Candidate Guide:
Students' Union Elections 2021

USSU UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD STUDENTS' UNION
Love your life at Salford

Welcome to the 2021 Students' Union elections!

This guide will tell you everything you need to know about being a candidate in this year's Students' Union Elections. Whether you're a 1st year, 2nd year or coming to the end of your studies, there are various roles that you can stand for to represent the student population at Salford.

Do you want to make real change and work on achieving the main priority for Salford Students, Excellent Teaching?

Do you have ideas as to how the student experience can be improved upon post Covid-19?

Have the current Student Officers inspired you to stand as their next successor? Do you want to amplify the student voice at Salford and make your mark on this campus? If so, these are the roles for you!

Being a student officer is not just about being elected. It is about being trusted. When someone votes for you, they trust you to represent them, to support them, to fight for them.

By being a student officer, you can improve not only your communication and political skills but also your way of approaching people, dealing with difficult situations and you can leave a mark.

Being a student officer is not just about being President or a representative for a school, it is about you being the first person students choose to count on when in a difficult position, it's about being a good friend and a truthful and honest leader.

We hope you decide to nominate yourself in this year's elections and wish you the best of luck with your campaign!

The USSU Elections Team

What is a student officer?

There are five full-time, paid, elected officer positions.

These positions include one Students' Union President and four Students' Union Officers who will have responsibility for specific schools.

If elected, you'll get to work with us for a year on the issues that matter to students and have the opportunity to make big changes that will impact on students' lives.

Elected officers run events, launch campaigns, lobby university officials and much more!

All the Officers lead the Union and ensure it is representing students and campaigning to improve life at Salford. You will also be a member of the Trustee Board and responsible for overseeing the Union finances to make sure our money is benefiting students.

The Officers work with Union staff to promote student interest in Union events including a varied social calendar and lead on development of specific areas of the union such as sports, activities, campaigns, academic issues, community issues and employability.

Our Priority: Excellent Teaching

In November 2019, the Students' Union ran a preferendum, which gave all students at Salford the ability to vote on what they thought should be the Union's focus for the next few years.

The issues were all important but the student community at Salford voted for Excellent Teaching as their top priority.

So, start thinking; what does excellent teaching mean to you and what do you think you can add to the improve the academic experience of your student body?

Available roles

There are 13 roles available for election (although you can only stand for one position). Five of these are full-time, paid, student officer roles and the remaining roles are voluntary and can be done alongside your studies.

- President
- Arts & Media Officer
- Business & Law Officer
- Health & Society Officer
- Science, Engineering & Environment Officer

If successfully elected into one of our full-time officer roles, you'll have a paid full-time job with the opportunity to improve life for Salford Students.

You will be paid around £18,263 for 12 months starting on 1st July 2021*. You'll get 23 days annual leave plus University closure days.

***There can be some flexibility in start dates for some students. Please email elections-ussu@salford.ac.uk for more info.**

- BME Students' Officer
- LGBTQ+ Officer
- Trans' Students' Officer
- Students with disabilities Officer
- Women's Officer
- Community & Wellbeing Officer
- International Students' Officer
- Sports & Societies Officer

If successfully elected into one of our voluntary officer roles, you'll get the opportunity to represent individual demographics or communities within the Salford student body.

These positions are voluntary and therefore you can take on this role whilst still studying.

Being a trustee

The University of Salford Students' Union is a charitable organisation and is governed by a board of trustees. If you are elected as a full-time officer, you will also become a trustee of the organisation.

The trustee aspect of the role is not about the day to day affairs of the Union but to take an overview of how the Union is performing, both financially and in delivering services to students. The Union is a million-pound charity that employs around 30 core staff members and over 60 student staff, so this is an important responsibility.

The role of the trustees is to provide the organisation with direction on major issues; it is responsible for the governance, financial and strategic management of the Union. For example, the Trustee Board approves the Union's financial plans, oversees the Union's accounts, agrees top-level strategies and ensures compliance with relevant legislation.

The trustee board is made up of:

- Five Student Officer Trustees (President, 4 x Officers each of whom is responsible for one or more of the University's Schools)
- Four Student Trustees (appointed by the trustees)
- Four Non-Student Trustees (appointed by the trustees)

To run to be a full-time student officer you must be eligible to also be a trustee.

Most people are eligible to be a trustee however some people are disqualified by law from acting as trustees.

You can't be a trustee if you:

- Have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
- Are currently declared bankrupt, subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order
- Have an individual voluntary arrangement to pay off debts with creditors
- Are disqualified from being a company director
- Have previously been removed as a trustee by either the Charity Commission or the high court due to misconduct or mismanagement

If you have a question with any of the above statements, please email elections-ussu@salford.ac.uk

Key Dates

Event	Date & Time	Location
Nominate Yourself	9am Monday 18th January – 12 noon Thursday 18th February	Online
Candidates Development Sessions	3pm Friday 19th February & 11am Saturday 20th February	Microsoft Teams, Online
Manifesto Deadline	10am Tuesday 23rd February	Online
Voting Week	9am Monday 8th March – 4pm Thursday 11th March	Online
End of Voting Celebration	6pm Thursday 11th March	Microsoft Teams, Online
Results	Friday 12th March	Online

Nominations

To nominate yourself you must complete the online nomination form by **midday on Thursday 18th February.** The form is available at www.salfordstudents.com/elections

Only fully completed nomination forms will be accepted.

Expenditure

If running for a full time position you can spend up to £50 of your own money on your campaign. If running for a voluntary officer position you can spend up to £25 of your own money on your campaign. **This will not be reimbursed by the Union.** You must produce receipts for all expenditure and tell us even if you don't spend anything. These must be handed in by the end of voting. You don't have to count "Labour costs", but hire, delivery, materials production and materials or distribution of consumables is counted

How does voting work

All elections will be carried out using the Alternative Vote system. This is a preferential system where the voter ranks the candidates in order of preference.

Each voter puts a '1' by their first choice candidate, a '2' by their second choice, and so on, until they no longer wish to express any further preferences or run out of candidates. You do not have to use all of your preferences.

Candidates are elected outright if they gain more than 50% of votes as first preferences.

If none of the candidates reach 50%, the candidate with the fewest first preferences is eliminated and their votes are transferred to the second preference marked on the ballot papers. This process continues until one candidate reaches the 50% and is elected.

Importantly for this election voters are able to change their vote right up until voting closes.

Reopen Nominations - Every election will have reopen nominations (R.O.N). If there are no other candidates that you want to vote for you can choose reopen nominations to show your disapproval.

FAQ ‘s

Who can stand? - Any current student at Salford can stand for election. However, you are not eligible to run to be an Officer of a school you are not from (i.e. an Arts and Media student couldn’t run to be Business and Law Officer).

If you believe you should be eligible to stand for another position you must talk to the Returning Officer whose ruling will be final.

The Students’ Union is very flexible organisation and we can work with you to adapt your working hours and environment to meet your needs and ensure that you do the best job possible! So, whether you’re a: part time, postgraduate or mature student we can help you to ensure you can get the most out of your role.

If you're a student parent or have dependents we can work with you to make arrangements for your caring responsibilities and your hours can be flexible.

If you want to discuss your specific circumstances, please email elections-ussu@salford.ac.uk

What are the rules on international students? - Any student can run in the elections, even overseas students. If you're from outside the European Union, there are special conditions on your tier 4 visa that allow you to extend your stay in the UK if successfully elected.

Isn't it just a popularity contest? - An election chooses the most popular person for the role and students have the final say in who that is. You'll have access to lots of information, training and support to ensure that you can run get as many students as possible to vote for you.

How much time will it take? We're not going to lie; running in the election can be hard work. During voting week if you want to win, you're going to have to put in some hard work, but this doesn't necessarily mean working ridiculous hours as there are many different ways to run an election campaign.

I am studying for a professional qualification, nursing etc. Can I stand in the election? - Yes! All registered students are eligible to stand in the election. If you choose to stand during your academic studies i.e. between your first / second or second / third year, this will be classed as a year out, or year of interruption and will not impact upon your qualification. You will return to your studies after your 12 months working with the SU and complete your degree as planned.

You can also choose to stand for election at the end of your final year i.e. after graduating. If you do this, you will still need to keep up the requirements of your professional body once registered so for example you will need to demonstrate a certain number of practise hours in order to maintain your professional registration. In this instance, the Union would accommodate your requirements fully, allowing you the time needed to do this.

I just want to get on with my career – why should I stand? - It is understandable that you are keen to complete your studies and start your chosen career – this is the reason you are at University after all! However, there are a host of benefits to becoming an officer once you graduate, and plenty that will positively impact your future employability.

I will be on placement during the voting period – won't this hinder my chances? - Students tend to vote for students they perceive as 'like' them. Even when on placement, there are plenty of ways to encourage your peers to vote for you, and we will be advising students on the best forms of communication and campaigning during the time leading up to voting week. As all the voting is done online, being physically on campus is not the most important part of campaigning. With our help and guidance, you can successfully engage students from your school and beyond.

What happens if I don't get elected? - If you don't win you will still have had an amazing experience, made new friends and done new things. It takes a lot of skill and determination to put yourself out there and stand for election so be proud of yourself, whatever the outcome!