

LSU Spring Elections – Student Group Endorsement Guidance

During SU Spring Elections at LSU (Part-Time and Executive Officers), student groups can endorse candidates. If a group endorses a candidate in election(s), it means they want that person to win and will likely promote their materials. This will happen if a candidate has a manifesto that would work well with the group's own goals, or the candidate will offer them the best support for their activities.

Below we have answered some questions and given information on how to endorse candidates. However, if you have any queries or doubts please email su-elections@leicester.ac.uk

Timeline

27/02/2023	Deadline for Manifestos, 200 word submissions – the SU will then be preparing Manifesto and Election booklets ready for the beginning of campaigning.
03/03/2023	Campaigning begins at 10:00am but voting won't open until 06/03/2023. During this time student groups can review manifestos and reach out to candidates (if you wish) before making a decision on who you are endorsing. After this, you can inform the candidates of your decision and they will be able to use this as part of their campaign. You may want to arrange a meeting/committee meeting with your group ahead of time if you want to get your endorsement out before voting opens but this is not a necessity.
06/03/2023	Voting opens! Your group members will have until midday on 10/03/2023 to cast their vote. However, they are under no obligation to vote in line with their group's endorsement.

Guidance

Can student groups endorse a candidate?

Student Groups are able to endorse candidates in the election. Approaches by candidates to student groups can be made prior to the start of campaigning but no public declaration of support can be made prior to the start of campaigning.

Please Note: Student Media Groups are unable to endorse any candidates and must remain impartial throughout the Executive and Part Time Officer Elections.

How does a group endorse a candidate?

Firstly, student groups don't have to! Even if a group do, this does not mandate ANYONE in the group to vote for that candidate. It is simply a stance the group has taken, individuals can vote however they want.

If a student group wants to endorse a candidate, we only ask they do this in a fair and impartial manner. This basically means giving everyone a chance! Here are some things student groups can do:

1. Group members/committees are given an opportunity to consider statements or manifestos from all the candidates.
2. Once these have been read, run a poll/vote either in the group chat, survey on the SU website, in an email, or via a meeting. Every candidate running for the relevant position/s must be included
3. Once an outcome has been reached the group is able to promote the candidate/s and suggest them to the group's membership. **Remember, they do not have to vote for the candidate endorsed.**

By running a vote and doing things impartially, the group will have evidence to prove that things were run fairly and allowed everyone a chance.

What happens if we promote a candidate in private chats?

If you're an individual, you are free to use your personal accounts so long as you are also following that sites regulations such as no harassment (i.e. WhatsApp, Facebook). Our main concern is if official group channels are used to endorse candidates outside of the recommended procedure.

Be aware that even personal accounts could cause issues if you are breaking roles (e.g., promoting a candidate early). Students, with evidence (e.g., screenshots) can make a complaint which could cause you disciplinary action or that of the candidate in question. If in doubt, check with su-elections@leicester.ac.uk

What happens if we do not follow the process?

If you unfairly promote a candidate (whether they know or not), this reflects on the elected committee of the group and could be investigated using the Union's Disciplinary Process. Remember, as a committee member, you are an elected rep and so should follow the same rules as any leader during the election period.

When can we start endorsing a candidate?

Remember if you as a committee are endorsing a candidate that you are required to follow the election regulations with regard to pre-campaigning which says that prior to 10.00am on Friday 3 March which state that the following isn't permitted:-

- Online posts on social media saying announcing who is running
- Face to face campaigning
- Encouraging students to vote for a candidate in any way
- Asking friends/supporters and Student Groups that you are a member of publicising who is 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 who is running at an event e.g. student group online event.
- Campaigning on virtual events or nights out e.g. O2 online events.
- Posters/Flyers or any election promotion material appearing in a public place