



LEADERSHIP ELECTION RULES

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FOREWORD

This document outlines the roles and details of the Leadership Election which takes place in the second semester of each academic year, this is designed to be in addition to your Briefing Pack. To be eligible as a candidate in the Leadership Elections, you must read, understand and acknowledge this document which contains the rules and the Code of Conduct (contained at the bottom of this document). By completing the form (sent to you via email) you accept the rules and regulations of this election as outlined below and in all related

UUSU Bye-Laws

This document is in two parts, the rules and regulations and the code of conduct.



RULES

1. POSITIONS

The Following Positions will be open for election in the second semester of each academic year:

- **President** (all campuses)
- **Vice President Sports and Wellbeing** (all campuses)
- **Vice President Education** (all campuses)
- **Vice President Equality and Belonging** (all campuses)
- **Vice President** (one for each campus)
- **Faculty Reps** (one per Faculty, all campus)
- **School Reps** (One per School, one per campus)

In the case of overall positions, all students at Ulster University will be eligible to stand.

In the case the Vice-President for a specific campus, students may only run for positions on their campus of current or most recent study.

In the case of a School/Faculty Rep, students may only run for positions in their School / Faculty.

2. VOTING

(Tuesday 3rd March, 9am - Thursday 5th March 2026, 4pm)

Students can vote by going directly to the voting website (www.uusu.org) or through visiting the student portal (UUSU will provide a link at the top of the page). Students will only see those positions which are open to them to vote on.

3. THE RETURNING OFFICER

The Returning Officer will be decided by Student Council or in their absence the Student Executive Committee. They must not be bias to one candidate over another. Deputy Returning Officers are selected by the Returning Officer to act as a point of contact and to assist in carrying out the duties of the Returning Officer, however, the Returning Officer's decision is final.

For the purposes of the leadership elections taking place in 2026 the Returning Officer is Peter Robertson (NUS Charity Director) with the Deputy Returning Officers being Mark Francos (Governance and Policy Coordinator) and Mandy Mulholland (Student Voice Manager) respectively.

4. ELECTION MATERIALS

- (a) Candidates will be allocated a set amount of posters and manifestos which will be verified as official election material with the UUSU logo. These are all printed by UUSU. Printing amounts will be subject to change and all printing amounts will be confirmed with candidates at their respective candidate's meetings.
- (b) Candidates will be allocated an election pop-up, personalised with their image and role. Overall position candidates will be provided with one for each campus.
- (c) Additional material may include handmade posters and banners; no additional digital printed material may be produced (excluding t-shirts). Digitally printed t-shirts will be allowed.
- (d) This material will be subject to approval of the Returning Officer and must not exceed a market value of £120 for an overall position and £80 for a campus position. A Faculty/School Rep candidate is not limited in financial spending. In the case where a complaint is raised or the Returning Officer is investigating, receipts may be needed to prove the cost price of the additional materials.
- (e) **Where a candidate has received these additional materials for free, in an investigation, they will be cost as market price.** If a candidate has gone over the additional materials limit, the items may be confiscated until after the election.
- (f) Logos of companies/businesses/brands/organisations are not permitted on elections material. If these are submitted they will be removed before printing.

5. CAMPUS CAMPAIGNING

- (a) Candidates may not start campaigning until 6pm, Friday, 20th February 2026. Candidates are allowed to approach Clubs and Societies to verbally request their support from the close of nominations but may only publicise that they have been 'endorsed' by clubs or societies on receipt by the Returning Officer of a quorate meeting of the club or society where that support is clearly demonstrated.

- (b) Campus campaigning will be restricted under guidance provided in addition to this document during candidates meetings.
- (c) Candidates will be responsible for the actions of their campaign team and anyone acting on their behalf. Where candidates dispute if a person is in their team or not, the decision will rest with the Returning Officer and this will be final.
- (d) Candidates must not remove, move, deface or damage another candidate's material. If a genuine reason exists as to why material may need to be removed, candidates and their teams are advised to contact the Returning Officer or their nominee(s).
- (e) The Deputy Returning Officer's shall decide which areas shall be designated as UUSU operated voter hubs . At each station there will be information to students about the election and the candidates running. **Candidates and their teams may use this area to campaign.** The Deputy Returning Officer's will specify these areas on each campus and circulate to candidates in advance.
- (f) Incumbent Sabbatical Officers running again can carry out their duties as normal, but should request leave for the periods they are campaigning. Officers must not use UUSU resources for election purposes. This includes the use of individual UUSU officer social media accounts for the duration of the election period.

6. SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNING

- (a) Candidates may use online media how they see fit (excluding the above), but may not advertise their candidacy on Students' Union pages on social networking sites. Candidates should not mention or imply any other candidate in media that would be considered negative. Emailing, phone calling, messaging and texting will be allowed to inform students of their candidacy and of the election.
- (b) An example of negative campaigning would be: "Candidate X is useless and cannot be trusted" and is not acceptable. "Candidate X has no experience of this role and his/her policies are unworkable for our Union" is acceptable.
- (c) Geofilters will be charged against the 'additional spending' budget for each candidate and receipts must be kept.
- (d) Using third party media or materials must cite sources. For example, if you are campaigning on student housing and use a figure from a housing report or report, be sure to include the source on your material.

- (e) Information posted on social media must be to the best of your knowledge, accurate.
- (f) Posting or re-posting libellous content will result in penalties for the candidate.
- (g) Engaging in 'trolling' either by the candidate or their election team will be addressed by the Returning Officer severely.
- (h) Tagging external accounts such as UUSU or Ulster University is disallowed.
- (i) Private content between candidates must remain so.
- (j) 'Dog piling' practices are strictly disallowed.
- (k) Fake accounts – that is, accounts not in your name or specifically linked to you personally or on behalf of your campaign is disallowed and if an investigation links you with a fake profile you will face disqualification.

REMEMBER:

- **Content you post online is a reflection on you as a candidate.**
- **Content online is permanent.**
- **Should any content you or your team post break University rules, or the law, that information will be passed on.**
- **The behaviour you display on social media during the campaign should be based on the premise that it doesn't contain anything you wouldn't say to someone.**

7. CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN TEAMS

Candidates are permitted to have a campaign team which may be made up of fellow students only. A candidate is responsible for their campaign team and it is important that candidates make sure their team are aware of the rules as contained in this document.

Any actions of a campaign team member will be reflective of the candidate and be as if the candidate acted in the same manner.

In the event of confusion over the allegiance of a campaigner, the DRO team will investigate and react accordingly.

8. USE OF DEVICES

Use of personal devices to facilitate student voting is allowed but this will be without coercion, intimidation or harassment, and as outlined in Bye-Law 3, and throughout these rules.

Candidates are not permitted to handle a device of a voter. Candidates or their teams **ARE NOT PERMITTED** to vote by proxy or on behalf on any student.

9. RELEVANT BYE LAWS

UUSU elections are governed by the rules contained here, alongside the regulations in more depth as provided in **Bye Law Three** governing elections and **Bye Law Seven** regulating member conduct.

These Bye Laws are more comprehensive than this document and govern the running of our elections, methodology, campaign spending, expected conduct and more and it is expected that you have a basic understanding of these.

10. RULE BREACHES

In the event of any breach of these rules, the code of conduct or the bye laws the Returning Officer or their deputies reserve the right to penalise candidates, their campaign teams or remove candidates from the election. This will be at their discretion and as appropriate, repeated breaches by a candidate or their campaign team may result in direct disqualification from the election.

If a breach is significant, you may be instantly removed from the election. The examples below are purely examples and may not reflect the penalties imposed in a real election scenario.

Examples:

- (a) An example of a minor breach would be printing additional materials and result in a verbal warning.
- (b) An example of a significant breach would be a candidate or a member of their campaign team being deemed to have voted on behalf of a student and result in a suspension from campaigning by the candidate and their campaign team for a larger duration of time.
- (c) An example of a major breach would be a candidate physically manhandling a voter and forcing them to vote and this would result in a disqualification and removal from the election.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All candidates will be bound by these rules as of above, the relevant bye laws around conduct and elections and the Code of Conduct below. For any clarification on any rules or bye laws please contact the Governance and Policy Coordinator and Deputy Returning Officer Mark Francos for more information @ elections@uusu.org.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTIONS AGREEMENT FOR THE CONDUCT OF ELECTION CAMPAIGNS WITH THE ULSTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION (July 2023)

Nominated Candidate's Name: _____

In the Election for the position of _____, agree to abide by the following regulations and communicate said Regulations to all individuals who by association are seen to be promoting our Election Campaign. (A proven breach of any Regulation will result in the Returning Officer disqualifying the Candidate).

- 1 All candidates and their election teams are subject to the regulations stated in this Code of Conduct, Election Rules, UUSU Bye Laws and any UUSU or UU Good Relations policies.
- 2 No statements or representations can be made by the Candidate or his/her representatives to any press or media outlet with regard to any aspect of the election process of candidature without the written permission of the Returning Officer or a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO).
- 3 Contact details and telephone numbers, supplied by the Returning Officer or DRO, will remain confidential.
- 4 Candidates and their representatives will not employ the use of materials expressly disallowed by Union or UU estates guidance which will be issued to all candidates.
- 5 Candidates and their representatives will, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the Union or University into disrepute. Reference will be given to the UUSU Media guidelines.
- 6 During the Election Campaign period, Candidates and their representatives will not engage in any act or omission which infringes on the personal safety and well-being of other Election Candidates and their supporters including written, verbal, physical abuse and/or intimidation or which breaches published University and Union Regulations whether online or off-line.
- 7 The Candidate and their representatives will abide with all requests issued by the Returning Officer and/or Deputy Returning Officer in regard to any aspect of their Election activities/ omissions or they will face disqualification.

- 8 The Candidate and their representatives will not cause obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic, nor enter restricted areas surrounding information stations nor act in a manner which may threaten or restrict other students' personal space.
- 9 The Returning Officer may disqualify or penalise candidates who violate or persistently transgress any of the regulations for the Conduct of Elections including the Agreement for the Conduct of Election Campaigns. The decision of the Returning Officer is final in regard to breaches of these rules.

SIGNED: _____
(Candidate)

WITNESSED BY: _____
(Returning Officer or his/her nominee)

DATE: _____