

EXECUTIVE AND PART-TIME OFFICER ELECTIONS 2024

RULES AND REGULATIONS

This document is available on request in different formats including Braille, audio, larger font or any colour.

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The Six Key Rules

1. Abide by University Regulations, Union Byelaws and the Law, in particular any reports of Racism within the election will be treated extremely seriously.
2. Keep within your budget (*£80 for Executive Officers and £40 for Part Time Officers) – please note that you will be required to submit receipts for any item/material that you use, if you already own the item then please ask us to make a costing before 1 pm on Thursday 14th March. If you exceed your budget, you are likely to be disqualified from the election process.
 - Please note that the budget allocated is subject to change, as it is dependent on how many candidates run in the election. Budgets will be confirmed at the Candidates Meeting
3. Any reports from students that they felt as though they were **pressured to vote against their true intentions** will be treated extremely seriously; it is also not permitted to vote on someone else's behalf. You have to be particularly careful in this respect when students are using electronic devices ensuring that students are able to complete their vote without undue pressure.
4. Campaigning begins on Friday 8th March at 10.00am, any campaigning activity that falls within the scope of pre-campaigning as defined in **appendix A is prohibited prior to this time at all locations.**
5. All candidates will be expected to attend either an in person or online election briefing. Where academic or mitigating circumstances prevent attendance at the briefing, opportunities will be provided for a one to one or small group briefing to take place. Failure to attend an Election Briefing prior to the beginning of campaigning will result in disqualification from the election.
6. All members of your campaign team must be current registered students at the University of Leicester or sabbatical officers who are rerunning, or have not declared an interest in the elections. All candidates must send a list of their campaign team with their student IDs and update this when appropriate. The campaign team consist of students who have knowingly been recruited to perform tasks to support a candidate's campaign, which may include: leafletting, reaching out to societies, speaking to students etc.

Please note that during the course of these elections you are responsible for not only your own behaviour, but also for the behaviour of your supporter(s). Any breaches of regulations by individuals will be fully investigated by the Deputy Returning Officers and/or the Independent Returning Officer.

Additional Rules

- All Media Groups, and staff including student staff, whilst they are working, are required to be neutral. In addition, Executive Officers who haven't declared an interest in the election, or aren't re-running are required to remain neutral.
- Displaying publicity material either in Victoria Park or on University Road is against local Council rules.
- No campaigning is allowed in the Library.

- If you have used your own personal printer (or a friends), then we will charge you at Library prices, for your information the price list is included below:-
<https://uniofleicester.sharepoint.com/sites/it-for-students/SitePages/print-copy-scan.aspx#title4>

Voting System

Students are able to vote online through www.leicesterunion.com/vote

The Single Transferable Voting System (STV) is used in the election campaign; this system is recommended by the National Union of Students. It means the voter is asked to rank candidates in order of preference one being the candidate the voter would most like to win the election, two being their second preference etc... 2nd and 3rd preferences often have a crucial part to play in which candidate is elected so it is recommended that voters are encouraged to carefully consider their 2nd, 3rd, 4th choices etc...

Questions/Complaints

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any concerns informally, email su-elections@leicester.ac.uk.

Complaints must be submitted prior to one hour after the close of voting and will be investigated according to the complaints process outlined in Appendix B. Complaints must be submitted using the online form that is available at <https://www.leicesterunion.com/surveys/electioncomplaintsform/>

Where a complaint has wider implications beyond the election, then it will be referred to the relevant University, Union or external processes for investigation. The election count for a particular position cannot commence until all investigations have been completed and the IRO has made their final rulings.

You will be asked sign an online form to confirm that there you are happy with the election process so far and that from your prospective have no undisclosed outstanding issues/concerns. The deadline for submitting this form will be one hour after the close of voting.

Manifesto

For the election campaign, you will be required to provide up to a three page (one page for Part Time Officers) A4 manifesto (portrait) for the manifesto booklet, this can include a photograph. Please make sure that you focus on the key points/messages in your manifesto. The points on your manifesto will be used as key-performance indicators during your scrutiny process if you are elected. A good practice is to make your pledges into SMART goals first. You are not permitted to include details of any Endorsements e.g. names of Student Groups who have agreed to support you within the manifesto. In addition please be careful to ensure that you don't have the Union or University logo included in any of the photographs that you use within your manifesto. The manifesto booklet will be published online and your manifesto must be emailed to su-elections@le.ac.uk in PDF format before 9 am on Monday 11th March. Please note if you do not provide the manifesto in the correct format it may not appear in the Booklet, it must be in A4 portrait and be submitted in PDF format.

200 Words and Photos

For the election campaign, you have the opportunity to provide a 200 words summary of the key points that you wish to achieve should you be elected. This should be in bullet point form, and can

include a link to a page of your choice which will be formed into a booklet for the Executive Officers and included within the voting pages for all other positions.

You will be invited to attend a session with our Marketing Team where your photograph will be taken, these will be utilised within the Union marketing of the election. If you are unable to attend this then, you are required to submit two photographs that meet the following requirements:-

1. Portrait Headshot – JPEG format of a minimum size of 1MB (for Booklet – only for Executive Officer Candidates)
2. Portrait Headshot – JPEG format maximum size of 1MB (for website and voting page)

These can be submitted to su-elections@leicester.ac.uk by 9 am on Monday 4th March.

Please note that if you exceed the word count only the first 200 words will be used.

Live Q&A Session – Executive Officer Candidates

You will be given an opportunity to introduce yourself and answer a number of questions that have been submitted by Students and approved by the Deputy Returning Officer. The Q and A session is set to occur on the Tuesday 12th March from 6pm.

Use of Union and University Branding

Please note that you are not permitted to use the University's or Union logo in any of your campaigning material this includes your manifesto.

Election Courtesy/Pledge

You will be asked to sign a code of conduct that will set out the positive behaviours that will enable the election to be an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. This will include a commitment to adhere to the principals of a fair election and that you focus on your own campaign rather than that of others. It will also include guidelines on behaviour with regards to Liberation and Inclusivity.

Your Wellbeing

Running in an election is an exciting but it is usual for candidates at some stage to feel a little bit stressed or overwhelmed. To help support you during the election you have access to:

- The Students' Union Advice Service is open and are there if you wish to chat to somebody from outside the election team simply email advice@leicester.ac.uk and put Election Candidate Support in the subject. They can also make referrals to the relevant support services at the University.
- During the voting period:
 - Access to an individual staff member within the Voice Team who you can ask questions electronically or call for a face to face chat at any stage during the election. They will also contact you via email at regular intervals during the election to check on how things are going.
 - Election Lunch or Breakfast sessions held daily during the voting period, opportunity to relax, listen to updates from the election team.

- Chill Out Space with soft drinks, tea and coffee available throughout the Campaigning Period.
- Letter for your department that says that you are running in the Executive Elections.
- Members of the election team are always on hand and happy to talk/chat via teams, simply contact us through the Elections email or visit us in the reception space during voting week.

Remember it is okay to take a break, and make sure you eat regularly and get a decent night sleep.

Training Requirements

For successful candidates training will take place after the summer term has finished with handover commencing from the middle of June onwards followed by a full training programme commencing when you formally taking up the position on Monday June 3 with residential training taking place the week commencing Monday 17 June. Please note that you should be available for this training.

Appendix A –Pre-Campaigning

What constitutes as pre-campaigning?

Campaigning commences at 10.00am on Friday 8th March, prior to there is no active campaign,

What is permitted prior to 10.00am on 8th March?

- Preparing election materials including online events/sites, videos etc...
- Seeking help from friends/colleagues for your campaign, building your campaign team.
- Asking in general terms what issues are affecting students or views on ideas.
- Asking student groups for their endorsements is permitted **after the candidate list and manifestos are announced on Thursday March 7 at 3.00pm**, as long as communication is restricted to the committee members within that group.
 - If a student group has said that they will endorse you, then you are able to mention this when approaching other student groups.
 - You are **NOT** permitted to include details of the student groups that are endorsing you on your manifesto
 - Student groups are unable to publicly endorse you until the beginning of campaigning.
 - Student groups would be able to hold their hustings after 3.00pm on Thursday March 7, but couldn't then make public who they were supporting prior to the start of the campaigning period.

*What isn't permitted **before** the campaigning period?*

- Online posts on social media saying that you are re-running
- Face to face campaigning
- Encouraging students to vote for you in any way
- Your friends/supporters and Student Groups that you are a member of publicising that you are running
 - Student Groups publicly endorsing a candidate prior to campaigning starting.
- Lecture Shout-outs including at virtual classes
- Giving a speech or letting students know that you are running at an event e.g. student group online event.
- Campaigning on virtual events or nights out e.g. at O2 Academy events.
- Posters/Flyers or any election promotion material appearing in a public place

Appendix B – Complaints Process

Complaints Process

Principals

- We are aiming to elect officers in a free and fair manner.
- We are not here to give everyone an equal chance of winning, just a fair one.
- We should help candidates to engage better, where we can.

General

- If you would like to raise informal questions or queries then email su-elections@leicester.ac.uk
- All formal complaints must be submitted using the online form at <https://www.leicesterunion.com/surveys/electioncomplaintsform/>. Complaints submitted via email or in person will not be accepted.
- Complaints should state the rule/regulation that is been alleged to have been breached and include relevant evidence. It is important to note that the degree to which we are able to investigate complaints is affected by the quality of evidence submitted.
 - Examples of evidence that can be submitted include screen shots of social media posts, copies of emails, photos, statements from students or names and contact details of students affected.
- Complaints that are of a nature that the election team are unable to investigate will where appropriate be referred to the Union's /University complaints/disciplinary procedures. In this situation, the count for a particular position would commence once the outcome from the relevant process is known and that the IRO had ruled on the action, if any, that should be taken in the election context.
- Complaints regarding matters that occurred prior to the commencement of the Nomination period will only be considered where they may bring into question the candidate legal right to become a Trustee.
- Complaints must be submitted prior to one hour after the close of voting.
- The Unions' Advice Service is available for general support, visit <https://www.leicesterunion.com/support/advice-service> for further information.

Process

- Complaints/Appeals will be responded to initially within 4 working hours defined as weekdays between 9.00am and 5.00pm with an initial assessment of the time we expect the complaint investigation to take and an expected close time for the complaint. For all other complaints, the initial response will be received by 10.00am the following working day.
- We will respond at the time we have stated in the first email to tell you the outcome, and whether an appeal is possible.
- Any complaint will be investigated by Deputy Returning Officer, who will interpret the Election Rules and issue a decision.
- All complaints are passed to the IRO to check that they are happy with the local interpretation of the rules.
- Once a complaint has been closed then everyone involved will be advised of the outcome from the complaint.

Outcome

The outcome from the investigation will either be:-

- An election regulation hasn't been broken and therefore no further action will be taken, if there are parts of the complaint unrelated to the election this can be referred onto the Union's/ University complaint process.
- There is insufficient evidence of an election regulation been breached and therefore no further action will be taken.
- There is evidence that an election regulation has been breached.

Actions

This sets out a list of actions the DRO/IRO typically apply when an election regulation has been breached, please note that this list is not exhaustive and is intended to give an illustration of the actions that may be taken:-

- Issue a warning to the candidate about their future conduct in the election.
- Campaign Penalty - Confiscation of campaign materials, or instructions to remove a social media post.
- Campaign Ban - To prevent a team campaigning to remove any specific advantages gained from misconduct.
- Disqualification - This is the strongest punishment, applied only in the most serious cases.

Campaign related actions

- Confiscation - materials in breach of budget or rules will be confiscated.
- Stunt cancellation - an event or stunt you have planned might be cancelled if it is involved in the breach of rules/code.
- Orders to remove social media posts which violate the election responsibilities.
- The Deputy Returning Officer will set a deadline for students to comply with specific Campaign Penalties – if they aren't complied with before the deadline, then a Campaign Ban will come into effect until proof is given that the order has been complied with.

Appeals

- Where a penalty has been applied, an appeal can be made to the IRO, this can be based on additional information or that the punishment was too harsh.
- The IRO will then review the appeal, the original complaint and will either up-hold the original decision or make a new ruling on the complaint.
- If new/different issues are raised within the appeal then a new investigation will be commenced.