

**STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS**

# **WELLBEING GUIDE**

## **LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS 2022**





# WELCOME TO VOTING WEEK 2022

Standing for an elected position is an exciting and rewarding experience. You'll have the opportunity to connect with other students and discuss real issues that impact students on a daily basis, while putting forward your own ideas for change at Worcester Students' Union.

That said, running in an election can be tiring and difficult at times. It's therefore really important to regularly check in with your mental health and overall wellbeing regularly. By looking after yourself you'll be helping to make sure you are a healthier and stronger candidate and campaigner.

The Students' Union are here to help you throughout your time as a candidate so please don't hesitate to get in touch with Tim, Jack, Helen, Sophie or any of the current Full Time Officers at any time during the process.

In this guide you'll find our top wellbeing tips to keep in mind during campaigning, along with some advice from previous candidates who have been through the process and wanted to share their top tips with you.



## A message from Liam

“Hi everyone! Elections can be stressful, tiring but also incredibly rewarding. Here are my top tips for looking after yourself during elections:

- **Read this booklet!!** - It's full of really important tips to support your wellbeing – make sure you read it and look back on it if you feel a bit overwhelmed.
- **Enjoy the process** – you will never get a chance to do something as unique again (unless you rerun of course). Take a moment each day to celebrate what's gone well as well as looking at where you want to do better – balance is key!
- **Positivity wins** - At Worcester we pride ourselves on our elections being a positive and enjoyable experience – make sure you add to this by being supportive of other candidates and the elections process in general, it can really help with your own mood and confidence.

If you have any problems or are feeling a bit overwhelmed- please come and talk to us at the SU. We're here for you throughout the process and want to support you every step of the way.

Regardless of the result, the elections is a fantastic thing to put on your CV, develop new skills and a great story to tell at the dinner table in years to come. You've done a fantastic job in standing as a candidate – and will raise much needed awareness of the issues and ideas raised in your manifestos - so enjoy the process and look after yourself whilst doing so!



# TAKE A BREAK

## Take some time out

Although aiming to reach every student with your campaign is an admirable goal, you also need some time to yourself. Whether it's going for a run, grabbing yourself a takeaway coffee, doing a puzzle or just having a nap, taking a break is important and will hopefully increase your energy making you an effective campaigner. Don't feel guilty about taking a break, think of it as taking some time to revitalise and then when you are ready you can get back to campaigning for those all-important votes.

## That includes screen breaks too...!

A lot of us are already experiencing virtual fatigue, with our brains working harder to distinguish how everyone is responding and reacting. Sitting in one spot for hours on end isn't healthy for your mind or your body so do make sure you are regularly standing up and moving around throughout the day. Make sure you get up and stretch, open a window and remember- don't automatically reach for your phone when taking a break from your laptop!

## Stay motivated with a change of scenery

Heading outside for some fresh air is a great way to reduce stress and combat that 'erugh' feeling. Even if it is just a quick 10 minute walking in the morning or afternoon to help boost those endorphins!

If you are campaigning from your laptop, iPad or phone try moving around the house and having a change of scenery from time to time.



# THE ESSENTIALS



## Healthy body, healthy mind

It's easy to forget all of the little things when you are in the middle of campaigning, like eating well, sleeping well and getting some light exercise. However, these are all important tools to maximise your vote and are absolutely crucial for being an effective campaigner.

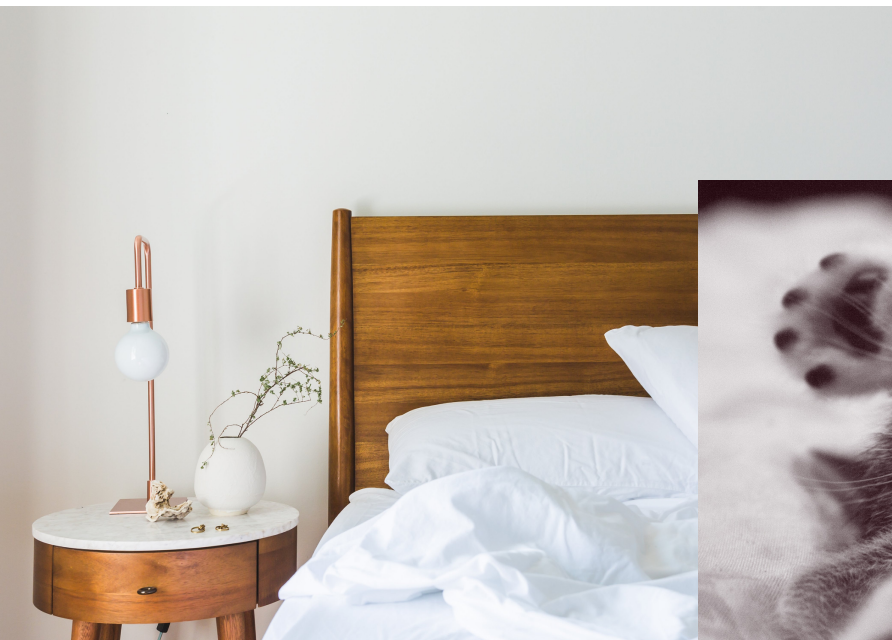
## Eat well and stay hydrated

Eating well can help combat fatigue, and eating at regular intervals can help you to sustain energy levels. Keeping a healthy diet with plenty of fruit and veg is important if you can. Why not try and sit down for a few minutes to relax while you eat, and to use the time to take a screen break away from your devices instead of eating on the go! Stay hydrated by keeping a water bottle with you throughout the day that you can sip on regularly and refill when you need too.





# THE ESSENTIALS



## Sleep, sleep and more sleep!

Sleep is critical to physical and mental health and effective functioning of the immune system. It is also key to supporting emotional wellness and wellbeing. It's really important to try and establish a day and night routine that works for you. You will have your routine which works for you, but please make sure you are getting enough sleep.

Writing 'to do' lists for the following day can organise your thoughts and clear your mind of any distractions you might have before going to bed. You might also like to try some relaxation exercises, such as light yoga stretches, drinking some herbal tea, reading a book or listening to an app designed to help you fall asleep. There are even some playlists on Spotify that are designed with music and noises that help you fall asleep if you are struggling.



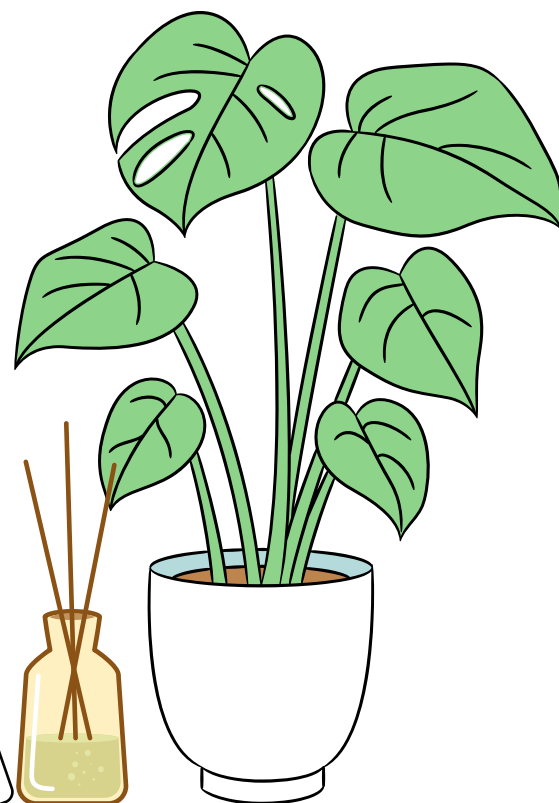
# ORGANISE YOUR SPACE AND TIME

## Draw workspace/relaxation boundaries

Wherever possible, when you are campaigning try to find a space that is separated away from the one you would normally relax in. We know this isn't always practical, but working from your bed can lower your focus as you sub-consciously associate where you are with rest. It can also have a negative effect on your sleep because your brain will struggle to switch off as it becomes more accustomed to your bed being an active workspace. It might be worth speaking to the people who you live with, whether that be your friends or family, about using an area in the kitchen or seeing if you are able to use a shared study space. If you do have a desk in your room make sure it is set up effectively and try to keep the space nice and organised. A clear and organised workspace can really help with motivation. If you are able to, then you should consider setting up by a window or perhaps adding a house plant somewhere within view.

## Organising your time can prevent overwhelm

Consider using a weekly planner to plan out your campaign week and help manage your time, map out your days, and make sure you are scheduling those all important regular rest breaks too! Try and plan something nice to do in the evenings to relax and make sure you dedicate some planned time for self-care. Don't try and cram too much into your days and as the week goes on we would recommend you prioritise just a little bit of time to focus on your wellbeing and not just votes.



# ORGANISE YOUR SPACE AND TIME

## Try to balance campaigning with your other commitments

Try to keep up with your studies as much as possible- running in the election should not be an excuse to miss your lectures! If you are worried about time then some candidates put some of their other commitments on pause for a week while they are campaigning for votes as it helps free up some of their time. Having said that some candidates like keeping their normal routine to take their mind off campaigning for a couple of hours. It really is all about finding a balance that works for you!



### Neve's Top Tip

Make sure you have a cut off point. It's so easy to be glued to your phone during elections. Give yourself and your campaign team a set time in the evening when you can all switch off.

### Liam's Top Tip

This seems easier said than done but make sure that you are looking after yourself - It is really easy to work from morning until night without realising - Try to switch off when you can and lean on your friends when you need. Also, bond with the other candidates - You never know, these people might become your best friends and officer team.



### Rag's Top Tip

Make sure to plan your campaign team in advance and strategically, some of your closest friends may have some skills that you don't necessarily possess that could really help with your success in the campaign.





# BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

## Selfcare

Selfcare is so important during Voting Week and can take many different forms, a few of which we have outlined already: taking breaks, eating well, getting enough sleep, getting some fresh air - these are all forms of selfcare. Be kind to yourself during the election weeks and remember to organise something nice for yourself when you're not campaigning.

## Try not to compare yourself to others

It can be really tempting to compare yourself to the other candidates throughout the week, but just remember everyone will have their own ways of campaigning and no one way will be better than another by default. We want the election process to be a positive experience for everyone running, so remember to be kind to each other and keep the focus on your own campaign and messages.

## Mindfulness/Meditation

Practicing mindfulness, meditation or even just taking some time out to focus on your breathing and centre yourself can boost your mental wellbeing. Search 'guided meditation' on YouTube for some great videos, or there are plenty of mindfulness apps available from the App Store or Google Play.





STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS  
Don't DUCK out of democracy



# BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK

## Find what works for you

Campaign in a way that works for you, find your rhythm and get to know your strengths, and your limits. Having a strong support network around you while campaigning can be a great encouragement. Whether it be people to talk to about how it is going, or your campaign team around you offering you their help and support, having those key friends will ensure you stay strong during elections.

## Ask for a helping hand

If you live with others, then you can consider asking housemates or family members if they are able to help you cook dinner one night, or schedule in a coffee break with them in order to help you stick to your scheduled break plan. Make sure you let your support network know the date and time of the Election Results too, and maybe ask a friend if they can be with you (even if it is virtually) to do something nice, regardless of the result.

## Virtual 'hello's' can help too

If you're not as close to those who you live with, or if you live alone, you can still build a virtual support network. Facetiming a friend, or even a family pet, is a great way to de-stress and feel supported. Consider asking people to check in on you throughout the campaign period and drop you a message to see how you're doing. Candidates often make friends with other candidates during the elections as you are all in the same position so you can all motivate each other!



# IF THINGS GET TOO MUCH

## Elections Support

We want the whole process of the elections to be a fun and enjoyable one, but we do know that it can also be incredibly stressful. If you need any support with any of the election processes or anything related to the elections then please don't hesitate to contact Tim (t.hewesbelton@worc.ac.uk) or Jack (jack.moore@worc.ac.uk) for some help.

## SU Contacts

We strongly recommend that you download the MS Teams app onto your phone. As an elections team we have set up our own '2022 Elections Candidate Team' so you can communicate with all of the other candidates. You will also be able to use the Teams App to contact members of the SU Elections Team. All of the SU Elections Team will be available to contact on MS Teams from 9-5 (Monday to Friday) during the whole elections process. Please do bear in mind we will still be having some meetings throughout this period but we have done our best to keep this to a minimum.

## Student Services

If feel you need any professional support then you are more than welcome to contact any of the Student Services departments at <https://www2.worc.ac.uk/student-services/>.

### Top SU recommendations currently on Netflix



### Top SU recommendations currently on Amazon Prime





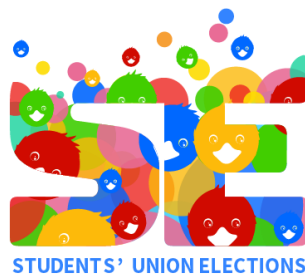
Embrace the challenge of virtual campaigning and all of the excitement that running in the Leadership Elections bring.

You already have so much to be proud of by just nominating yourself as a candidate!

If you are having a bad day, try not to let it affect how you campaign for the rest of the week. Each new day provides new opportunities

Elections can be stressful weeks, so making time for selfcare is so important!

**Happy Campaigning - you've got this!**  
**#voteworc**



With thanks to Winchester Students' Union

