they have nominated themselves is not considered campaigning.
- B. Campaigning is about persuading people to vote for you.
 - This includes anything from wearing a t-shirt, changing a cover photo or talking to students.
 - You must be careful not to bribe, intimidate, harass or bully voters. This includes attempts to influence a student's vote whilst they are voting or campaigning in sight of a polling station.
- C. Candidates will be held to account for the actions of individuals campaigning on their behalf.
- D. The Returning Officer and the Democracy Team are here to help you. They also have the broad power to deal with campaigning that doesn't promote the spirit of elections.
 - If you do something that isn't allowed, you may have to speak to us to explain what happened and why. In very serious cases, this could lead to repercussions or sanctions on your campaign.

Campaigning Dos and Don'ts

1. Promotional methods



Within or on Union buildings, publicity may only be placed in accordance with instructions issued by Union staff.

- ✓ Inside buildings, please only use white tack or blue tack (not gaffer tape, sellotape or similar)
- ✗ You can't put things on painted walls, doors, cover any existing signage or artwork, or block windows.
- ✗ Outside Union buildings, publicity may only be displayed with prior permission from the relevant authority; in the rest of the University you should contact the relevant school office.
- ✓ You can put up posters on the Redbrick area.

Publicity must be removed within 24 hours of the close of voting.

Here are a few other things to be mindful of which are not permitted:

- ✗ using stickers or chalk,
- ✗ putting up posters on stairs or in toilets.
- ✗ making unreasonably loud noise in the vicinity of University buildings.

2. Social media, email and electronic devices

- ✓ The Union doesn't impose any particular restrictions for campaigning on social media groups. The administrators of these groups may choose to restrict posting, so long as they do so fairly.
- ✗ You can't use mass email lists for campaigning as this is spam.
- ✗ A candidate or member of a campaign team must not provide, or offer to provide any electronic device in their possession to any other person to use for the purpose of voting.

3. Whilst campaigning

Whilst campaigning, you are subject to the various policies and regulations of the Union. In order to ensure that there is no breach of the Staff-Student Partnership Agreement, you cannot reference specific Union staff members in your elections campaign.

4. Health & Safety

Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety, and that of others that their campaigning affects.

- ✓ The Union will facilitate the placement of publicity at heights within Union facilities. The roof of any building is out of bounds unless accompanied by an authorised individual.
- ✗ All candidates should avoid creating slips, trips and hazards whilst campaigning; including trailing leads, setting up near stairs and steps, blind corners or heavy use areas.

Other campaign guidance

5. Breaches of the rules & complaints procedure

- If you are ever unsure about something that you or another candidate is doing, drop an email to the Elections Team via elections@susu.org. We are always happy to provide you with advice and support.
- In the event that a matter comes to our attention that cannot be dealt with via words of advice, the Returning Officer will conduct an investigation. In some cases, complaints may be referred to the Elections Project Team for a decision.



- Complaints received after the count time should be made to the Returning Officer in writing within 7 clear working days of the offence, unless circumstances preclude this time period being adhered to.

6. Union Media and the elections

- Union Media groups must ensure that their elections coverage is fair and unbiased. All candidates must be offered the same opportunities to participate in media coverage, and reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure they are able to take up any opportunities.