



STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS

Don't DUCK out of democracy



CAMPAIGN TO WIN



**Your Guide to Running a Successful
Campaign**





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Introduction

Every year, during the elections period, we are always amazed by the innovative and unusual ways that candidates chose to campaign for the votes of their fellow students. This guide will give you some great tips on how to build the most effective campaign possible.

It's important to point out that you don't need to do absolutely everything in this guide to win (although the more you do will obviously help), and there are obviously things not included because well, we haven't thought of them yet. Every candidate has the same small budget but it is important to note that each year the successful candidates are those who focus on the most effective methods – are creative and **go out and talk to as many students as possible**. Talk to any previous candidates and they will tell you that election campaigns are a great experience where, win or lose, you will make friends, meet people you would never normally come into contact with and develop skills you never thought you would and most importantly have fun!.

How Do Elections Work?

Whether you are standing yourself or a member of a candidate's campaign team, take the time to read through all the key documents. Make sure you understand how the elections will work and know all the key deadlines, processes and rules. You can find all this information in two key documents:

- The Autumn Elections Guide
- The Election Rules

Both can be found in the Elections Resource Hub at <http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub/>

If you aren't sure you can always contact Tim Hewes-Belton our Student Engagement Manager at t.hewesbelton@worc.ac.uk or 01905 543222.

Planning Your Campaign

Why Are You Standing?

The first thing you should do is to set aside a few hours to think about why you want to run, what you would do for students and how you plan on conveying that message. These ideas, what you want to change, should then be fleshed out into your manifesto. Your next step should be to contact a couple of close friends to run your ideas by them, and to try and develop a clear message and brand for your campaign. In the early planning stages, try to keep these meetings to just a few people as you don't want to over complicate your ideas.

Who Are You Representing?

Most importantly you should consider the students you hope to represent – after all this is why you are running for election. Remember, people's experiences at University can vary because of social, cultural and other differences. So think about issues that will be common to everyone regardless of their background.

A good starting point is the one thing you have in common: you are all at university to get a degree and further your education. You can then start thinking about a broader range of issues that affect different people – running ideas





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past specific groups if you're unsure about something. A great way of doing this is to go along to student groups meetings, and ask them directly about what they'd like to change. Make sure you think about the role you want to go for and what is important to that area of the Union's work.

What Are Your Key Policies?

Having thought about the different types of students you will be representing, and the issues that affect them most, you should try and shape these into your key policies for your campaign. These policies should be what you put on your posters, what you put on your leaflets and will form talking points when you're out on campus talking to students. A good number to aim for is four or five that you think are a) the most important, and b) most appealing to students. The more original or creative these are, the more you'll set yourself apart from the other candidates, and therefore more recognisable your campaign will be. You need to tread the line between populism (what students want) and what is achievable in a year. Remember, you do have your full manifesto online where you can develop these ideas further, so try and keep them short and snappy. Finally, if you're in doubt about whether you are able to campaign on something, ask yourself two questions: a) Does it affect the students I'm running to represent? b) Have I got an idea how to solve or improve it?

Your Campaign Message

A key element to any successful campaign is the publicity behind it – how you tell students about your ideas and persuade them to vote for you.

Campaign Theme

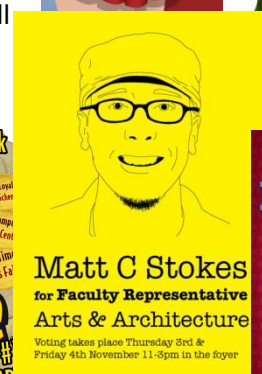
Many students choose a campaign theme that is linked to their name or something that they think will appeal to students. You can see some examples from other Students' Unions in the pictures to the right with a Super girl theme and one based on the candidates name "Daisy". It doesn't have to be fun though you can also have more serious themes based around a specific policy or idea.

Campaign Colour

This sounds like a simple decision, but you want to choose something that will really stand out and draw people's attention to your campaign. In the past, people have picked colours that link with their name, campaign ideas and



HULK for AU





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Campaign Slogan(s)

Many students decide that they want to have a slogan that students can remember them by. Think about slogans used by political parties and political figures, such as Obama's 2008 'yes we can'. This was effective as it made a clear link to what people wanted, and was simple enough to be repeated time and again. Another popular choice is to link your slogan to your name, which will help with recognition when students vote. If you think hard enough, almost any name can be made into a slogan. Examples from Worcester and further afield include:

- Hemaka Pathirana: It's Hemi Time #hemitime (Worcester)
- Mini Zhou: Vote Mini, Get Max (Liverpool)
- Amy Horner: #superhorner (Derby)
- Bryn: Vote #1 The Bryncredible Hulk (Cardiff)

Your Manifesto

Your manifesto should be the basis of your campaign and is basically a document which lets voters know a little bit about you and what you stand for. It is in your manifesto is your tool for delivering your campaign message and lay out why students should vote for you! Writing an election manifesto needn't be something to tear your hair out about. Essentially, your manifesto should state what you would plan to do in your time of office, and what changes you would make.

Example Manifestos

The image displays three student election manifestos. The first, for Amy Horner, is titled 'Vote #1 Lisa Cooke For Vice President Education' and lists her platform points under 'THINGS AMY HORNER WILL NEVER DO' and 'THINGS AMY HORNER WILL DO'. The second, for Manuela Schwarz, is titled 'Manuela Schwarz for Black Officer' and details her experience and plans for the Black Officer position. The third, for Grace, is titled 'RE-ELECT YOUR SAVING GRACE' and lists her campaign promises for the President role. Each manifesto includes a photo of the candidate and a list of specific actions or goals.

Example Manifesto 1: Amy Horner

Vote #1 Lisa Cooke For Vice President Education

THINGS AMY HORNER WILL NEVER DO:

- Give you up
- Let you down
- Run around
- Desert you

THINGS AMY HORNER WILL DO:

- ACCESSIBILITY**
 - Lobby for disabled student support for extracurricular activities
 - Break down the barriers to starting new societies
 - Host specific training & workshops for disabled students
- COMMUNITY**
 - Increase the provision of opportunities for online students
 - Create volunteering that you actually WANT to do
 - Provide more extracurricular activities for Buxton & Leek College
 - Host community action days
- FUN-ABILITY**
 - Host a variety of socials which are accessible for ALL campuses
 - Create enjoyable joint campaigns with the Officer Team

Example Manifesto 2: Manuela Schwarz

Manuela Schwarz for Black Officer
Creating Spaces for Black People at SOAS

Black Officer

It is important to note that 'Black' here refers to people with African, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American backgrounds, referring to the term in a political sense.

When I first came to SOAS I assumed there would be Black and minority ethnic (BME) spaces that I would be able to identify with. As of now, I do not think SOAS offers enough such spaces, which is why I am running for Black Officer. I want to create spaces for Black people, making sure our voices are recognised at SOAS and I hope to see such spaces become platforms for mobilisation and change.

About Me

I'm a second year BA Law and Development student from Berlin. I am currently the Women Society President where I'm involved in the organisation of a variety of events and campaigns. I am easy-going and approachable, and I elected always open to input from students about how to shape the Black Officer position because I want to root this position in our everyday experiences as Black students at SOAS.

Relevant Experience

- Black Feminist: relevant experience and knowledge needed for this position
- SOAS Women Society President
 - Anti-Harassment Campaign
 - 'Am I A Woman? What's race got to do with it?' This was a successful event series in February 2014 where we explored racism and sexism as intersecting systems of oppression. It elected I look forward to organising more such events and extending them to other issues of interest to the Black community at SOAS.

My Plans

- Research: organise focus groups and survey to include your input in the way I shape the Black Officer position
- BME network: create a network with the relevant societies where we meet regularly so we can work together and support each other in our different campaigns
- Black History Month: organise a series of events involving societies and complementing their events
- SOAS Equality and Diversity Board: ensure that Black students' voices are heard and taken seriously, representing the concerns of Black students through continuous feedback sessions
- Seminar series
- Reading group: create a forum where we can discuss issues and educate ourselves
- NUS Black Students Campaign: liaise with NUS and extend their campaign to SOAS, focusing on Black representation and equal education

Vote Manuela Schwarz for Black Officer! Polls open 10-13 March!

Example Manifesto 3: Grace

RE-ELECT YOUR SAVING GRACE

Vote Grace #1 for President

LISTEN. INSPIRE. CHANGE.
BUZZERGRACE21@gmail.com

You Said, I Did.

My aim as President has been to find out what you want and deliver it. Here are some of the things I've done so far:

- You said you wanted longer library opening hours, so I lobbied the University. They are now looking into proposals for 24 hour opening at selective points in the year.
- You said you wanted free parking when the University introduced weekend charges. I got you free weekend permits.
- You were concerned about rising tuition fees. I campaigned and challenged the University at each stage of the process.

So far this year as your President, I have worked tirelessly for the benefit of students across campuses. I have lobbied, campaigned and even marched for the rights of students at the University of Derby. I have grown into the role of your President and, if re-elected, here are some of the things I am to deliver during my time in office.

Microwaves and Kettles on Campus.

It is reasonable for students to want to bring their own food into the University and heat it up. Buying hot food regularly can be expensive and unrealistic on a student budget. If re-elected, I would negotiate with the University to allow for these facilities to be put in place on campus.

Holding the University to Account on Your Tuition Fees.

We all know tuition fees are expensive, but what does the money go on? If re-elected, I would work alongside the University to ensure this was transparent, and that students were getting the best deal possible. This could be in the form of bursaries or extra resources. In fact, I want you to get in touch with any ideas you have!

A Brand New Students' Union.

We would like to see the Students' Union revitalised, with our services brought closer to student residences in the city centre. Could this be a brand new SU building? A new media studio or a library book collection point? Or all of the above? If re-elected, I would work hard to make this space a reality, consulting you on what you want from us at every step.



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Some top tips for writing your manifesto:

- Graphically design it if you want to, it will look more inviting. If you want to upload one of these please send it to j.stilgoe@worc.ac.uk before the deadline together with a text copy (Microsoft Word doc please) Be **concise** and use **clear** language. Avoid long, complicated words – you won't win awards for being clever and you might just alienate important voters.
- Use **bullet points**, rather than long sentences – you need to try to get your message across in a short, snappy way
- Set out your **goals** (we suggest no more than 3 or 4) for your time in office. Be **realistic**. Don't make wild claims about what you will do – if you're not sure if any of your ideas are feasible, talk to SU staff before you put your manifesto together.
- Your manifesto is about **you** and not about your opponents. Avoid discrediting and disrespecting others as it is not professional and ultimately it could lead to a libel lawsuit!
- Be **relevant**. There's not much point telling everyone you like cute bunny rabbits when you're standing for Vice President Education. However, instances where you have shown leadership, tenacity, and tact would indicate to voters your suitability for the role.
- You may want to mention **previous experience** which you think is relevant (perhaps you've been a Course Rep or a committee member, for instance)
- Keep it to a **maximum of 250 words**. They are the rules, and, after all, voters will want to read what you have to say and are likely to give up if you write the equivalent of 'War and Peace'. Be succinct your manifesto will be cut off if you exceed 250 words.
- Check your **spelling** and **grammar** (or ask someone else to) – you want your manifesto to look professional.
- Be **creative** and **inspiring**. However, there are rules so make sure that you are not overstepping the mark. You may, if you want to, include a **slogan** for your campaign.

Manifestos will available on the SU website and we'll produce standardised promotional material showing all of the candidates. **Photographs of all candidates will be taken at the Candidates' Briefing and these will be used in promotional material which will be produced by the SU.**





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Your Campaign Publicity

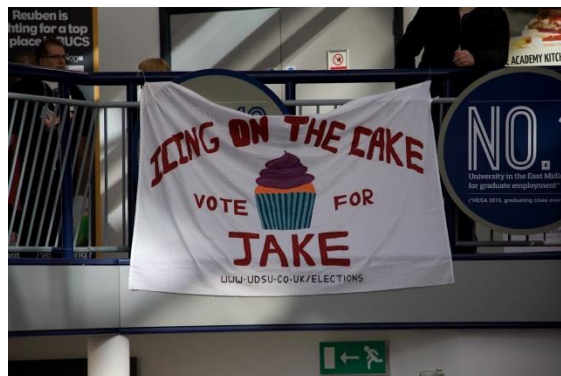
Posters

The first thing you should think about is the design – to make it eye catching and distinct. Look at ideas from famous advertising campaigns, magazines and the television for some inspiration. During the campaign weeks there will be posters all around campus, and because of this it's very easy for students to miss them (it's called poster blindness). Try and make yours stand out – through comedy, colour, shape or size. Your posters should have your name, a photo, your key policies, details of how to vote, and any slogans you're using on them. A lot of candidates use phrases like "Vote me your #1" highlighting the need to rank candidates.

You need to think about where you put your posters up to have the maximum impact on students. The Students' Union will provide you with a number of candidates' boards that you can place posters on in the Students' Union building but it is also important to spread the word in the wider University. Academic departments, halls and bus stops are a good place to start. However, **you must keep to the notice boards** and if someone asks you to move or take posters down then please cooperate with them. **Always ask permission before sticking posters on notice boards** (that are not official candidates' boards). It's also important to be considerate to other candidates, so try not to hog all the space in high profile places. If you wish to put posters in halls make sure that you do not enter illegally and if you are able to gain permission then please use the notice boards only.

Bed Sheets in SU

If you want you can decorate and hang a bedsheet in The Hangar. Try to be inventive, make sure you include your name, the position you are going for and any slogans you may have. Make sure it is readable and will stand out from the crowd.



Leaflets

Leaflets work really well here at Worcester where there are limited places to put up posters. Like your posters, these should stand out and look appealing to students. Put the same information about voting, as well as your contact information on them. If you're using double sided leaflets, use one side for an eye catching design and the second for more detail about your policies (maybe even a copy of your beautifully designed manifesto).

Stickers

Stickers usually end up stuck on floors and walls, and are a real pain to remove. As such, they are not allowed on campus. They can, however, be really effective when out campaigning during student nights in the city. Keep them as simple as possible, with something as basic as "I'm voting for...", and shop around to make sure you get the best value for money. This type of activity gives a campaign momentum, raising the profile of your ideas and the election in general.





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T-shirts

T-shirts are an excellent way of having your supporters promote your campaign even when they are not actually out campaigning, and they will make your campaign easily identifiable. A cheap way to do this is to buy plain t-shirts and iron on transfer paper. (Home-decorated t-shirts have a cost of £2 on your budget sheet)

Video

Making a video can be a great way on interacting with students who don't go onto campus very often or who wouldn't read a leaflet. You can make your video serious with you talking about your policies, or you can make a spoof video that you think will appeal to students and maybe go viral. Previously, students have chosen to act out scenes from films, sing songs or change the words of rap songs to make them relevant to their campaign. Upload them to Youtube or Vimeo and share as much as possible (a simple search on either of these will give you some good examples from past years too).

Examples of videos:

- Vote Toby for President (Exeter) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=finc4SFNICg>
- Vote Landy for Activities (Leeds) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpcAfKdVRLM>
- Ben Street for Education (Exeter) <https://youtu.be/qaB8TWZnGMQ>
- Amy "the RickRoll" Horner (Derby) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CG7FQV2_gE
- The Hicks Fix, Tom Hicks for Sports Officer (Nottingham) <https://youtu.be/sjyWXDz2Wn8>
- Daniel Alauddin "Vote Aladdin for Welfare" (Cardiff) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgPT1R41zTM>
- Ellie McWilliam for President (Nottingham) <https://youtu.be/tzAcBiHppvc>
- Tom Van Wesseldine for President (Nottingham) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOcsloGlxws>

Songs

In the past, some candidates have also looked to music to help support their campaign – ranging from re writing song lyrics of popular tunes, to original composed pieces. It's a great way of injecting a bit of fun, and drawing attention to your supporters.

Facebook

Setting up a Facebook group or page can be an excellent way to get your supporters to show their support for you, and to help raise the profile of your campaign online. You can publish your full manifesto, post updates on what you are doing and encourage people to vote for you. Don't overdo it though - as a general rule, try and limit yourself to one (maybe 2) Facebook update(s) per day reminding people to vote for you. Sharing photos is a great way to spread the word too.

Using a Facebook ad can be effective as it is targeted publicity. You can change the settings to only advertise your Facebook group or page to current students at your University.

Twitter

Using Twitter is also a very good way of communicating with potential voters, especially if you use the relevant hashtags when tweeting about the elections. Again, photos are a great way of engaging students. Twitter is more time responsive so feel free to tweet every couple of hours.





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Email Address

It is advisable to set up an email address specifically for the election that students are able to contact you on. This way you can keep your personal accounts separate, and can easily contact those voters with questions or queries. It is obviously not essential, but it can be a nice way of allowing students to be in touch with you throughout the campaign.

How to Campaign

Campaign Team

One of the most important elements of any campaign's success is to have a good group of campaigners who will help you distribute fliers, put up posters and generally spread the word about your campaign. We recommend that you have at 3 to 5 students joining you in active campaigning at any one time as it is enough to make you visible but not so many so that you bombard people. Remember that your campaign team are bound by the same rules as you and you will be penalised if they break the rules!

If you can, try and hold a training session where you familiarise your team with your policies, tell them how you would like them to campaign, make sure they understand the rules if they missed our session. This is also a great opportunity to talk about some of the benefits they'll get from participating, particularly related to employability after graduation. The best way of ensuring students vote for you is to talk to them, not just hand them a flyer, so really stress this as much as possible.

Good people to ask to campaign for you are friends from your halls or accommodation, friends from your course or society but they should all be students here at Worcester. Take some time in putting together some kind of rota if possible, so you know how much to expect from friends in terms of time commitment. Remember though, these people are doing you a huge favour and will have other time commitments, so don't take it personally if they can't give as much time as you'd like. Make sure you keep them refreshed with regular breaks and maybe even some food and drink – a little gesture like this goes a long way. Everyone gets a bit stressed out during elections, so if you feel that this is happening to you, tell your campaign team that you're going to campaign elsewhere and take half an hour to reenergise and refocus. Never let yourself get to the stage where you are grumpy with voters or your campaign team, it's completely normal, just have a cup of tea and calm down. Finally, make sure you use your team effectively. Have regular meetings keeping people updated on what's happened, and spread people out around campus rather than just outside main buildings. It's also worth stressing the importance of them not grouping together and simply talking to each other – you want them to engaging with students who have yet to be persuaded to vote for you yet.

Campaign Manager

Appointing a close friend to act as a campaign 'manager' is an extremely useful technique to reduce some of the pressure during the election, and will allow you to focus on talking to as many students as possible. Choose a good organiser, people person, and someone who's committed to helping you win. Make sure you thank them at the end of the process too.





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Election week timetable

Get one of these written up, prior to the start of elections, for you and your campaign team. This gives everyone an idea of what they should be doing and ensures that the key places, like ballot boxes, are covered.

Talking to Students

When talking to students, try and be brief and to the point - but make sure you tell them something they will remember. A good icebreaker is to introduce yourself, and then ask them a couple of questions before you start to talk about yourself and your ideas. Focus on the changes you are proposing that are relevant to them – remember elections are about the voters.

Lecture Shout Outs

Doing lecture shout outs are an extremely important part of campaigning. For a minute or two you have access to up to 200 students, all in one place, ready to listen to you. Like quite a lot of aspects of running an election campaign, it can seem very daunting to walk into a huge lecture theatre of unfamiliar faces, so start practising on your own lectures where you'll know some of the students there. Try and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start in order to ask permission from the lecturer, and try and keep your pitch down to a minute – audience participation is great when it works, but can be tricky at 9am.

Using Sweets

Many candidates choose to give out sweets during election time to lure students into talking to them. They can also be a nice way of starting a conversation with a potential voter; however, they are not essential and are, ultimately, an added expense.

Flash mob

In the past, some candidates have chosen to do a flash mob on campus to attract attention during a busy period of voting. There has been singing, dancing and acting, all of which went down very well with students and drew attention to the respective candidates

Campaign Launch Party

Having a launch party on the first night of voting can often be a very good idea. Invite your friends, their friends and get people along to celebrate the launch of your campaign. Lots of bars have space for small private functions that is free to hire and it will help your campaign gain momentum.





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Where to Campaign

Campaigning In Halls of Residences

Halls are a fantastic place to campaign in the evenings once campus has gone quiet and students have left for the day. Be mindful that these are students' homes though, and make sure you are polite and ask permission if you're poster in kitchens etc.

Campaigning at the Bus Queues

Bus queues are a perfect place for you to catch students with five minutes free to talk. You will often find lots of students waiting around and they will usually be more than willing to talk for a couple of minutes. Fliers are also great as they'll have time to read them during their journey.

Campaigning at Student Events

In the run up to the election many candidates will choose to attend student events to try and gain support from the society and its members. Societies don't usually mind this, however, you should speak to the President of the society prior to going along to check if it is ok to attend in this capacity.

Campaigning during Nights Out

Campaigning during nights out can be effective at raising the profile of your campaign, especially if you get your campaign team dressed up to attract attention. Be careful not to annoy students who may be taking a break from their studies though, and remember too many late nights will negatively affect your capacity to campaign during the day.

Campaigning at all Sites and Campuses

Whichever site you study at don't forget to go and visit all the University campuses: St John's, City Campus, Jenny Lind, Riverside and the Garage. Many of your potential voters don't visit campuses that they don't study at and getting their votes could be the difference between winning and losing. Students at satellite campuses can feel left out from all the action at the main campus so making them feel included could really work in your favour!





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Campaign Dos and Don'ts

Here are some general Do's and Don'ts (more specific rules can be found in the Candidate's Code of Conduct)

DO...

Do go out and talk to students

Do enjoy it as much as possible

Do be aware that students get very fed up of the constant hassle of electioneering very quickly; think of different and exciting ways to campaign

Do remember to eat and remember to take regular breaks – the same should go for your campaigners

Do be able to sum up why a person should vote for you in 30 seconds

Do be creative and make things

Do make a fun and entertaining video

Do use social media to promote your campaign

Do make sure you do lots of lecture shout outs

Do plan early

Do have a clear message

Do keep your best campaign ideas secret until you actually start using them

Do take lots of campaign photos by which to remember the campaign you've run.

DON'T...

Don't decide not to run because you are afraid you won't get elected. In the words of the famous American baseball player Babe Ruth 'don't let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game'

Don't spend too much money, especially not on sweets

Don't go overboard with your publicity; a few posters in each building are more than enough

Don't overwork yourself and your campaign team

Don't be put off if one student is disinterested or rude to you, the majority will be interested

Don't be unfair to other candidates by taking their posters down or negatively campaigning

Don't promise things that you can't achieve

Don't litter your city – remember the way candidates conduct themselves affects the perception the public has of all students across Worcester

FOR ALL THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ON CAMPAIGNING PLEASE SEE THE ELECTION RULES DOCUMENT IN THE ELECTIONS RESOURCE HUB AT

<http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub/>

