

# 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 restricted 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 **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 encounter and develop skills you never thought you would and most importantly have fun.

## How Do Elections Work?

Whether you are standing yourself or are 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 Elections Guide
- The Election Rules

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

If you aren't sure you can always contact our Elections Support Team at [suelections@worc.ac.uk](mailto:suelections@worc.ac.uk).

# 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.

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## 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 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 can 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 previous examples below from past elections manifestos. It doesn't have to be silly/fun; 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, or campaign ideas.

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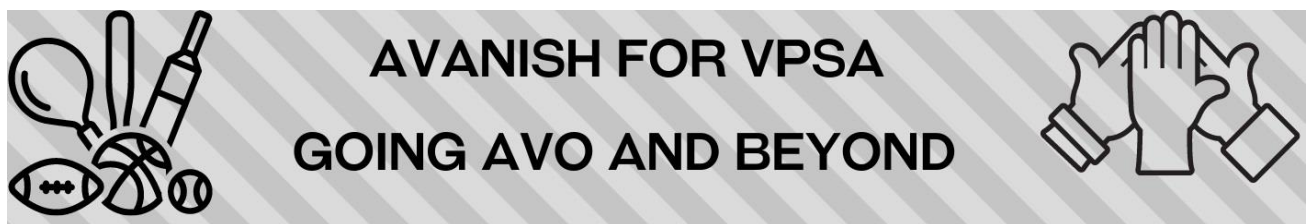
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## Campaign Slogan(s)

Many students decide that they want to have a slogan that students can remember them by. A 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 Pathiranage: 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.

### Some top tips for writing your manifesto:

Graphically design it if you want to, it will look more inviting. If you want to submit a graphically designed manifesto,

please send as a jpg file to [suelections@worc.ac.uk](mailto:suelections@worc.ac.uk) before the deadline. We suggest that it is portrait rather than landscape. You will still need to upload a plain text version when you nominate yourself (see guide on the website).

- 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.

### Example Manifestos



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- 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 be available on the SU website, and we'll produce standardised promotional material showing all of the candidates. **We will arrange to have photos of you that will be used in promotional material which will be produced by the SU.**



# Your Campaign Publicity

**In all your publicity, encourage people to vote you, number 1** (or if not put you as their second choice).

Second or even third or fourth preferences really can make the difference between winning and losing!

## Posters

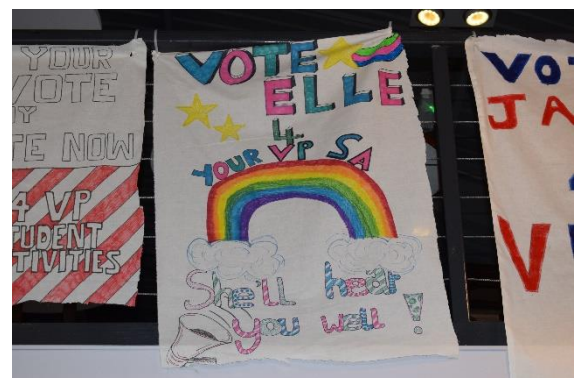
The first thing you should think about is the design - to make it eye catching and distinct. Look at ideas from famous advertising campaigns, magazines and the television for some inspiration. During the campaign weeks there will be posters all around campus, and because of this it's very easy for students 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

The Students' Union will provide you with a bedsheet to turn in to a banner to hang in the Hangar. Try to be inventive, make sure you include your name, the position you are going for any slogans you may have. Make sure it is readable and will stand out from the crowd.



## Leaflets

Leaflets work 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). Hand out leaflets and don't leave them in the canteen as they will be cleared away.

## 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). This is something you will still be able to do when campaigning virtually, as well as in person, as it will get other students to become familiar with your campaign when they see you and your campaign team wearing your T-shirts in videos, photos, events and online lectures.

## Video

Making a video can be a great way of 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).

Even if you don't think you'll create a big campaign video, throughout the voting period it's still beneficial to use video to convey your message. Analytics show this is one of the most effective methods of communication on social media, even if it's just a 30 second update at the end of the day. Can you think of a way to use a current trend on TikTok or Instagram Reels to showcase yourself and your manifesto?

## Examples of videos:

- [Vote Toby for President](#) (Exeter)
- [Vote Landy for Activities](#) (Leeds)
- [Euan Morrison for Education](#) (Worcester)
- [Ben Street for Education](#) (Exeter)
- [Amy "the RickRoll" Horner](#) (Derby)
- [The Hicks Fix, Tom Hicks for Sports Officer](#) (Nottingham)
- [Daniel Alauddin "Vote Aladdin for Welfare"](#) (Cardiff)
- [Ellie McWilliam for President](#) (Nottingham)



## 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.

## 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. If you are thinking of setting up an email address, we would encourage you to think about making your own email signatures to promote what your manifesto is and get the word out there.

## Social Media Channels



## 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. Sharing photos is a great way to spread the word too- the more creative you can get with your photos the more likely you are going to be able to grab voters' attention.

### Facebook Groups vs Pages:

Facebook Groups		Facebook Pages	
Perfect if you have an already large following and have a team helping you attract new people to your group. Perfect if you do not want to spend your campaigns budget on adverts.		Perfect if you want to target people that aren't following you. Perfect if you want to spend your campaign budget digitally.	
<b>Positives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Builds a community.</li> <li>Anyone can post in the group.</li> </ul>	<b>Negatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can't do paid advertising - boosted posts or paid Ads.</li> </ul>	<b>Positives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only the page can post content.</li> <li>You can use paid advertising.</li> </ul>	<b>Negatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content isn't as effective unless you spend.</li> <li>To keep on budget, you will</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your content/posts are guaranteed to reach anyone who follows the group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can't track how well your posts are performing.</li> <li>People who don't follow your group, won't see your content.</li> <li>You can't schedule posts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can schedule posts &amp; track them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>need to pre-plan what to post from launch to end of voting.</li> <li>Pages are always public, so you will need to set up your page the day you want to launch it.</li> </ul>
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Be aware that it takes time to build up a following so make sure you get some Facebook content for the SU social media takeover (More info on the social media takeover will be sent to you by our marketing team).

## Instagram

Students are using Instagram more and more so a few cool pictures laying out your manifesto or at least some key points are a great way to go. Using Instagram stories are also a way of getting across your manifesto points in a really eye-catching way. We recommend that you use 'Canva' to create some templates for your posts and stories as the sizing's have already been created for you. Think of your manifesto as a 'brand' and that if your posts all look similar then voters will begin to make the association with your posts and manifesto points and you which might make all the difference when it comes down to voting.

Instagram Live is also a function you are able to use that is an easy way to interact with your followers whilst giving you the opportunity to answer any questions that they might have about your manifesto.

## Tips on How to make sure you are obtaining your maximum reach on your social media pages:

- Make sure all profiles are set to public (once campaigning is permitted, NOT BEFORE).
- Follow all sports clubs, societies, networks etc. on social media.
- Use the #Worcester and #WorcesterUni hashtag to find students and follow them.
- Get your campaign team to really shout about you and your campaign on their personal profiles.
- Clearly state your full name and which role you are running for.
- Put everything into context so people understand - 'what even are the elections?!'

- Make content (including profile pictures/headers) consistent across platforms.
- Don't jump the gun or panic if someone launches their campaign before you; keep to your plan and be prepared in advance.
- A large percentage of people vote on the first day of elections so don't leave it to the last minute to put out your most important content such as your video.
- Plan out your social media using a spreadsheet, so your content is evenly spaced, thoughtful and aligns with key milestones.
- Respond to any comments and messages you get in a timely way - be friendly and clear in what you stand for.

**Keep an eye on the SU social media for cross promotion opportunities i.e., Candidate Takeovers.**

### **Top Tips to make your social media stand out from the crowd:**

- Make sure all of your social media pages have 'branded covers'
  - Think about making sure there is a picture of you on your cover.
  - Which position you are standing for.
  - Your Slogan.
  - When students can vote.
- Include videos into your pages.
- Use infographics to get the key points of your manifestos across to the voters. Try to keep these short and sweet to try and get three or four of your main manifesto points across to voters.
- Use some quote graphics and try to break down the key points of your manifesto and then quote them onto individual posts. This will just reinforce the main points of manifesto to students who are viewing your pages.

### **Some top tips for using Canva:**

When designing all your campaign materials we recommend you use Canva to help you all theme your materials and make sure they are 'on brand'. Below are some top tips to make sure you are getting the most out of the website:

- Canva has a number of guides and tutorials of how to use its different features here: <https://www.canva.com/help/article/using-canva>. On this link you will find tutorials, videos, and how to help guides which should break down everything you need.
- We would encourage you to use all the templates they have for the different types of social media (Instagram, Facebook etc.). The reason we suggest you use these is because they have already been set to the required dimensions for the post so

when it comes to uploading them, you will have the perfect image size for each one of your posts.

- When creating imagery for your campaign think what you are saving each image as once you have finished. Try and organise your folder into days or even manifesto points. This way you will have a clear plan of what you are posting each day and there will be no last-minute panicking about where you have saved your images.

## How to Campaign

**The SU will be providing more organised opportunities, but you will still need a plan of how to maximise your reach. Where are the online spaces you can access students, as well as spaces across all UoW campuses? We will organise for some posts to go on our other channels.**

### 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 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 be running 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.

Additionally, 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.

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. 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 be engaging with students who have yet to be persuaded to vote for you yet.

## 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 everyone is prepared for key times during the week (Question Time etc) as well as being able to ensure you all get rest periods throughout the week.

## 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. **Remember to remind students that they should vote in order of preference and if you aren't their first choice ask them to consider putting you in second.**

## Networks, Clubs and Societies

Networks, Clubs and Societies are a great way to engage groups of students at one time. Contact committees and ask if you can attend a meeting or event to talk about your candidacy with their members. Remember if they allow one candidate to post on their pages or attend a meeting/event, then they must allow all candidates to post. They are not allowed to endorse or publicly support any one candidate.

## Lecture Shout Outs

Doing lecture shout outs are an important part of campaigning. We recommend that you contact lecturers the week before voting to ask if you can give a lecture shout out during the campaigning period (remember, not before!). Like quite a lot of aspects of running an election campaign, it can seem very daunting to walk into a lecture full of unfamiliar faces, so start practising on your own lectures where you'll know some of the students there. Try and arrive on time or at least 15 minutes before 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.



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## Campaign Launch Party

Having a launch party on the first night of voting can be a good idea. Invite your friends, their friends and get people along to celebrate the launch of your campaign.



# Where to Campaign

## 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

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

## 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 new Medical School. 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 Election Rules Document)

## DO...

Do try to talk to as many students as possible

Do enjoy it as much as possible

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!

## 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. There is a limit of £40 after all.

Don't overwork yourself and your campaign team. You might not need as many people as you normally would. Campaigning online won't be so labour intensive

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 use any physical campaigning materials unless you are using them to create an online video or campaigning tool

Don't use any rubber ducks or SU logos in any of your campaigning materials

Don't leave things to the last minute

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FOR ALL THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ON  
CAMPAIGNING PLEASE SEE THE ELECTION RULES DOCUMENT  
IN THE ELECTIONS CANDIDATE INFORMATION HUB AT  
<http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub/>