UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD STUDENTS' UNION

Candidate Guidance: 2019 Elected Student Officer Elections

These regulations have been created by the Returning Officer and form part of the election rules. They may be amended by the Returning Officer.

There are some general principles that you should be aware of when conducting an election campaign:

• We are aiming to elect people in a free and fair manner.

• Candidates should adhere to the principle that they should only do what other candidates have an equal opportunity to do.

• Candidates must respect that voters have the right to vote confidentially and freely. Once a voter has started completing their ballot you should not communicate with them in anyway

1. **Timetable**
   1.1 Nominations are open from 09:00 Monday 21st January to 12:00 noon Friday 15th February.
   1.2 Deadline for manifestos & 500-word statements is 12 noon Wednesday 20th February
   1.3 Voting is open from 09:00 Monday 4th March to 16:00 Thursday 7th March
   1.4 Results will be announced in University House after 5pm on Friday 8th March. The Returning Officer reserves the right to delay the announcement of the result.

2. **Returning Officers**
   2.1 The Returning Officer for this election is Peter Robertson (NUS Acting Chief Executive)
   2.2 The Deputy Returning Officer is: Lauren Beckett, Head of Student Voice, USSU

3. **Nominations**
   3.1 Nominations should be submitted online by 12:00 noon Friday 15th February.
   3.2 Only fully completed nomination forms submitted before the deadline will be accepted.
   3.3 You may only nominate yourself for one position.
   3.4 Union members who are present at the University on a visa are responsible for the following:
   3.4.1 Ensuring they meet any visa requirements were they to be successfully elected
   3.4.2 Recognising that the Union is not responsible for ensuring their compliance with visa regulations
   3.4.3 Informing the Union of any changes in their visa status

4. **Candidate training**
   4.1 There will be two candidate briefing sessions running on Friday 15th February. These sessions will take place between 3-5pm and 5-7pm You must attend one of these sessions.
   4.2 All candidates will be required to confirm that they have read and understood the rules and will abide by them during the course of the election.

4.3 There will be several candidate training sessions before the opening of voting. These sessions are optional but will cover:

- Basic information in relation to the elections process
- How to campaign effectively and how to talk to voters
- How to produce a manifesto
- You may also arrange a one to one meeting with a member of the student voice team if you would like any information on the elections process. You can do this by emailing elections-ussu@salford.ac.uk

4.4 There will be a candidate question time event on Thursday 28th February. The Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to change the timing of this event.

5. Expenditure

5.1 If you are standing for a full-time officer position you may spend up to £50 of your own money on this election, this will not be reimbursed.

5.2 If you are standing for a voluntary officer position you may spend up to £25 of your own money on this election, this money will not be reimbursed.

5.3 Receipts for expenditure must be returned by 5pm Thursday 7th March. Failure to return receipts may result in disqualification.

5.4 All candidates will be eligible to receive a campaigning pack from the Students' Union which will include materials to aid their campaign such as t-shirts, banner material and access to paint etc.

6. Publicity

6.1 Your nomination will need to include a picture of yourself.

6.2 You will have the opportunity to write a 500-word statement outlining why students should vote for you. This will appear on your ballot once voting opens

6.3 You may also produce other reasonable publicity to promote your candidacy. Such as a designed manifesto, video, social media pages

6.4 If you wish to display a designed manifesto, in place of your 500-word statement, on your ballot this needs to be submitted by 12 noon on the 20th February for this to be included.

7. Voting

7.1 Voting will be online using the alternative vote system.

7.2 There will be a separate election for each of the full time Elected Officer positions and each of the Voluntary Officer positions. Re-open Nominations will be a candidate in each election.

7.3 Students will rank the candidates in order of preference and may rank as many or as few candidates as they wish.

7.4 Students may login and change their preferences as many times as they wish until the close of voting.

7.5 Where electronic ballot boxes are set up, the ballot box shall always be staffed, no candidate or person campaigning on their behalf may be within the immediate vicinity.

7.6 During the voting week there will be a meeting each week day morning, between the candidates (or a nominated representative) and election officials. The meeting will discuss the conduct of the election so far, notify the candidates of any complaints or issues surrounding their conduct. This meeting will also be used to share useful information to all candidates about voting patterns, activity on campus etc

7.7 Candidates must respect that voters have the right to vote confidentially and freely. Once a voter has started completing their ballot you should not communicate with them in any way.

7.8 Candidates should not hand over mobile devices of their own to students to cast votes on. Students should be encouraged to use their own mobile devices or access a polling station to cast their vote.

8. Campaigning and conduct

8.1 Candidates should adhere to the principle that they should only do what other candidates have an equal opportunity to do.

8.2 Candidates or their supporters who have an official role inside or outside the Union may continue to act in this capacity, but they must not abuse their position for any purpose related to the election.

8.3 Any Sabbatical Officer wishing to campaign must do so in their own time.

8.4 Candidates or their campaigners must not campaign in any of the university library sites except at times and in locations designated by the Returning Officer.

8.5 Candidates are only permitted to display publicity material on the ground floor of the library, this should not obstruct use of library facilities. Posters are permitted on other floors of the library but only when pinned to designated noticeboards.

8.6 Candidates are permitted to campaign in the social spaces of the faith centre only. Disruption to prayers or meetings taking place in the faith centre is not permitted.

8.7 Candidates can use social media to promote themselves during an election but are advised to familiarise themselves with the University's policy on the acceptable use of its ICT network and facilities. In particular, candidates and their supporters must not send unsolicited campaigning emails or messages to students where they have not received express permission from the recipient to utilise their contact details for that purpose. This includes the use of mailing lists that have been provided to the candidate by the Union for a different purpose, for example a candidate who has been a School Rep should not use the list of course rep contacts that they are provided with, in order to send campaigning emails during the election period.

9. Activity groups and Sports clubs

9.1 Activity groups and sports clubs may endorse and promote candidates using all free methods available to them. E.g. Facebook, websites etc.

9.2 Decisions by activity groups and sports clubs to endorse candidates should not be made by the candidate themselves. Normal decision-making processes for the group should be used, a decision of the full committee or a vote of group members is recommended.

9.3 If a group/ sports club makes a decision to endorse a candidate mailing lists are deemed to be owned by the membership of the group, so committee approval is required to allow use of the list. Use of these lists must be in line with USSU GDPR guidance.

9.4 Activity groups and sports clubs must not use their own funds to campaign for candidates.

10. Complaints

10.1   Any complaints about candidates must be raised in a timely fashion and no later than by 9am Friday 8th March, when the count will commence. Complaints should usually be submitted no later than 24 hours after the alleged misconduct occurred

10.2   All complaints and appeals must be submitted via the complaints form on the website.

10.3   Complaints should be substantiated with evidence and must clearly state which election rule has been broken. Complaints made by word of mouth or that are hearsay will not be considered

10.4   We will aim to resolve complaints within 24 hours, however more complex complaints may take longer to resolve.

10.5   The Deputy Returning Officer may designate other Union staff to investigate a complaint.

10.6   The Deputy Returning Officer will assess the evidence, allow the candidate to present their case and then make a recommendation to the Returning Officer who shall rule.

Appendices

Voter Eligibility

Eligibility for receiving an electronic vote in the Trustee Board elections will be to include students registered on all levels at the University by a date before the election determined by the returning officer. This includes all current registered students who are enrolled for that academic session. This does not include students who are interrupted from their studies. For the avoidance of doubt eligibility would also not include the following students (due to their status within the University, or the inability to capture their data in time to process it for use in the ballot):

- visiting and exchange students from overseas whose association with the University of Salford ended at the close of Semester 1,
- students who have requested that the University does not share their data with the Students' Union,
- students who have exercised their right not to be a member of the Union under the 1994 Education Act.

Regulations on Trustees during elections

Sabbatical and Student Trustees are free to promote to students the opportunities offered by standing as a candidate in a Union election. This may extend to identifying individual students as potential candidates and encouraging them to participate.

Sabbatical and Student Trustees may, in a personal capacity without reference to their Trustee role, endorse the candidacy of any individual they wish to support and/or support them in their campaign.

Should a Sabbatical Trustee wish to provide campaigning support for a candidate then this should take place in a personal capacity and in their own time. Should a Sabbatical Trustee wish to campaign for a candidate during the usual working day then the expectation is that they would take annual leave from work, and not use the Union or University facilities at their disposal as a Sabbatical Officer in order to do so

External Trustees should not involve themselves in the election process other than when required to within Trustee Board meetings in ensuring good governance of the Union.