



Election Rules, Leadership Elections 2020

Election Rules in Context

During your election campaign you will be involved in a series of activities. It is important to remember that you are bound by various other rules that, in addition to elections rules, still have a bearing on your conduct.

Students' Union: SU's rules are contained in the Bye-laws which can be found at the following link <http://worcsu.com/yourunion/aboutwsu/>. If you are in breach of these, even if the Deputy Returning Officer does not take action under the auspices of the election rules, you may still be subject to the SU's disciplinary procedures

University: The University has a number of rules that relate to use of its facilities and property and to your general conduct as a Worcester student. The Student Disciplinary Procedures can be found on the University's website <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/StudentDisciplinaryProcedures.pdf>. If you are in breach of these and the Deputy Returning Officer does not take action, you may still be referred to and, therefore, subject to the University's disciplinary procedure.

The Law: The fact that you are standing in the elections does not remove you from the auspices of the law of the land. The SU reserves the right to refer a matter to the appropriate authorities, if it deems it necessary, which may put your candidacy and student status in jeopardy.

Principles

All candidates must:

- Treat all students and staff with respect.
- Always act in the interests of a fair and transparent election.
- Take responsibility for their actions and those of their campaign team.
- Undertake campaigning in a good natured, up-beat and positive manner.
- Respect the SU's core values (Professional, Inspirational, Accountable, Student-centred, Positive, Entertaining)
- Recognise that being a Full Time Officer is a responsible post which will require you to lead by example, to represent students and to have credibility in your dealings with students, staff and external stakeholders.
- Ensure that they do not put their academic studies at risk through the elections process or through taking up an officer position and be confident at the point of nomination that they are in good standing academically able to commit to the role for the duration of the term of office.
- **Understand that the SU will contact your Schools to check your academic status and that you are progressing well, to ensure that running in the elections will not jeopardise your future prospects. If there are concerns, we reserve the right to discuss this with you, together with your academic lead and, if necessary, to recommend that you do not run for candidacy.**





Election Rules

Campaigning

- All candidates must attend a mandatory candidates briefing before their candidacy is confirmed. Details of this briefing can be found in 'Elections Dates' on the website and in the Elections Guide.
- Campaigning cannot begin until the mandatory candidates briefing has been concluded. This includes publically announcing that you are running. If you are unsure of what this means, please check with us.
- Candidates and campaigners should respect students' personal space. For example, candidates should not disturb students who are studying in the Hive/Peirson.
- Candidates are responsible for the actions of their campaign team and supporters. This includes campaign activities and spending on campaign materials.
- Candidates and campaigners are not permitted to interfere with another candidate's campaign materials.
- Negative campaigning in which you attack another candidate physically, verbally or in writing is strictly prohibited.
- The use of coercion or bribery in order to obtain votes is not permitted.
- Candidates and campaigners must seek permission from lecturers before campaigning in lectures.
- Candidates and campaigners must seek permission from the committee before you campaign at Society or Sports Club meetings or events.
- Candidates and campaigners cannot campaign during Students' Union meetings.
- Candidates and campaigners who are employed by the Union as student staff must not campaign while they are working for the Students' Union. Candidates must not wear any uniform provided by the Union when campaigning.

Halls of Residence

- Candidates and campaigners are not permitted to campaign actively inside Halls, although campaigning outside is permitted.
- If candidates and campaigners wish to place materials in halls you must seek permission from Accommodation Services and should only place posters on notice boards.

Slates (campaigning with one or more other candidates as a team)

- Candidates are permitted to form "slates" but, in doing so, are jointly responsible for any breaches of this Code of Conduct and elections regulations by ANY member of the slate i.e. if one breaches the rules you all do.
- Candidates running in a slate need to make this clear to the electorate and have joint campaigning materials.
- Candidates must make it clear they are in a slate when submitting their nomination.

Social Media/Websites

- Candidates may post in Facebook groups including societies and sports clubs. Be aware that if they allow you to post messages, they will be required to allow all candidates to do the same.
- Candidates and campaigners cannot post on official SU or University pages (with the exception of dedicated candidate social media takeover opportunities).
- Candidates and campaigners are not permitted to post campaigning messages to any closed groups to which all other candidates do not have access.





- Candidates may have their own social media accounts or websites for their campaign but these cannot go live until campaigning has begun.
- Candidates only (and not their campaigners) can post in external groups e.g. clubs and society groups.

Societies and Sports Clubs

- In the interest of fairness, societies and sports clubs must agree with their committee to do either one of the following:
 - (i) allow NO candidates to post in their social media pages, attend their meetings/events or sessions
 - (ii) allow ALL candidates to post in their social media pages, attend their meetings/events or sessions
- Failure to adhere to either (i) or (ii) above may lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked against individual members of societies or sports clubs

Campaigning Materials

- 1 copy of all campaign materials must be submitted in a sealed envelope at the Candidates Briefing. Additional material can be submitted at the morning Candidates Breakfasts throughout the campaigning period.
- No campaigning material can be used until it has been approved by the Elections Committee.
- Each candidate is responsible for producing and distributing their own campaigning materials.
- Candidates must not incorporate the SU's or University's branding or logo on any promotional material. This includes the use of ducks, superheroes and the phrases "don't duck out" or "don't duck out of democracy".
- Candidates will be permitted to place posters on Candidates' Boards in both the Union and the University. These areas will be clearly marked and candidates should only place 1 poster per candidate board.
- If candidates wish to place posters elsewhere then they must place them on notice boards only and must always ask permission before doing so from the University member of staff responsible for that area.
- Stickers are not permitted to be given out on campus. Candidates and campaigners can use stickers off site e.g. on a night out.
- Candidates cannot use the Union's resources or those of clubs and societies with the exception of SU printing facilities which will be deducted from their candidate budget.

Budget

- Candidates must not exceed their budget limits.
- The Budget for full time officer elections is £50 of which the Union will reimburse the candidate up to the value of £20.
- Candidates should complete their Budget Form as they spend money and bring it to the Candidates' Morning Briefings. A final budget sheet should be submitted 30 minutes after the close of voting to the SU Welcome Desk.
- Failure to hand in the budget sheet by the deadline will result in no money being reimbursed.
- You must keep a record of the costs of your campaigning materials and be able to present receipts and evidence of expenditure if requested to do so by the Deputy Returning Officer.
- Candidates can use any item that anyone could reasonably get for free. This would usually include cardboard, wood, paint, adhesives, chalk, pens and pencils etc.





- Any pre-owned materials count towards a candidate's campaign budget.
 - Home printed/designed t-shirts will be given a value of £2 per t-shirt. Preowned costumes will be given a value of £10 per costume.
- Candidates should only do what other candidates have the opportunity to do. This means that any 'sponsorship' or 'favours' that exceed the maximum budget must be available to all candidates e.g. getting a family friend who owns their own business to print you t-shirts for free. Candidates are responsible for making whoever is offering to help them aware of this;
- Candidates are permitted to recruit campaign team members with skills and use these to support their campaigns (e.g. graphic design). All campaign team members must be current University of Worcester students.

Voting

- Candidates and campaigners must allow voters to cast their ballot freely and must not communicate with voters in any way once they have begun to complete their ballot.
- Approaching another student and requesting or seeking, by whatever means, personal information required to cast a vote is strictly prohibited
- No candidate or campaigner will cast, or attempt to cast a vote or encourage another person to cast a vote on behalf of another student;
- The use of any electronic devices to encourage or help others to cast votes e.g. laptops, iPads, smart phone is prohibited and those wishing to vote should be directed to polling booths or the SU website.

The SU reserves the right to add any additional rules the RO or DRO deem necessary, during the elections period.

Elections penalties

Disciplinary action may be taken against any offenders under the Students' Union's disciplinary procedures.

Breaching the SU's election regulations, bye-laws, and this code of conduct may result in the application of penalties. The Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to impose any reasonable penalty in light of the circumstances.

As a guide and depending on the severity of the breach, candidates might:

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| • receive an informal verbal warning | • receive a formal written warning | • be disqualified from the elections |
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Important information to remember:

- Candidates can receive penalties incrementally if they commit more than one breach. **Penalties may not necessarily be given incrementally and will depend on the severity of the breach e.g. candidates may be disqualified from the elections without having received any prior penalty;**
- Serious breaches may be referred to the Returning Officer (appointed by the National Union of Students) **All candidates are advised to consult with SU staff or a member of the Elections Committee if they are uncertain about any of the elections rules and regulations. It's much better to ask than breach the rules!**





Complaints and Appeals

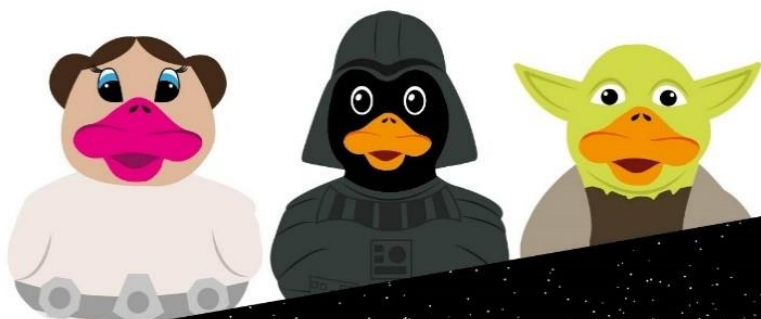
Any member of the SU (i.e. any current University of Worcester student) may make a complaint by completing a Complaints Form (online form), which should be supported by evidence such as photographs and/or witness statements wherever possible. Complaints cannot be made third hand i.e. a student told you that another candidate breached an elections regulation so you complain on their behalf. The student who experienced the problem or saw it first-hand must make the complaint themselves, or the complaint will be rejected. Complaints should be raised immediately. Complaints that are more than 24 hours old will not normally be considered. Complaints about incidents over the weekend will be dealt with on Monday morning. All complaints must be submitted by the close of the voting period. The complaints form is available at <http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub>

All completed complaint forms will be initially received by the Student Engagement Manager. Complaints will be forwarded to the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), Val Yates, who will respond and take action, where appropriate, in consultation with the Elections Committee. All decisions on the interpretation of the elections rules will be made by the RO/DRO.

The Elections Committee is made up of a maximum of 5 members of Student Council who are not nominated themselves or supporting anyone else who is nominated in the elections.

Appeals against the decision of the Deputy Returning Officer regarding a complaint need to be sent to the Returning Officer (RO) of the Elections **within two working days of the decision**. The Returning Officer, appointed by the National Unions of Students, is Peter Robertson, Acting Chief Executive.

Remember that you are not the Returning Officer; focus your energies on your own campaign, not someone else's and if you are in doubt ask first. Those candidates who obsess over others' campaigns are generally unsuccessful!





Candidates Pledge of Fair Play, Leadership Elections 2020

This Pledge sets out the standard of behaviour we expect from candidates & campaign teams throughout elections.

Specifically, your signature below indicates that you:

- Pledge not to bully, harass or intimidate any candidate, campaign team member, student, staff member or any other person as part of your election activity.
- Promise to campaign positively and cooperatively; allowing other candidates and campaign teams the space and opportunity to engage students and campaign on their own views and issues.
- Will not 'instruct' any student to vote for any particular candidate.
- Will not vote for or on behalf of any other student.
- Will only campaign and put up posters during the times permitted, in the places permitted and using the resources and methods permitted.
- Will not spend over the budget limit and will provide all expenses receipts to the elections team within the agreed timeframe. I understand that failure to do so may result in my forfeit of the right to reimbursement.
- Will attend any meetings, training sessions or briefings at which you are required to be present.
- Will not attempt to canvas any member of The Students' Union or University staff and will not accept any endorsement.
- Ensure that you do not put your academic studies at risk during the elections process.
- Accept the risks of being in a slate if the rules are breached by any member.
- If you are a candidate, accept that it is your responsibility to ensure that your campaign team is aware of the election rules, and that any breach by the campaign team will be considered a breach by the candidate.
- Accept that your conduct throughout elections is subject to the University Code of Conduct and Worcester Students' Union's bye-laws, and any breach of these may result in disciplinary action.
- Accept the authority of the RO, DRO and Elections Committee and will abide by their decisions in relation to the interpretation of elections rules.

By signing this pledge, you agree to abide by the SU's values and the behaviour code set out above. You are also subject to the rule of law and the University's Student Code of Conduct and any other rules regarding the elections which are set out in the Elections Rules or adopted by the SU at any time before or during elections.

Any breach will be subject to investigation, potential disciplinary action by The Students' Union or the University, and, where appropriate, removal from the election.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

For the position of/supporting _____ running for the position of: _____

SU Values: Professional, Inspirational, Accountable, Student-centred, Positive, Entertaining

