

SU ELECTIONS

Students' Union Elections Guide 2024

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About Worcester Students' Union

Worcester Students' Union (WSU) is an independent charity, registration number 1145192, which is devoted to the educational interests and welfare of its members. Its members are all students (full-time and part-time) registered for a course of study with the University of Worcester unless they specifically choose to opt out of membership. Its activities and services are funded through a block grant from the University of Worcester and through any trading surpluses made from the SU's commercial services, such as The Hangar bar.



Like other Students' Unions, WSU's charitable objects are the advancement of education of students at the University by:

- Promoting the interests and welfare of students and representing, supporting, and advising students
- Being the recognised representative channel between students, the University, and any other external bodies
- Providing social, cultural, sporting, and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of students

WSU is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS) and pays an annual fee for this of approximately £15,000.

As a democratic organisation, it is a fundamental principle that the Students' Union is led by students. This means that each year, the leadership of the SU (its Executive Committee, further details of which can be found below) is determined by the student body through cross-campus elections.

The University of Worcester has approximately 10,000 students and elected officers have responsibility for representing the interests of all these students. The student body is increasingly diverse and so the Executive Committee of the Students' Union should reflect that diversity.

Contact Details

If you have any questions about the election process, please feel free to speak with any member of SU staff. You may want some information and advice about the roles and responsibilities before you make the decision to stand, so please come and have a chat with the Student Voice team. You can email us at suelections@worc.ac.uk.

Contact	Responsibilities
SU Student Voice Election Team Email: suelections@worc.ac.uk	The Student Voice Team at the SU are responsible for the running of the elections, candidate queries and support, events, and promotion. Talk to any of the SV Team on the email provided if you want to know more about standing as a candidate for election.
Peter Robertson Returning Officer Director NUS Charity National Union of Students Email: elections@nus.org.uk	The Returning Officer is someone independent of the election process who rules on any disputes that arise. He will be available to provide advice and support and will deal with any complaints relating to the election. You should always contact Val Yates or SU Student Voice Team before contacting NUS.
Val Yates Deputy Returning Officer Director of Access and Inclusion University of Worcester Email: v.yates@worc.ac.uk Telephone: 01905 522170	The Deputy Returning Officer is an independent representative of the University of Worcester. She checks that the Students' Union is adhering to election rules and regulations throughout the elections.

Positions Available in these Elections.

The positions that are being contested in this elections period is for the three full-time officer roles:

Students Union President
Vice President Education
Vice President Student Activities

What is a Full-Time Officer?

Full-time officers (sometimes known as sabbatical officers or officer trustees) are students who are elected in a cross-campus ballot by their fellow students to lead the Students' Union for a year. They are paid a salary of approx. £20,000 per annum and work full-time (although they are entitled to annual leave and TOIL too!). **It's not just a 9-5 job - full-time officers need to be flexible as there's quite a bit of evening and weekend work involved.**

Worcester Students' Union has three full-time officers - the President, Vice President Education and Vice President Student Activities. They work together as a team and are all paid the same. They form the Executive Committee which oversees the day-to-day representation of students and are members of Student Council.

Student Council is the Students' Union's highest student representative body. It provides the student voice within our governance structures, ensuring that students have a say on what your Students' Union should be focusing on and how it's run. Councillors are involved in deciding the work the SU does, such as major issues we raise to the University, the campaigns we run or the events we support!

Student Council is made up of members who are drawn from other elected or engaged students within the Union's structures including: the Full Time Officers, a representative from each Student Network, Department Reps from each College, representatives from Society and Sports Club Committees and the RAG Team Leader.

You can find more on Student Council at

<https://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/studentcouncil/>

Who can be a Full-Time Officer?

Any student (part-time or full-time) registered for a course of study with the University of Worcester can stand as a candidate to be a full-time officer at Worcester Students' Union. You can either take a year out of your studies to be a full-time officer and return to your studies after your year in office (this is known as a sabbatical year) OR run for a position when you are in your final year, meaning you take up your position once your studies have effectively finished.



Being a full-time officer is a brilliant, unique job in which you will develop a whole raft of skills and attributes and you **don't** have to have held a previous role within the SU to stand as a candidate. The key thing is that you have a passion for representing students and improving their experience. We have put together a list of some of the skills and competencies we think you need to run for office, as it's quite a demanding job. You'll find this below.

A few key points:

- Full-time officers must be available to take up their posts from **Monday 10th June 2024** when the one-week handover period will begin. The full length of their term of office will be 54 weeks.
- All candidates for full-time officer posts must be eligible to be charity trustees. For more information about this, please email us on suelections@worc.ac.uk.
- A term of office lasts for one year and under the Education Act 1994 students may hold full-time officer positions for a maximum of two years if successfully re-elected.
- Please note that any student may only stand as a candidate for one full-time officer position, so when you submit your nomination, you must clearly indicate which role you wish to stand for.

Why should you stand?

There are many reasons why you might want to stand for election as a full-time officer, as it's a fantastic opportunity to spend a year gaining invaluable skills and loads of experience which will enhance your employability and set you up for your future career, for instance:

- Communication and public speaking skills – addressing prospective and current students, talking to the media, using social media and the website, writing emails and reports.
- Teamwork, decision-making, problem solving – as a charity trustee, you'd have a huge amount of responsibility and would need to get your head around the law, finances, HR and governance.
- Negotiation and diplomacy – regular meetings with senior members of University and SU staff.
- Training design and delivery – running workshops for Student Academic Reps and student groups.
- Campaigning – working with the NUS to respond to government policy and with the local community to highlight students' issues and impact.
- Leadership – the Full-Time Officer Team leads the Executive Committee and you'd be expected to lead by example, as well as chairing meetings and being at the forefront of change and challenge.
- Networking – you'd meet other full-time officers from students' unions all over the country at NUS training, conferences, regional and national meetings.
- Organisational skills and time management – full-time officers don't find filling their days a problem!
- **It's a full-time job for a year, which could really kick-start your future career!**



General competencies and skills necessary for Full-Time Officer

Competency or Skill	Why?
Good communication skills	As an elected representative of the student body, your key role is talking and listening to students and representing their views and interests to the University.
Good presentation skills	You will be expected to present reports to a range of university committees and meetings, to deliver induction talks to new students and to run training courses and information sessions to groups of students throughout your year in office.
Good time-management and organisational skills	Your typical day will involve attending meetings and working on a number of projects whilst keeping on top of communications to and from students and SU and University staff.
Good understanding of current political, social and economic factors relating to Higher Education and issues of concern to students	As a spokesperson for students, you will be called on to explain what students think about a range of local, national and international matters which may have an impact on the student experience.
Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with a wide range of individuals	You will be liaising regularly with senior University staff, governors and SU trustees, other SUs and universities, external companies and commercial partners as well as students.
Enthusiastic approach to learning and personal development	You will have a wide range of opportunities to attend local and national training courses and conferences, including NUS officer training, which will enhance your skills and confidence.
Commitment to equality and diversity and to the values of the SU	You will take responsibility of ensuring that the SU and its services are accessible and openly inclusive for all students, whatever their background, age and interests.
Self-motivated and enthusiastic	The ability to effect positive change for students comes from a willingness to start and see-through initiatives.
Ability to take a constructive and co-operative approach to solving problems and making decisions	You will be part a larger team of officers and staff and so will need to be able to negotiate, compromise and remain calm in situations which may sometimes be challenging and where there may be conflicts of interest.

Competency or Skill	Why?
Reliable and honest	You will have a very busy diary but also have important responsibilities as a Trustee of the SU.
Willing to work unsociable hours and weekends	This is not always a 9-5 job! Over the course of your year in office, you should expect to work during several weekends and to attend evening meetings and events.
Flexible and adaptable	Things never stand still in the SU for long and it is a fast-paced environment.

Full-Time Officers are fully supported by SU staff, but it is important that you are able to meet a number of the above, even if not all, for you to be comfortable in the role. It is a demanding (and brilliant) role that requires individuals to work hard and get stuck in! If you have any questions about what is required, please arrange to talk to a member of SU staff listed on the Contact Details page.

What will you be doing?

Whilst all candidates will have their own manifesto when they stand for election to find out what each individual job role does please read the factsheets available [HERE](#).

Campaigning and Manifestos

This year's election will be held face to face but we strongly believe that online campaigning will remain important. Many students are still getting used to life back on campus and you will need to ensure your campaign is as visible as possible. Don't forget that there are rules and you can only put promotional materials in permitted places, so make sure you read the rules before you plan your campaign.

For lots of ideas on designing your campaign take a look at our "Campaign to Win" booklet, which alongside the rules is available in the Elections Candidate Information Hub: <http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub/>

Campaigning may begin at 10:00 on Monday 26th February 2024 and finishes when voting ends at 17:00 on Thursday 29th February 2024. To ensure that no candidate has an unfair advantage over others, all publicity material must be submitted to the Students' Union for approval before it is reproduced and distributed. Candidates should submit via email to suelections@worc.ac.uk and we will work to approve them as soon as possible. Please note you will not be able to campaign unless you have attended the candidates training on Tuesday 20th February (12pm-5pm) in EE 2035.

Please note that candidates must not refer to or endorse any other candidates for any positions on their campaigning material unless you are in a slate (joint campaign). We will make sure we explain all the rules at the Candidates' Training Session.

The Students' Union will provide you with:

- General promotional material to help you explain the elections and why it's important for all students to vote.
- A campaigning budget which you can use to spend on online campaigning materials and boosts.

Campaign Teams

One of the most important elements of any campaign's success is to have a good group of campaigners (your Campaign Team) who will help you spread the word about your campaign. Don't forget that your campaign team are bound by the same rules as you and you will be penalised if they break the rules! To help you we will **run training for your campaign teams** at the following times:

- Wednesday 21st February 10:00 – 10:45 (Online via TEAMS)
- Thursday 22nd February 10:00 – 10:45 (Online via TEAMS)

These sessions are optional, but we highly recommend any key campaign team members attend to ensure they are fully aware of the rules surrounding their conduct.

Manifestos

To be approved as a candidate, you must submit a manifesto, in addition to your nomination, by the deadline of midday on Monday 19th February.

The maximum word limit for each manifesto is 250. You will not be confirmed as a candidate if these have not been received. Manifestos must be typed into the form online as plain text but we strongly recommend also submitting a graphically designed manifesto. If you want to submit a graphically designed manifesto please send as a **jpg file** to suelections@worc.ac.uk before the deadline. We suggest that it is **portrait** rather than landscape.



For more information on writing manifestos please see

Campaign to Win document at www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub/.

We will arrange for photographs of each of you and these will be used in promotional material which will be produced by the SU.

Voting System

Alternative Vote (ATV)

The voting system used for all elected positions is the Alternative Vote (ATV). With this system of voting, each candidate ranks the list of candidates in order of preference (Mark a '1' beside the most preferred candidate, a '2' beside the second-most preferred candidate and so on).

The voter may rank any number of candidates they wish. For example, if there are five candidates running; they can rank one of the five candidates, two of the five, three of the five, four of the five, or all five of the candidates. This means they do not have to rank all candidates unless they choose to.

When counting the votes, once a candidate has 50% or more of the votes, they are elected. If no one gets 50% or more then the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated and the count enters a second round. Those who voted for the eliminated candidate will have their 2nd choices come in to play. This continues until a candidate receives 50% of the vote. Where students do not wish to support any of the candidates standing for a particular position, they may opt to choose 'RON' (re-open nominations).

Here is an example of how an election using the ATV could turn out:

Candidates	Round 1		Round 2	
Candidate 1	10	48%	10	48%
Candidate 2	7	33%	11	52% (winner)
RON	4	19%	Excluded (all second preferences to Candidate 2)	

You can watch a video explaining ATV at

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

Re-open Nominations (RON)

For each position there will be an option on the ballot form for Re-Open Nominations (RON). This option is for students who feel that no candidate running for that position is suitable to win. Should RON win the election for your position none of the candidates shall be appointed to that position and it will remain vacant until the next elections where you, and anybody else who was running, will not be permitted to re-run for that specific position. A RON campaign may only be run against a single position, and only one campaign run per position, though there is no other limit to how many RON campaigns can be run – i.e. there could be a RON campaign run for each position available.

Key Dates 2024

Date	Details
Monday 22nd January 12:00 - Friday 2nd February 12:00	Recommend-A-Friend open
Monday 5th February 12:00	Nominations Opens
Monday 19th February 12:00	Nominations Close
Tuesday 20th February 12:00-17:00	Candidate Training (EE 2035) - all candidates are expected to attend
Wednesday 21st & Thursday 22nd February 10:00-10:45	Campaign Team Training (online) - <i>optional</i>
Monday 26th February 10:00	Election Candidates announced & campaigning begins
Tuesday 27th February 12:00-13:30	Question Time (The Hangar) - all candidates are expected to attend
Tuesday 27th February 14:00	Voting Opens
Thursday 29th February 17:00	Voting Closes
Thursday 29th February 17:30	Deadline for budgets
Friday 1st March 19:00	Results Night (The Hangar)

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