

**YOUR UNION.
YOUR TURN.**

Worcester Students' Union Leadership Elections

Candidates Guide



WORCESTER
STUDENTS' UNION

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WELCOME ADDRESS FROM THE INTERIM CEOs

Hi,

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for expressing an interest in the Leadership Elections here at Worcester Students' Union.

But first, you need to get elected... You are enthusiastic, passionate individuals, driven to enhance the student experience; as Officers you will ensure that we remain student-led and achieve our main goals for students:

- Encouraging and supporting students to prioritise their wellbeing
- Understanding students' financial realities and reflecting that in what we do
- Empowering students to have their say
- Making sure our diverse student body is represented
- Building connected student communities where students feel they belong

Further information about what this means in practice can be found on page 5.

As exciting as the elections are, they can also be challenging; Worcester SU is here to support you over this period, inspiring you to be the best you can be.

This Guide provides important information about our elections including key dates, contacts and the rules, as well as additional support such as the compulsory Candidates' training. We hope that this answers any questions you might have but feel free to speak to the Student Engagement Team or us should you need further assistance.

We wish you all the very best of luck.



Rob Cox
Interim Chief Executive: Finance and Operations



Colina Wright
Interim Chief Executive: Membership Services

Worcester Students' Union

WELCOME ADDRESS FROM THE DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER



Hi,

My name is Val Yates, and I'm delighted to be the Deputy Returning Officer for Worcester Students' Union. The Returning Officer for these elections is Peter Robertson, the Director at NUS Charity.

Firstly, the serious bit... The roles of myself and the Returning Officer are extremely important. Collectively we ensure that the elections are conducted in a free and fair manner. This means that should you, another candidate or any student express a concern or complaint in relation to any aspect of the election process we are on hand to investigate this. This can be directly or through the Election Officials, individuals chosen to support these elections.

At times Peter or I may be required to make rulings based on activities as and when they take place, some of which aren't too popular. Should this be the case, all candidates will be notified via email (although not necessarily informed of the reason behind our decision). It is therefore really important that you read this Guide carefully to prevent yourself from conducting your election campaign in an unsuitable manner. Please feel free to ask any questions to either myself or Liv Williams or Colina Wright, the Election Officials, our contact details can be found on page 24 or at <https://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/>

Now... I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in these elections. Being involved in the Students' Union as an elected representative can present a mixture of emotions; it's exciting and challenging as well as being quite daunting initially. The skills and experiences gained during your time in office are unique, you're given a direct role in the management and development of your Union, an experience generally gained in later life. These skills can be transferred to all walks of life so if considering your next step, this is certainly an opportunity worth thinking about.

The Students' Union offers a safe and supportive environment to learn and to develop personally. There is a lot of support for our Officers including the current Officer team, the dedicated Union staff, the National Union of Students (the national body representing university and colleges students across the UK), WonkHE (an organisation involved in the UK higher education debate) and other Officers across the country.

The Guide has been put together to (hopefully) answer any questions you have about the whole election process, from how to apply to explaining the voting system.

We're here to ensure that the election process is fair but also enjoyable for all involved.

I wish you all the best in these elections.

Val Yates
Deputy Returning Officer
2026-2027

WHAT IS WORCESTER STUDENTS' UNION (SU)?

Worcester Students' Union (SU) is an independent charity led by our members, you. We are also a unincorporated charity, governed by a Board of Trustees, which is made up of 3 Officer Trustees, up to 4 Student Trustees and up to 4 External Trustees. The Board delegate the day-to-day management of the Union to the CEO.

Worcester SU has a turnover of around £1m, employs around 15 staff including student staff and represents 11,000 students.

Our vision is "**Delivering excellence, uniting diversity and enriching student lives**"

As indicated in the Interim CEO's address, Worcester SU's main goals for students:

Encouraging and supporting students to prioritise their wellbeing

- We will be proactive in finding out what is worrying or concerning our students, without overburdening them.
- We will support students to access help and advice.
- We will facilitate extra-curricular opportunities that enhance students wellbeing.

Understanding students' financial realities and reflecting that in what we do

- We will keep the cost to students of getting involved with our activities and services to a minimum wherever and however we can.
- We will support students in their efforts towards employability and make it clear how getting involved with the SU develops them as people and as leaders
- We will work with the University to ensure value for money across their services and facilities.

Empowering students to have their say

- We will support students to engage in things that affect them and wider society.
- We will go out to where students are and not wait for them to come to us, being present and listening to their experiences.
- We will emphasise our independence from the University, ensuring we challenge them based on our students' feedback and experiences, whilst continually demonstrating to our students how and where we will represent them.

Making sure our diverse student body is represented

- We will understand and learn about the diversity of our students so we can support and represent them.
- We will ensure Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is central to all we do, working to an informed action plan each year and keeping our members updated
- We will deliver activities and events that are accessible and that appeal to different students.

Building connected student communities where students feel they belong

- We will be highly visible to our student body and be a 'home from home' through physical and online spaces.

- We will help and enable students to build communities that benefit them and their University experience.
- We will provide environments for students to have positive interactions with each other and learn new things.

Our values are:

- being bold
- honest communication
- keeping it simple
- developing people
- representative
- inclusive and accessible

Worcester SU has four broad areas: firstly, representation. We exist to represent the student body. We do this through the Executive Officers and Department Reps. The Executive Officers represent the student body at the most senior level, including sitting on the University Board of Governors, the highest governing body of the institution. The Executive Officers also run a series of campaigns, educating students on issues affecting them.

Secondly, there's the Help and Advice. This service provides a free, confidential and independent advice centre to students. It deals with a wide variety of issues, including academic offences, accommodation and student finance.

Thirdly, the student experience. This includes the sports, societies, volunteering, in fact all the things outside of the lecture theatre that make being a student so enjoyable. Worcester SU provides many ways for students to participate in, to enhance their student experience. The Union organises many events for students to get involved in, including the Varsity matches, etc.

Fourthly, our commercial services include the Hangar and student-led events. Whilst these exist to be commercially successful, they play a key part in the student life, including the Freshers' Fair, but most obviously through providing a friendly place for students to enjoy their time at University.

The Constitution and our byelaws are our governing documents, outlining how we operate. Officers should be strategic, meaning they will be asked to contribute to discussions about operational matters but will not engage in day-to-day practicalities, essentially don't run for election if you want to run or manage our commercial operations.

How does student representation work at the University of Worcester and Worcester Students' Union

The University of Worcester:

The general student population	There are 11,000 students at the University of Worcester including distance and online learners.
Course Reps	From the general student population, there are a number of Course Reps per course. These students are elected by the peers to represent students' learning and teaching issues at course level. These elections take place within

	the first few lectures of the term. This process is undertaken by the University
Department Reps	<p>These speak on behalf of students and influence decision-making at department and University level, and provide feedback to fellow Reps and students.</p> <p>They collaborate with Course Reps to consult students within their departments.</p> <p>They connect with academic societies in the departments to gather student opinion and ensure students' expectations are met in all areas.</p> <p>They work closely with the Vice President Education to review and suggest policy that is beneficial for all students via Education Council</p>
University committees	<p>There are a number of University committees that Officers will attend including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Board • Academic Representation Oversight Group • EDI Oversight Group • Sustainability Oversight Group • Finance and development committee • Campus Experience Group • Sports Development Board
University Board of Governors	<p>The University Board of Governors is the University's governing body. It is committed to upholding the highest standards of corporate governance and has a responsibility to promote the University's wellbeing and to ensure its sustainability. Its specific responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • corporate strategy, plans and budgets • corporate policy and major business decisions • establishing the framework for governance and management • monitoring institutional and executive performance <p>All the Executive Officers sit on this committee</p>

Worcester Students' Union:

Executive Officers	<p>Worcester SU is led by three full-time student Executive Officers. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • Vice President Education • Vice President Student Activities
Student Council	<p>Student Council is the highest-level decision-making body within the Students' Union.</p> <p>Student Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives and approves reports or updates from the Executive Committee, Education Council, Student Activities Council and Welfare and Inclusion Council; these are sub-committees of Student Council • Receives reports for information and discussion from the joint Students' Union/University of Worcester Academic Representation Oversight Group. • Ensures that the Officer Trustees remain accountable to our members, scrutinising and approving Officers' reports. • Considers new affiliations of the Union to be taken to the Union's Annual General Meeting (AGM); • Approves the joint Students' Union and University of Worcester Student Charter • Approves Honorary Life Membership (subject to approval by the Trustee Board). • Approves the Officer's annual objectives
The Trustee Board	<p>The Trustee Board is made up of the Executive Committee, up to 4 appointed Student Trustees and up to 4 externally appointed Trustees.</p> <p>Student Trustees are current students, undertaking the role for 2 years.</p> <p><i>We currently have a Student Trustee vacancy; for further information please contact studentsunion@worc.ac.uk</i></p> <p>Trustees take overall responsibility for the work that the organisation undertakes. They will focus the strategic direction of the organisation, ensuring that the Union creates and implements strategies that meet the objectives of the charity. Trustees will also agree plans and budgets and will hold the Chief Executive Officer to account for the delivery of the plans.</p>

What are the leadership elections?

Every year Worcester SU hold an election process to identify and elect WSU's future student leaders. During this process we empower you as candidates to develop your leadership and campaigning skills, giving you an opportunity to be empowered, have your voice heard and make a difference.

By choosing to stand in the elections, you will receive the support and training needed to lead an effective campaign. You will be encouraged to think about how you present yourself to students to encourage them to vote for you. If you are successful, you will become one of the Executive Officers at WSU, which is a one-year, full time role, and a Trustee of the Union. This is a paid position; last year's salary was £24,290, this is subject to a cost-of-living increase, which is still to be determined. As previously stated, successful candidates will undergo an induction process which should enable you to execute the role to the best of your ability.

A note for international students / postgraduate students

As this is a full-time role, there is an expectation for you to work full time as quickly as possible following your appointment which is likely to have visa implications. This might require you to complete and submit your dissertation earlier than anticipated.

Should you require support for your visa process, please contact us at your earliest opportunity.

OFFICER ROLES

- President
- Vice President Education
- Vice President Student Activities

The collective duties of the Student Executive are:

- To be Trustees in the capacity of Officer Trustees on the Board of Trustees (subject to the terms of the Constitution).
- To campaign and consult members on their views and speak on their behalf.
- To promote, defend and extend the rights of members.
- To interpret, implement and uphold Union policy.
- To be responsible for, and accountable to, the Student Executive as a whole.
- To ensure Union members are kept up to date on the actions of the Executive.
- To fulfil their roles as outlined in the portfolio descriptions and to support, where appropriate, other student representatives in the fulfilment of their roles.
- To liaise with external organisations, appropriate to individual roles.
- To steer the strategies and policies of Worcester Students' Union ensuring the Union works for students.
- To act as the spokespersons for the Union.

In addition, the individual role descriptions are as follows:

President

The President should:

- Be the lead Officer on all matters relating to governance and finance at Worcester Students' Union
- Develop and maintain relationships with various stakeholders, including but not limited to the University, the local community, NUS and WokHE
- Support wellbeing campaigns and initiatives including the Community Cupboard, Breakfast with the SU and Kitchen Korner
- Be the lead Officer on sustainability and EDI within the Union
- Be the lead Officer on supporting and empowering Networks
- Chair the Trustee Board and the Welfare and Inclusion Council

What has this role achieved over the years...

- Created cost of living initiatives: Breakfast with the SU, Community cupboard and Kitchen Korner
- Fought for access to learning funds for international students
- Increased network participation over the years
- Involved in national campaigns with NUS and relevant organisations
- Widened participation for underrepresented groups of students through events and the Welfare and Inclusion Council



This year's President is Ronke Akintan; if you would like to speak to her about the role, please contact her on **ronke.akintan@worc.ac.uk**

Vice President Education

The Vice President Education should:

- Be the lead Officer on all matters relating to education at the University of Worcester and Worcester Students' Union
- Support the academic representation system, empowering students to shape how the University works in partnership with academic colleagues
- Represent students to the University and work with other representatives to make sure that education at the University of Worcester is shaped by students and meets their expectations
- Co-chairs the Academic Representation Oversight Group (AROG) with the Deputy Vice Chancellor
- Chairs Student Council and the Education Council

What has this role achieved over the years...

- Liaised with staff to ensure Progress Weeks are kept in the academic year
- Developed the Rep System and created new ways to receive feedback (MSL update)
- Held Student Voice Conferences for all student
- Continued to ensure that the University follows its policy to record lectures... and worked with students when informed that this has not been implemented



This year's Vice President Education is Katie Costis; if you would like to speak to them about the role, please contact k.costis@worc.ac.uk

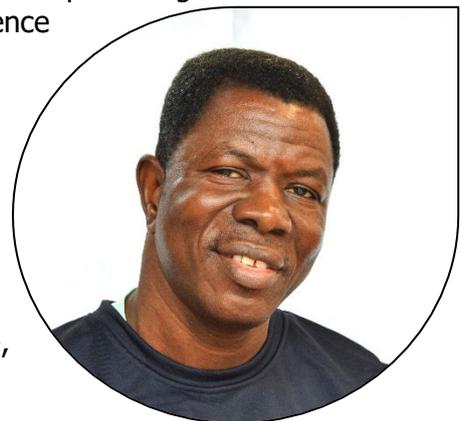
Vice President Student Activities

The Vice President Student Activities should:

- Be the lead Officer for clubs and societies, ensuring that these are relevant to students and helping students to feel happy, healthy and develop as people
- Ensure sports and co-curricular activities are well supported to meet the needs of students
- Represent the Union in sport and activities-related activities and events, such as the Union Awards (Societies and Volunteering), Varsity and the Colours Ball (Sport)
- Ensure that members have access to developmental opportunities
- Chair the Activities Council
- Attend the Union's Health and Safety Committee
- Attend the University's Sports Development Board

What has this role achieved over the years...

- Overseen a significant increase in sports club membership and registrations
- Continued to support charity fundraising in the absence of Raise and Give
- Worked with various University departments to increase opportunities for students to participate in sports teams and societies
- Provided a safe for students that do not go home for Christmas to come together and celebrate



This year's Vice President Student Activities is Olayemi Ogunleye; if you would like to speak to them about the role, please contact o.ogunleye@worc.ac.uk

WHAT IS A TRUSTEE?

Our successfully elected Officers will automatically become Trustees of Worcester Students' Union.

Trustees will take overall responsibility for the work that the organisation undertakes. They will focus the strategic direction of the organisation, ensuring that the Union creates and implements strategies that meet the objectives of the charity. Trustees will also agree plans and budgets and will hold the Chief Executive Officer to account for the delivery of the plans.

Trustees will be legally responsible for ensuring that the Union operates to standards set by parliament and the Charity Commission. In addition, the Union aspires to operate to good or best practice standards in these areas.

This might seem a bit overwhelming however training will be provided.

Before you submit your nomination, please be aware that there are criteria set out by the Charity Commission which prevents anyone undertaking the role of Trustee. These are:

- **If you have unspent convictions for offences of dishonesty or deception** (an offence of dishonesty or deception is one where dishonesty or deception must be proved for someone to be convicted. It doesn't just mean dishonesty or deception was involved in committing the offence). The same goes for attempting, aiding or abetting (encouraging or assisting someone to commit) these offences. Theft is a good example: dishonesty must be proven for a defendant to be found guilty.
- **If you have previously been removed as a trustee, charity officer, agent or employee, by the Commission or the High Court** due to misconduct or mismanagement (or the Scottish equivalents).
- **If you are currently declared bankrupt or subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order**
- **If you are subject to a debt relief order, a debt relief restrictions order or interim order**
- **If you are disqualified from being a company director.**

Please speak to someone in confidence if you would like to discuss this.

SO, I THINK I'M INTERESTED, WHAT NEXT?

If you wish to stand for any of the positions you will be required to read this guide, making a note of any questions you have, and:

- **Submit a nomination form** (this can be found online at <https://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/nominate/>)
- **Attend an optional "So you want to lead Worcester Students' Union" session.**
- **Attend the compulsory Candidate training on Monday 2 March 2pm – 4pm or Tuesday 3 March 10am – 12pm** (if you are unable to attend either session, please contact suelections@worc.ac.uk at your earliest convenience, failure to do so or attend the compulsory session would mean you would be withdrawn from the elections)

HOW DO THE ELECTIONS WORK?

The Candidates' Training will go into great detail about the elections process including guidance on how to present yourself as a candidate, clarifying our marketing and social media position, how to write your campaign statement and campaigning, the rules, how the votes are counted, etc however the following is a useful starting point...

The role of the Returning Officer

These elections are overseen by an externally appointed Returning Officer. They are responsible for the good conduct and administration and has the sole interpretation of the election regulations as such interpretations cannot be subject to challenge in any meetings of the Union.

The Returning Officer may appoint a Deputy Returning Officer and Election Officials to assist in the conduct of the elections. The contact details for them can be found on page 24.

The sanctions of the Returning Officer or their nominee are outlined under the election's complaints on page 22.

For transparency, anonymised complaints will be shared with candidates however the sanctions will remain confidential; this is to ensure that all candidates are up to date with the interpretation of the regulations to prevent continuing with behaviours considered to be inappropriate.

Running individually or as a collective

You can decide whether you want to run as a standalone candidate or as a slate, where two or more candidates that run for different positions within the same election based on a common platform or shared / similar goals or vision. It is completely up to you however as with a campaign team, you are responsible for the actions of anyone associated with your campaign so should there be a complaint against one member of the slate, the whole slate could be penalised collectively.

Slates will need to be declared as quickly as possible, this can be communicated in advance of the nominations closing, which could be indicated through publicity, or may form organically from conversations with different candidates after they become known to each other; this may take the form of distributing others' resources or verbally encouraging voters to vote for candidates in other positions. This must be confirmed throughout the election process, and the Election Officials may ask you to determine the status of your campaign if it is felt to be operating as a slate.

Campaigning

Campaigning is vital, not only will it gain you the votes you require to get elected, but the greater number of votes, the greater influence you will be able to wield in your time in office.

Remember you cannot campaign until Thursday 5 March but bear in mind students won't be able to vote until Monday 9 March at midday. You can use this time to display your publicity or emails clubs and societies asking whether you can attend their social events to gain their support.

By submitting a nomination, candidates consent to be photographed and filmed during the elections process and for these images and videos to be used to promote current and future elections.

It is advantageous to get yourself a good campaign team but remember that you are responsible for their conduct:

- Get as many people as you can who are reliable and prepared to give up their time for you. Provide the names and contact details for your campaigns team as soon as possible. Nominate a deputy who Election Officials can communicate with if they are unable to reach you.
- You should also consider maximising the strengths of members of your campaigns team; ideally select people with a variety of personalities to help get your campaign message across to more students: Use people from different courses and / or those who are involved in a wide range of activities.
- You or members of your campaigns team may speak in lectures with the prior consent of the lecturer.

Good practice for working with your campaign team:

- Allocate areas of responsibility and ask them to commit to times when they will work for you.
- Get them to learn a campaigning line that they can repeat to potential voters.
- Encourage them to 'engage' with voters. There is nothing more pointless than campaigners who just give potential voters your flyer and walk away. It invariably does not get you the vote and can turn people against you.
- **Make sure they have an understanding of the rules, as you are responsible for their conduct and can be penalised if they break them – they can attend the training if they would like**
- Encourage them to re-use election material (your key statement / messages and other publicity).
- Try to ensure that their spirits are kept up throughout the day(s).
- Try to allocate a central point (base) where your election material is kept and to where they can return at any point for more instructions throughout the day(s) of the election.
- ***Remember it is important to keep them interested and motivated during this often mentally and physically challenging time. Think about what they like and give them tasks / challenges that they enjoy doing!***

Innovation, Innovation, Innovation

There may be lots of candidates campaigning, this should not deter you... There may be hundreds of applicants going for the same job but that doesn't mean you should want it any less or you're less qualified for the position. Think about how you stand out from the others, not just in your policies and political views but in the ways, you engage with voters.

Be as creative as you can, this can go a long way with a little foresight and research.

Budget

To retain fairness in the elections, candidates will receive a budget of £20. This is provided by the Union and will be reimbursed after the results; this cannot be supplemented and is subject to the presentation of all receipts, alcohol will not be reimbursed.

Whilst you should only do what others have had the opportunity to do, ask... if you can do it, they might be able to do it, or something similar, too – or think of alternative creative ways to promote their candidacy.

Pre-determined items

You may wish to use items you already own as part of your campaign. Whilst the cost of these items will not be reimbursed these will still need to be included as part of your expenditure; this is to ensure that all candidates remain within their £20 budget and do not create an unfair advantage using free materials.

Not all items need to be included, only items that are part of sending out a campaign message. For example, using a chair for your home to sit /stand on during your campaign will not need to be itemised, however if the chair was significantly altered to put across a campaign message (spray-painted, had "vote for me" written on it) then the chair would be considered part of your campaign.

Item	Pre-owned value as determined by the Election Team
Clothing	
T-shirt	£1
Hoodie / jumper / coat	£4
Other garments	£2
Other items	
Single bedsheet	£1
Double bedsheet	£2
Pillow case	£0.50

In the event of disputes regarding finance, Officials will determine a reasonable value to be attributed to materials purchased, borrowed or donated.

You can submit your expenses at any time however these must be received by **1pm on Thursday 12 March** so you will need to plan your expenditure in advance. This will enable us to reimburse candidates as quickly as possible but also to proceed with the count.

If in doubt, ask.

Dual positions

- You may not stand for more than one Executive Officer position

Voting system

Our elections are conducted entirely electronically. We are using our website to conduct our elections. We use a system called Single Transferable Voting (STV). This means you need to get 50% +1 of the votes to win. If a candidate does not achieve this then the candidates with the least votes are eliminated until one candidate has an absolute majority.

Students can vote in one of two ways:

- By putting a "1" in the box next to the name of the candidate they wish to elect
- By ranking the candidates in order of preference, with each preference being considered if their preferred candidate is eliminated.

This link demonstrates STV in practice, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjGd6Py2iug>; should you have any further questions, please let a member of the Election Team know.

The term "Re- Open Nomination" (also known as RON and used to mean there are no suitable candidates in your opinion) is used on the ballot papers. This essentially gives voters the opportunity to vote for the position to be re-opened as they may not agree with the intention statements of the candidates. If RON received the most votes and were duly elected, it would mean that the position was not filled.

THE ELECTION PROCESS

Nominations

In order to be eligible to stand in the elections you must be a student at The University of Worcester as defined by the University and Union regulations. These require you to be formally enrolled on a programme of study provided by the University.

Nominations must be submitted online by the close of nominations, **Friday 27 February 2026**; nominations submitted in another way will not be valid.

Campaigning

The success of the elections is dependent upon you, the candidates. It is your opportunity to successfully promote yourself and convince students to vote.

We would like to create an atmosphere where you can have a contest, which is exciting and good-natured, leading to a higher voter turnout.

We ask that candidates and their campaigns team show respect for other candidates and embrace this process as a competition; we suggest that you use other candidates' competitiveness positively, motivating you to think more creatively about your own campaign.

It is important that you read through the election regulations section carefully.

These regulations supersede any previous rules however please be mindful that these regulations do not override rules relating to the Union, the University or the law; should the Returning Officer may decide not to take action against a candidate or an activity undertaken whilst campaigning, you may still be subject to the University or Union's disciplinary procedure, which could result in revoking your student status or your membership rights. The Returning Officer also reserves the right to refer matters to the appropriate authorities, which may also put your candidacy, and possibly your student status, in jeopardy.

Whilst campaigning is not permitted until **1pm on Thursday 5 March**, the following activities are acceptable:

- Telling close friends about a prospective candidacy
- Recruiting people for campaign teams in a non-public manner (i.e. directly messaging individuals who may wish to volunteer for your campaign), provided that this is not for the purpose of covertly campaigning prior to the start of the campaign period.
- Creating election content in a public place (e.g. the library) ahead of the campaign period, provided that a reasonable person could not construe the activities as campaigning.
- Researching for a campaign/statement. Prospective candidates may contact specific students to indicate they are "considering running in the Students' Union elections" only in a manner in which it is clear that they are not canvassing for votes or intimidating others against running.

Election Officials can investigate any aspect of the election process, irrespective of receiving a complaint or concern, should they be inclined to do so.

Support from the Union

As a candidate you will be supported by a member of the Election Team throughout the process, answering any questions you may have.

You can share your thoughts and publicity with them, they can sense check campaigning resources for ease of understanding and legalities (you are not making promises you are unable to deliver in line with Board via the Constitution ... and the law!) and to ensure it contains the required information to prevent it from being removed by University Estates (assuming it is within the correct locations).

Support from the members: Endorsements and Candidates' Question Time

An endorsement is selecting and promoting a preferred candidate or candidates.

Worcester SU will circulate the role descriptions for all positions within this election to all Clubs, Societies and Academic Representation groups; this is not only to encourage nominations from these areas but to encourage those involved to consider questions that would like to ask of the candidates standing in particular positions – to general questions of any position.

We would encourage that each Club, Society or Academic Representative submits at least one question. These questions should be received by the Student Engagement Team by **Thursday 5 March by 4pm** to enable us to streamline these, removing duplications and merging similar questions. This process will involve any interested non-running Executive Officers to ensure that this remains a student-led process.

These questions will be given to the candidates at the training or circulated as soon as practically possible thereafter.

Any Club, Society, Academic Representative or student can attend and propose questions to the candidates; in the event of fairness each question should be asked of all candidates for that position(s).

Voting

The count shall be supervised by the Returning Officer or their nominee. This will only take place when the Returning Officer is satisfied that any complaints have been resolved and that all receipts and expenditure forms have been returned. The Returning Officer shall satisfy themselves that all the votes are valid.

Complaints about the count must be made in writing to the Returning Officer or their nominee no later than one working day after the announcement of the result.

Results night

Worcester SU will announce the results, subject to the resolution of any complaints, at **2pm** on **Friday 13 March** in the Hangar.

Publication of results

Election results shall be published in a timely manner after the results have been announced.

ELECTION RULES

During your election campaign you will be involved in a series of activities. It is important to remember that you are bound by some additional rules, outlined below, that, in addition to elections regulations (including Bye Law 3), still have a bearing on your conduct. Students' Union: The Students' Union's (SU) rules are contained in the Bye Laws and Members' Code of Conduct which can be found at the following link <https://www.worcsu.com/yourunion/aboutwsu/documents/>. If you are in breach of these, even if the Deputy Returning Officer does not act under the auspices of the election rules, you may still be subject to the SU's disciplinary procedures. University: The University has rules that relate to the use of its facilities and property, as well as 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 act in relation to the elections, you may still be referred to the University's disciplinary procedure by the SU, if we consider your actions warrant it. The Law: Please remember that you are always subject to 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

We have always been very proud of our candidates in our elections and of how few issues we have had to address. Worcester students are the best (in our view) and have always conducted very positive and supportive campaigns. Please do what you can to continue this tradition. As a candidate you must:

- Treat all students and staff with respect.
- Always act in the interests of a fair and transparent election.
- Take responsibility for your actions and those of your campaign team.
- Undertake campaigning in a good natured and positive manner (campaigning is NOT about saying negative things about other candidates and any campaigning of this nature will be in contravention of these principles).
- Respect the SU's core values.
- Recognise that being a Full Time Officer is a position of responsibility 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 your academic studies are not put at risk through the elections processor through taking up an officer position and be confident at the point of nomination that you are in good standing academically and are able to commit to the role for the duration of the term of office.
- Understand that the SU encourages you to communicate with your lecturers/PATs or equivalent about your intentions of running in the SU Elections. This is to ensure that running in the elections will not jeopardise your future prospects and that you can seek to arrange with your academic's reasonable support where needed. If there are concerns, we request that you speak to the SU so we can see how best to support you

in running in the Elections. We do this to ensure your interests and your studies are a priority.

Election rules

Campaigning

CAMP1. All candidates must attend a mandatory Candidate Training Day before their candidacy is confirmed. Details of this can be found in 'Elections Dates' on the website and in the Elections Guide. If you cannot attend, contact the SU Elections Team at suelections@worc.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity and we will arrange an alternative.

CAMP2. **Campaigning cannot begin until 10am on Thursday 5 March.** This includes publicly announcing that you are running. If you are unsure of what this means, please check with us.

CAMP3. Candidates can have a Campaigns team these must be current students. Candidates are responsible for the actions of their campaign team and supporters. This includes campaign activities and spending on campaign materials.

CAMP4. 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.

CAMP5. Candidates and campaigners are not permitted to interfere with another candidate's campaign materials.

CAMP6. Candidates and campaigners should respect students' personal space. For example, candidates should not disturb students who are studying in the Hive/Peirson.

CAMP7. Negative campaigning in which you attack, intimidate, or bully another candidate physically, verbally or in writing is strictly prohibited.

CAMP8. The use of coercion or bribery to obtain votes is not permitted. For example, you cannot ask people to vote for you in return for something.

CAMP9. Candidates and campaigners must seek permission from lecturers before campaigning in lectures.

CAMP10. Candidates and campaigners must seek permission from the committee before you campaign at Network, Society or Sports Club meetings or events.

CAMP11. 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

HALLS1. Candidates and campaigners are not permitted to campaign actively inside Halls, although campaigning outside is permitted.

HALLS2. If candidates and campaigners wish to place materials in halls, you must seek permission from Accommodation Services and should only place posters on noticeboards.

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

SLATE1. Candidates are permitted to form "slates" but, in doing so, are jointly responsible for any breaches of these rules. If ANY member of the slate, or their campaign team breaks the rules the Deputy Returning Officer will sanction all members

SLATE2. Candidates running in a slate need to make this clear to the students voting for you and have joint campaigning materials.

Social Media/Websites

SOC1. Candidates may post in social media groups/group chats including networks, societies, and sports clubs. Be aware that if these groups allow you to post messages, they will be required to allow all candidates to do the same.

SOC2. Candidates and campaigners cannot post on official SU or University pages (apart from dedicated candidate social media takeover opportunities). Candidates can post on Blackboard if they have been given permission from the academic school.

SOC3. Candidates may have their own social media accounts or websites for their campaign. These can be set up before campaigning begins but you should not promote them in any way until 10am on Thursday 5 March.

SOC4. Candidates must not spam or be offensive to students as part of any online campaigning.

SOC5. Candidates should not post to mailing lists or closed groups to which all other candidates are not able to request access.

SOC6. Candidates must not post from club, society, network, Officer, Department Rep or Course Rep accounts but may post to these groups from personal accounts if all candidates are allowed to post.

Networks, Societies, and Sports Clubs

NET1. In the interest of fairness, networks, 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 (online / in-person) meetings/events or sessions.

(ii) allow ALL candidates to post in their social media pages, attend their (online / in-person) meetings/events or sessions.

NET2. Failure to adhere to either (i) or (ii) above may lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked against individual members of networks, societies, or sports clubs. Student Groups can endorse any candidate; if this is done on behalf of the Group / Society, it had to be the decision of the Committee that this is the Group / Society's preferred candidate. This does not stop individual members of the Group / Society voting for an alternative candidate; it should be clear that they have the right to a personal preference if this does not align with the consensus of the Group / Society and, if queried, should be stated as their individual preference.

Campaigning materials

MAT1. Candidates **must not** incorporate the SU's or University's Colours, branding or logos on any promotional material.

MAT2. Candidates cannot use the Union's resources or those of networks, clubs and societies.

MAT3. A copy of all campaign materials must be submitted via email to suelections@worc.ac.uk before it is used either online or physically.

MAT4. No campaigning material can be used until it has been approved by the Students' Union. We will explain to you how this process will work and give you an official digital stamp that **MUST** be included within your publicity, failure to do so would mean these posters and other resources will be removed and not returned / reimbursed.

MAT5. Each candidate/slate is responsible for producing and distributing their own campaigning materials.

MAT6. 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.

MAT7. 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.

MAT8. Stickers are not permitted to be given out on campus. Candidates and campaigners can use stickers off site e.g. on a night out.

Budget

BUD1. Candidates must not exceed your budget limits, spending over your allotted budget will be subject to investigation by the Election Official which could lead to disqualification.

BUD2. The Budget for Full-time Officer elections is £20. The Union will reimburse all approved expenditure up to a value of £20.

BUD3. Candidates should complete their Budget Form as they spend money and if they wish can bring it to be checked at daily debriefing meetings. A final budget sheet should be submitted by 1pm, Thursday 12 March to suelections@worc.ac.uk, or handed into a member of Union staff or the Elections staff team.

BUD4. Failure to hand in the budget sheet by the deadline will result in no money being reimbursed and may lead to actions taken by the Deputy Returning Officer which may include disqualification.

BUD5. You must keep a record of the costs of your campaigning materials and be able to present receipts and evidence of expenditure. This can be screenshots of expenditure online.

BUD6. Candidates can use any item that anyone could reasonably get for free.

BUD7. Any pre-owned materials count towards a candidate's campaign budget. These are outlined on page 15 in the Candidates' Guide.

BUD8. Candidates should only do what other candidates also have the opportunity to do. This means that any 'sponsorship' or 'favours' have to be reflected in your costs. e.g. getting a family friend who owns their own business to print your t-shirts for free would not be allowed however assigning a cost price as agreed in advance with the Elections Team within your expenditure would be permitted; this shows transparency and encourages effective campaigning. For further clarification please speak to the Elections team.

BUD9. Candidates can purchase boosts for posts on social media from their budget and this will be charged at the cost applied to that candidate by the social media provider. You will need to provide screenshots or e-receipts of any charges as evidence.

Voting

VOTE1. Candidates and campaigners must allow voters to cast their vote freely and must not communicate with voters in any way once they have begun to complete their voting.

VOTE2. Approaching students (face to face or virtually) and requesting or seeking, by whatever means, personal information required to cast a vote is strictly prohibited.

VOTE3. 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. Candidates and campaigners perceived to be taking another person's device to encourage or help others to cast votes e.g. laptops, iPads, smartphones is prohibited. You cannot help a student to vote and must direct them to the SU website or a polling booth.

PENALTIES

Breaching the SU's election regulations or Bye Laws, may result in the application of penalties. The Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to impose any penalty deemed reasonable in the circumstances. As a guide and depending on the severity of the breach, candidates might:

- receive an informal verbal warning
- receive a formal written warning
- receive a campaigning ban or restriction of candidate budget
- be disqualified from the elections

As mentioned above, further disciplinary action may be taken against any offenders under the Students' Union's Code of Conduct and the Union

It is 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. **All candidates are advised to consult with SU staff if they are uncertain about any of the election's rules and regulations. It's much better to ask than breach the rules!**

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Remember to focus your energies on your own campaign, not someone else's and, if you are in doubt, ask first.

However... the complaints form is available at <http://www.worcsu.com/yourvoice/elections/hub>. All completed complaint forms will be initially received by the Elections officials. Complaints will be forwarded to the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), who will respond and take action

COMP1. 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. This must set out the grounds for complaint including the name of any candidate or member of their team who is accused of breaking a rule(s).

COMP2. 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.

COMP3. Complaints should be raised as soon as possible. Complaints about incidents over the weekend will be dealt with on Monday morning.

COMP4. Complaints relating to any aspect of an election other than the count must be made to the Returning Officer no later than 1 hour after the close of voting.

The Returning Officer or their nominee will investigate the complaint and provide a written report.

The Returning Officer may delay any count of an individual or multiple roles until the complaint is resolved.

COMP5. All decisions on the interpretation of the election's rules will be made by the Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer.

An appeal is designed to remedy any defects in the process rather than repeat the investigation, and therefore the only grounds that will be considered are:

- unfairness of judgement*
- the severity of the penalty, with consideration of any key extenuating circumstances*
- new evidence coming to light that was not available at the time of the original investigation material procedural irregularities*

COMP6. 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.

COMP7. The appeal must be made in writing to the Union stating the desired outcome and the grounds for appeal

The SU reserves the right to add any additional rules the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer deem necessary, during the elections period; these will

be communicated in a timely manner to any individuals involved within the elections.

ELECTION TIMELINE

Nominations	<p>10am, Monday 8 December – 2pm, Friday 27 February</p> <p>During this time students will be encouraged to “recommend a friend”, someone you think you make an amazing Officer. We will reach out and let them know that someone thinks they would be amazing for one of our roles. Your nomination can be anonymous, or we can let you know who recommended them.</p> <p>We will also be scheduling optional introductory “So you want to lead Worcester SU”, providing an overview of each of roles.</p> <p>If you are interested in attending, please email olivia.williams2@worc.ac.uk and we will confirm the details.</p>
Candidates’ training	<p>2 – 4, Monday 2 March 10 – 12, Tuesday 3 March Locations are to be confirmed</p> <p>Attendance at this is compulsory</p>
Candidates’ campaign launch	10am, Thursday 5 March
Candidates Question Time	10am, Monday 9 March
Voting	Midday, Monday 9 March – 4pm, Thursday 12 March
Submission of expenditure	Candidates should submit all receipts by 1pm on Thursday 12 March ; this is to provide sufficient time to reimburse candidates as soon as practically possible
Candidate activity and debrief	To be confirmed, potentially Thursday after voting has closed
Results night	2pm, Friday 13 March, The Hangar <i>This is subject to the resolution of complaints</i>

CONTACTS

Who	Email	Contact about
Olivia Williams, Colina Wright Election Official	olivia.williams2@worc.ac.uk, wric5@affiliate.worc.ac.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing questions or support throughout the elections
Val Yates	v.yates@worc.ac.uk	

Deputy Returning Officer		process Procedural issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is acceptable campaigning • Concerns • Complaints • Anything else not mentioned
Peter Robertson Returning Officer	Contact via Val	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Liv / Colina or Val are unavailable

As a general rule:

Liv / Colina are the most appropriate person to contact prior to handing in your nomination form.

Liv / Colina and / or **Val** are the most appropriate once you have handed in your nomination form and or if you have any questions / complaints about the procedure or behaviour of any candidate or representative.

Peter is involved at key points such as counting of the votes; he will also be involved if the Deputy Returning Officer needs to get a ruling on a matter.

Further support

We look forward to meeting you and wish you every success with your campaign. If you have any questions relating to the election process, please email Liv on **olivia.williams2@worc.ac.uk**.

We wish you all the very best of luck