

UWLSU Elections

Keeping elections fair is our top priority - these rules are designed to ensure that no candidates gain an unfair advantage and voters have an equal opportunity to elect their representatives. We've done our best to make sure there's no reason for anybody to feel discouraged from participating in the elections.

Breaking a rule is very serious – if any of these rules are broken, the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officers can disqualify candidates or stop the election. We don't want this to happen of course – so please read through thoroughly!

This list of rules is not exhaustive, the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officers will use their own discretion if they feel candidates or campaign teams have broken rules or gained significant advantages unfairly

We wish you luck and all the best in campaigning!

Jessica Smith, Head of Membership
Alexander Lavall, Head of Union Development (Ruskin) & Community & Engagement manager, **Deputy Returning Officers**

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Rules

Voting

- Voting will take place **in person only** at designated Students' Union voting locations at voting booths.
- Voting can only take place between 10am and 6pm in the booths, in the election week
- An online voting option will be available **once** during the election week for short period of time. Candidates will be unable to campaign in person during this period.
- Voting will not be available via personal devices – including mobile phones and computers
- All voting will be administered and supervised by UWLSU staff to ensure a fair and transparent election process.
- There will be a 'pre-campaign' period before the voting opens. Pre-campaigning will take place from Thursday 16th April (12pm) until voting opens on Tuesday 21st April 2026.
- Printed materials can only be used once voting opens, and not in the pre-campaigning period. The SU will print all of these materials.
- All rules around candidate conduct, behaviour etiquette will apply to the pre campaign week.
- Candidates cannot campaign in the library (SMR Library or Paragon second floor) or areas which only limited students with specific memberships or ID access. This includes the Gym.
- Candidates and campaign teams must not campaign in lectures and seminars.
- You can campaign using your own online platforms, social media and on campus.

Voting Areas and Booths

- Candidates and campaign team members are restricted from entering the voting areas, unless they are casting their individual votes.
- Candidates and campaign team members must not engage in conversation with students while they are voting or in the voting area. Students must be able to interact freely with UWLSU staff managing the voting space without interference.
- Candidates are permitted to walk with students to the voting areas, but must leave once the student enters the space. Areas will be marked by SU staff

Campaigning Behaviour & Etiquette

- Candidates must be respectful of voters and their decisions on whether they would like to vote
- You cannot vote on behalf of others, including logging in with their student ID's
- Students must be able to vote in peace and decide for themselves, without pressure
- You, or your campaign team cannot interrupt another candidate or their campaign team whilst they are campaigning to a student. You must wait until they have finished their conversation to approach them.
- Candidates or campaign team members may be disqualified from elections if actions or behaviour by poses a significant risk to the reputation of UWLSU or its members


Campaigning Etiquette: respecting personal space and boundaries.

- Candidates and their campaign teams must maintain a respectful distance of approximately 1 meter from individuals while campaigning.
- If an individual expresses a desire not to engage, candidates and campaign teams must cease their efforts and move on.
- All campaign activities should be conducted in a manner that respects the personal space and comfort of others. Persistent or aggressive behaviour, such as following or crowding individuals, is strictly prohibited and will be treated as a breach of campaign conduct.
- Respectful behaviour – candidates and campaign teams must always treat election staff with respect. Any disrespectful, aggressive or disruptive behaviour towards UWLSU staff members will not be tolerated and be considered a rule break.
- Candidates must abide by and follow the UWLSU values throughout campaigning: Inclusive, Collaborative, Informed, Committed, Empowering and Innovative.

Other Candidates

- Candidates must not interfere with other candidates' campaign materials.
- Candidates must not bully, harass or intimidate other candidates.

Campaign Teams

-  Candidates must provide a list stating the names of all campaign members that will be taking part in the elections - If anybody on your campaign team breaks a rule, the candidate will also be deemed to have broken a rule.
- Only UWLSU members (UWL students and current elected sabbatical officers) are allowed to participate in the elections as candidates or campaign teams
- Candidates can name up to 2 campaign team members in the voting period and the pre-campaigning period.
- Campaign team members are defined as students who support your election campaign through targeted or consistent media and communications; campaigning to students in person around campus; and supporting with election strategy.
- Candidates found to have 'unofficial' campaign team members supporting with elections as per the guidance above, will be subject to sanctions.

- **You** are responsible for making sure your campaign team understand and follow the rules.

Collaboration

- Candidates cannot collaborate with each other on campaigning, manifesto creation or voting strategies.
- Candidates cannot have overlapping campaign team members, campaign team members must only campaign for one person in the election.
- Candidates cannot run in or part of slates.
- Candidates and campaign team members must only campaign for themselves, and cannot endorse, support or advise students on other election candidates

Budget (£20)

- You cannot spend more than the allocated budget or use personal funds, this is to ensure equitable opportunities in campaigning.
- You cannot 'reward' voting with items from your £20 budget, i.e. you cannot say "if you vote for me you can have X item".
- Food and drink is permitted to use within your £20 budget, however if you do this, you must demonstrate receipt/proof of the value of the items (i.e. must under no circumstances exceed £20).
- In order to comply with health and safety, no home baked goods can be handed out to prospective voters - only items in sealed packaging with clear labels on ingredients can be used. Candidate team members should have a list of ingredients available if requested if handing out food.

Rule breaks

- Rule breaks are taken very seriously and there are consequences for rule breaks comprised of minor violations, moderate violations and severe violations.
- **All rule breaks** will be actioned, and penalties/consequences may result in disqualification from the election.
- All candidates must respond promptly to questions or investigations from the DRO regarding rule breaks.
- The Deputy Returning Officer's will evaluate the severity of any rule break and has the authority to determine the outcome in order to maintain a fair election.
- The severity of the rule break will depend on deceit or intention of candidates, honesty of candidates, consistency in rule breaks, and impact of the rule break.
- Based on the severity of the rule break, sanctions may be imposed. These could include some of the following: campaigning restrictions or suspensions, limits on campaign methods, disqualification of campaign team members, and disqualification of candidates.
- The decision of the DRO is final and must be respected.

- UWLSU Staff members will be observing the election, any observation of rule breaks by UWLSU staff will be recorded and actioned accordingly.

Manifesto Points

- Candidates must submit all manifesto points for approval by the DRO prior to printing. This is to ensure all content aligns with election guidelines and University policies.
- Late submissions may result in exclusion from official campaign materials and/or participating in the elections.
- Any manifesto points submitted, but not approved, will be removed and printed without these points.
- Candidates who distribute manifesto points without approval from the DRO may face sanctions.
- Candidates are not permitted to make any in-person or online promises that are not already included in their official manifesto.
- Candidates must submit both a photo and their manifesto points for approval by the deadline. Failure to submit both items will result in being unable to run in the election.

Access and Promotion

Connections

- You can use your connections through student groups to support your campaign, but you and your campaign team members cannot use any committee positions or other positions of power to pressure students into voting for you.
- You can campaign in any other student community communications, such as WhatsApp chats.
- Free access must be given to all other candidates or campaign team members who request to campaign in groups or communications. Candidates cannot restrict, delete or change campaigning messages in groups or communications.

Clubs and Societies

- Any student who is a member of a student group (such as a sports team or society) must have fair and open access to the student group's resources to use for campaigning, including WhatsApp and Facebook groups.
- You can also request that your campaign materials are posted on other groups' social media.
- Individual members of clubs or societies should have the freedom to vote for who they want.

UWLSU and UWL

- The Students' Union, UWL, and their associated departments must remain neutral and are not allowed to endorse any candidate or promote any campaign materials under any circumstances.
- The Students' Union and University departments can only encourage students to vote in the election.
- Student staff (UWLSU and UWL) are not permitted to campaign during work hours, whilst at their desks, or while wearing UWL or UWLSU uniforms. Student staff cannot endorse candidates whilst on shift

Promotional Materials

Allowed Items

- Cardboard, Paper
- Paint, Paintbrushes, Pens
- Sheets (e.g. bed sheets)
- String
- Sticky tape (not to be used on the walls!)
- Cable ties
- Glue (not to be used on walls!)
- Blu Tack
- Scissors
- **Four** T-shirts for your campaign team
- Any other reasonable craft materials (if in doubt, ask!)

Restricted items and placements

- Balloons are not allowed under any circumstances
- Posters and stickers are not allowed on the walls or floors. You can campaign there, but you need to keep the space new and fresh
- Do not put campaign material on fire exits, fire extinguishers or anything that puts students' safety at risk.
- Nothing permanent can be used. For example you cannot glue posters to the wall, or put anything up that leaves a mark.
- The SU will print your materials for you. You cannot use any printed campaign materials other than the posters the SU has printed for you.
- All items purchased must have been purchased in the UK, and the receipt/invoice must have the name of the UK business and VAT number.

Regulations and Voting

- Your campaign must abide by university's rules and regulations and with UK national law. All UWL policies can be found at www.uwl.ac.uk/policies
- The University regulations state that you cannot send bulk emails or communications to students. You will have to be creative in the way you contact and communicate to students.
- Be aware that the university do not want any posters or helium balloons in the Heartspace on campus.

Voting System – how they will be counted

- Voting will be by single transferrable vote - this means voters will number their candidates by order of preference, and candidates will need to meet the quota to win.
- For more information, please visit <https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems/types-of-voting-system/single-transferable-vote/>

Complaints

- Candidates are able to submit complaints if they feel elections rules have been broken by other candidates. Candidates must email su.elections@uwl.ac.uk with details of your complaint, by no later than the time of voting closing
- Consistent complaints made by candidates without adequate or satisfactory evidence may be considered a breach of the rules.

Questions

- **If in doubt, ask!** Please contact Zander or Jess in the Students' Union team should you have any questions. Alternatively, you can email su.elections@uwl.ac.uk

Returning Officer

- Peter Robertson from the National Union of Students is the Returning Officer in charge of making sure the election is fair, so their say will be final. Alexander Lavall is our Head of Union Development (Ruskin) & Community and Engagement Manager, and Jess Smith is our Head of Membership and they will be the Deputy Returning Officers for this election, and will be acting on NUS' behalf in the first instance.