

**SU ELECTIONS 2025
CANDIDATE HANDBOOK**

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for showing an interest in being a University of Chichester Students' Union Representative and running in our elections!

Elections are an exciting time for the Students' Union. Over the next few weeks, you'll get the chance to run a campaign, develop skills, get your message out to students and have a say in how the Students' Union is run!

This handbook, the website and the Election Bye-Law(s) outline the role of the positions available, what you should do to get elected, the election rules and important key contacts and dates.

Most importantly the elections are run as a free and fair competition for eligible candidates to become the Students' Union Officers. The best and most effective elections are those that are run in a spirit of friendly competition and mutual respect. The election regulations are strictly enforced and failure to comply may result in candidates not being eligible to stand or being excluded from the election.

IGNORANCE IS NOT A DEFENCE FOR FAILING TO COMPLY WITH REGULATIONS OF THE ELECTION.

The Deputy Returning Officer for this election is: **Anne Elliott, SU General Manager**. The Deputy Returning Officer is the person who makes sure the election is run fairly and will deal with any disputes and anyone who breaks the election rules.

For more details about the elections please see www.ucsu.org/elections

If you have any questions about the elections, please contact studentsunion@chi.ac.uk

KEY DATES

Nominations Open – 24th Feb, midday
Prospective candidates' drop-in session – 27th Feb (2-4pm) BOC & BRC
Nominations Close – 5th March, midday
Candidates Meetings – 11th March (time tbc)
Candidates Declared – 24th March, 10am
Campaigning Begins – 24th March, 10am
Voting Opens – 24th March, 10am
Voting Closes – 27th March, 10am
Results – 28th March 6.15pm onwards @ The Hub, BRC

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

There are two full time paid positions and nine voluntary, part-time roles available in this election. If elected, you will be in the role from 1st July 2025 – 30th June 2026 (Full time officers start in mid-June shadowing the current President/Vice-President).

Full Time roles (also known as Sabbatical Officers or Sabbs) can be either taken as a break from or on completion of your studies. Full time roles are:

- President
- Vice President

The President & Vice President positions attract a salary of £23,881 per annum, plus a one-off allowance of £750.

Voluntary Roles: Part-time positions taken on alongside your studies. To be eligible for these roles, you must be a student in the 2025/2026 academic year:

- Academic Officer BRC
- Academic Officer BOC
- Activities Officer
- Ethnic Minorities Officer
- LGBTQ+ Officer
- Disabilities Officer
- International Officer
- Chair of Student Council
- Sustainability Officer

For more details on these positions and their role descriptions, please see www.ucsu.org/elections.

ELECTION CHECKLIST

✓	Tick off the steps as you complete them
	<p>Read and understand the Candidate Handbook and Elections Bye-Laws (F). Available at www.ucsu.org/elections</p>
	<p>Nominate yourself before the deadline of 5th March 2025, midday. You can nominate yourself online at www.ucsu.org/elections. If you have any problems accessing the online nomination process email studentsunion@chi.ac.uk</p> <p>To nominate yourself you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name (<i>this will be the name used on the ballot</i>) • Your basic contact information • Your Slogan (<i>if you want one</i>) • Who your proposers are (<i>these are the people that support your nomination</i>) • For full time positions ONLY: complete and submit the two additional paper forms. <p>Any nominations submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.</p> <p>Make sure that you read the election rules before submitting your nomination!</p>
	<p>Attend the Candidates Meeting. There will be an informal drop-in session where you can chat to current officers and SU staff to find out more about specific officer positions Thursday 27th Feb between 2 & 4pm) at both the Hub on BRC and Zee on BOC.</p> <p>The formal candidates meeting will be held on 11th March (timings tbc).The meeting will brief you on the election rules and give you an opportunity to meet the other candidates.</p>
	<p>Submit your manifesto by no later than 20th March, midday</p> <p>Manifestos must be completed online.</p> <p>Advice and training will be given during the candidates' meetings.</p>

	<p>If you do not submit a manifesto the student body will not know why you are standing, this could impact your campaigning and ultimately what votes you do or don't get.</p> <p>Remember you are responsible for your campaign as a whole and all content.</p>
	<p>Start campaigning from Monday 24th March, 10am Campaigning is anything you do to encourage people to vote for you. You cannot start campaigning (including campaigning on social media).</p>
	<p>Tell people to vote (24th March 10am, 27th March 10am) All current UoC students, who are members of the SU, will be eligible to vote by clicking on a link sent in an email on the first day of voting. Alternatively, they can vote by going directly to www.ucsu.org/elections.</p> <p>As a candidate, you should vote as early as you can, so you have a clear idea of how the online system works.</p> <p>Remember - You can vote for yourself!</p>

HOW TO WRITE YOUR MANIFESTO & STATEMENT

Your manifesto states what your policies and proposals are and how you would like to take the Students' Union forward. Your manifesto can be in colour and have pictures. Your manifesto will be made available for students to read.

Think about who you are representing

Every student has a different experience during their time at University. Think about what issues are currently important to students and to you. Start by thinking what you have in common with other students, then think about a broader range of issues that affect different people.

What issues might be important?

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Think about why you are standing

Take some time to think about why you want to run, what you would do for students at Chichester, and how you plan to convey your message. Contact friends with different perspectives and run your ideas past them.

I need to speak to...

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Think about your key policies

After you have talked to different types of students and understand the issues that affect them you can start to develop key policies for your campaign.

You should aim for around four or five policies that are:

- The most important
- Most appealing to students

Original and creative ideas will set you apart from the other candidates. The more distinctive you are, the more recognisable your campaign will be. Make sure you research your ideas to check they have not already been implemented!

The best policies strike the balance between what students want and what is achievable in a year.

Based on your research, what will your achievable policies be?

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HOW TO CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGNING MUST NOT START BEFORE 10am Monday 24th March

Being elected isn't all about knowing the most people or printing the most posters. You can succeed by campaigning in creative ways and speaking to as many students as possible. A key element to a successful campaign is the publicity – how you tell students about your ideas and persuade them to vote.

Any publicity for your campaign **must be approved** prior to reproduction and/or display/circulation. All promotional material must include where, when and how to vote. Campaign material can be approved remotely.

Campaign theme

Campaign themes come in all shapes and sizes. Campaign themes have been linked to famous films, funny puns on people's names or a focus on key policies and ideas.

Remember to keep you campaign appropriate.

Campaign slogan

Many candidates choose a catchy, memorable phrase across their campaign to attract students, give a feel of their campaign and set them apart from other candidates.

Tips for a strong slogan:

- Research slogans from past elections (some are good, some are bad).
- Link it to your name to help students remember who you are.
- Make it short, snappy and original.
- Link it to something memorable.
- Think about if you could use humour / puns.

Translate your message

We are an international campus, so why not translate your message so it reaches students more effectively! Remember that we are an International University, with students from all around the world who can also vote in the election.

CAMPAIGN BUDGET

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During the campaign, the Students' Union will allocate you a budget so you can purchase campaign materials. You cannot spend any more than this amount on your election campaign. Candidates who are part of a slate will have the budget reduced for every additional candidate.

Individual Candidates:

Full Time Positions (Contested) – up to £20 each

Part Time Positions (Contested) – up to £15 each

If positions are uncontested (either FT or PT) – up to £10

Candidates on a Slate/Team:

Full Time Positions (Contested) – up to £15 each

Part Time Positions (Contested) – up to £12.50 each

If positions are uncontested (either FT or PT) – up to £7.50

ALL EXPENDITURE MUST BE APPROVED BY THE DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER.

You must keep all your receipts and keep a log of all your expenditure which must be within the amounts above. Expenses claims are to be submitted to Deputy Returning Officer by midday 27th March.

Spending ideas

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Items used in campaigning that a candidate or proposer already owns can be valued using a minimum value list but will not be reimbursed. All campaign materials must be available to other candidates at the same price. If materials are purchased from outside the UK, it is the responsibility of the candidate to provide a quote from a UK company demonstrating their value as if they were purchasing them in the UK. Only the UK value for all products will be accepted.

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

A few pointers:

Please ensure you campaign fairly;

Think about style and content;

Think about accessibility – videos must include closed captions;

Ensure your material lets people know who you are, what you stand for and why they should vote for you.

Include a call to action and timeline – visit ucsu.org/vote before 10am 27th March.

Campaign Videos (for President & Vice President):

Social Media:

If you are intending to use Social Media to promote your campaign you must adhere to the following guidelines (*Failure to do so may result in penalties or withdrawal from the election*):

- If you post to a page you must ensure that all other candidates (for the same position) also have the same opportunity to do so.
- You are responsible for any posts made on your behalf, so warn your proposers that anything they post you may also be held accountable for.
- Posts can only be about your campaign; you must never mention any opponent or candidate, unless you are commenting about another candidate with whom you are running as part of a slate OR to announce that you are both running for the same position.
- Your comments must not bring the SU or the University into disrepute. Raising a point for debate can be acceptable but negative comments or criticising of opponents, students or staff will not be accepted.

It is accepted that your friends may specify they have voted for you and support your campaign - this is ok as we have no control over what your friends post. You are however responsible for postings made by your proposers.

If you are ever unsure – ASK!

Posters (*if you feel they are needed this year and please remember the environment*):

- Make it eye catching and distinct through comedy, colour, shape and size
- Keep the poster in line with your campaign brand
- Don't overcomplicate your design

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- It should include your name, a photo, key policies and slogan
- Posters and other campaign material may not use the University, Students' Union or affiliated logos to endorse their campaign
- Spell check and proofread or get someone to check it for you – a great design won't matter if it's full of spelling mistakes

REMEMBER YOU CAN'T DO WHAT ANOTHER CANDIDATE DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY TO DO.

Think about where to put posters and leaflets to allow them to have maximum impact. Please ensure you use designated notice boards and ask permission of the department and use appropriate fixings that will not cause damage. Candidates must not prevent free and easy access to and within the Students' Union and University buildings when campaigning, including positioning posters on doors. Any candidate who wishes to place campaign publicity in buildings shall be responsible for obtaining permission from the appropriate authorities where required. No permanent adhesive or stickers shall be used in any circumstances. No publicity may be affixed in such a way as to interfere with the publicity of another candidate, and no candidate or proposer may remove or deface the publicity of another candidate.

MAKE SURE YOU TAKE YOUR POSTERS DOWN AFTER CAMPAIGNING HAS FINISHED!

EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING

A crucial part of a successful campaign is a good campaign team who will help you spread the word about your campaign.

Good people to ask are:

- Housemates
- Friends from courses

These people are most likely to be your campaign proposers.

Try to hold a session where you familiarise them with your policies. Put together a rota so that your friends know how much of a commitment it will be. Tell them how you would like to campaign and go through the rules which all candidates and campaigners must abide by. Candidates must take reasonable steps to ensure that the actions of their proposers and campaign teams comply with the Election Bye-Laws at all times and must be able to demonstrate this in the event of a complaint against them.

Make sure you keep your team updated. Spread people out across the different campuses. Encourage them to engage with students that you have not persuaded to vote yet. It doesn't matter if your friends can't commit a lot of time, they are doing you a huge favour so remember to thank them – a little gesture goes a long way.

My Campaign Team

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Here are a few tips to give you ideas about what you can do:

Campaign manager

Appointing a close friend as a campaign manager can be useful to reduce the pressure of the election as it will allow you to talk to as many students as possible. Choose someone who is a good organiser and someone who is committed to making you win. Make sure they have the time to do it and thank them at the end.

Talking to students (think digital)

The best way to guarantee a vote is to talk to the student, not just hand them a flyer. Try to be brief and to the point – make sure it will be something that they will remember. Have a good icebreaker to hand and then ask them a couple of questions before you start to talk about yourself. Focus on the

changes that are relevant to them – remember the elections are about the voters.

Lecture/Club shout-outs (think digital)

This is a very important part of campaigning. For a minute or two, you have access to lots of students, all in one place, ready to listen to you. It can be a bit daunting walking into a lecture theatre with people you don't know; start with your own lectures. Try and arrive 10 mins before the lecture starts in order to get permission from the lecturer. Keep your pitch to a minute, especially if it's at 9am. If using whiteboards to campaign, please ensure you use a whiteboard marker, rather than a permanent one, to prevent complaints from academic staff.

Get yourself as Second Preference

If you don't manage to convince someone to vote for you directly ask them to put you as their second choice. With the voting system used, the second choice can be as important as the first, and results have been known to change dramatically after the first round of counting. This is a vital tactic for ensuring a good total each round of the count and to improve your chance of winning.

Campaign launch party (think digital)

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.

Be yourself

You don't have to be a 'politician' to get elected in the Students' Union. You should just be yourself – if people think that the persona you are using to get votes is false, then they will be less likely to vote for you.

Don't take it all too seriously - Remember your degree is your priority.

This is not the election for US President so don't get too stressed about it all. At the end of the day life will go on if you're not elected and the experience of running a campaign is a great learning curve. Above all do not let running in the election interfere with your studies or jeopardise your grades.

Have a campaign planner

It's a busy job doing your university work, planning a campaign and balancing your other commitments. A Campaign Planner will help you plan out your time and resources effectively to make the most of the final voting week. Remember to look after yourself and take regular breaks, drink lots of water, eat and sleep!

SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO CANDIDATES

The Students' Union wants running in this election to be a fun experience where you feel supported and informed. This is why we have provided the following opportunities for you to find out more. If you are unsure about running and would like to find out more please visit ucsu.org/elections or get in touch via studentsunion@chi.ac.uk

Speak to a current Officer

The Students' Union's Officers all know what it is like to be a representative and will be able to help you with any questions you have.

Speak to a member of staff

The elections are overseen and supported by the staff within the Students' Union. At any time before, during or after the elections process, feel free to get in touch about your campaign and get support. Staff are also the first point of call should you have a problem or need to raise a complaint. You can contact a member of staff at: studentsunion@chi.ac.uk or by visiting our SU offices.

Looking after yourself

- Don't be put off if a student is disinterested or rude to you, the majority will be interested.
- Take some time out and grab a drink or some food to re-focus.
- Don't overwork yourself or your team
- Try and take care of as much life admin before voting opens e.g. cook yourself some meals in advance or ask a friend to help you with some specific tasks.
- It might also be worth planning your work, studies and commitments around the voting week so you have a lot of free time to chat to students.
- Ask your friends and course mates for help and advice - it can be fun and exciting to help someone else with their campaign, so don't be afraid to ask!
- Plan something nice to do at the end of the voting period. Even if you're not elected, you have achieved a lot.

FAQS

What is the Election Bye-Law?

Bye-Law F sets out the rules which state what candidates can and cannot do when running in the election.

You can find the election rules here at www.ucsu.org/elections. Please read them before submitting your nomination.

Who is the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer?

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer have the responsibility to uphold the Election Regulations. The Returning Officer will be representative from NUS, and the Deputy Returning Officer is Anne Elliott, General Manager. The Deputy Returning Officer will be the person you deal with on a day-to-day basis, and they will be in contact with the Returning Officer as required.

What should I do if I want to make a complaint about the Election?

A complaint may be made about the actions of candidates, proposers or election officials. Complaints must be submitted using the Complaints Form www.ucsu.org/elections and sent to studentsunion@chi.ac.uk

Grounds for complaint are that one or more of the election rules have been broken, or that one or more Students' Union policies or regulations have been breached. The complaint must make clear which rule or rules have been broken, by whom and when and must be supported by evidence. Evidence might be, but is not restricted to, the following: documents; photographs or video clips; screen shots of web pages; copies of e-mails or written statements from staff or students.

Complaints about campaigning must be submitted not more than nine hours after the close of polling. Complaints about the count must be made within 24 hours of the declaration of results. Complaints received after these deadlines will not normally be considered.

Can I use a nickname as a candidate?

When you nominate yourself, you will set a name that will appear on the ballot. This could include using a nickname. You could use a nickname for campaigning purposes or because it is the name that students know you by. We would recommend that your election material includes your name as it will appear on the ballot paper.

How does the voting work?

The voting system the Students' Union uses is called Single Transferable Vote (STV). Voters are asked to rank the candidates in order of preference. Voters can select candidates they want in the order they want them (1,2,3 etc) and it builds their vote. Once they're happy they can submit their vote. Voters

may express as many or as few preferences as they wish but cannot mark more than one candidate with the same number.

Within every post there will be a candidate option called a RON (Re-Open Nominations), which allows voters to choose/rank RON in preference to the candidates.

More information about the voting system and an example please visit ucsu.org/elections.

Voting from mobile devices (e.g. phones, tablets or laptops)

For the purposes of our elections, when someone is voting using a mobile device, that device becomes a polling station. Candidates, and those campaigning for them, are not allowed to be present when a vote is being cast on a mobile device. Failure to comply with this ruling will be treated as a breach of the Election Bye-law.

What should I do if I don't want to be a candidate anymore?

Should you wish to withdraw from being a candidate during the election process, please let the Students' Union know by emailing studentsunion@chi.ac.uk

Use of social media

Due to the vast number of social media platforms it is no longer possible for the Deputy Returning Officer to monitor candidates' use of social media. Candidates and their proposers are reminded that offensive or intimidating behaviour, or language, whilst participating in Students' Union activities (e.g. elections) may be considered misconduct, or gross misconduct and be dealt with under the Students' Union's Disciplinary Procedure.