



The aim of the election rules is to create a free and fair election in accordance with the Education Act 1994 Section 20-22. The rules aim to create a level playing field between candidates and campaign teams and fairness to the voter, thereby giving integrity to the election process and the Students' Union overall.

The Leadership Elections are overseen by an external Returning Officer (RO), who is responsible for ensuring that elections are conducted fairly and democratically. It is also overseen by an external Deputy Returning Officer (DRO). They will interpret these election rules in response to any complaints and appeals.

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1. Election Principles

- 1.1. Students should be free to decide who they would like as their representatives and how they would like to vote. This decision should not be made or unfairly influenced by candidates or their campaigners.
- 1.2. Candidates should run fair, honest, and transparent campaigns and you may only do what other candidates have an equal opportunity to do.
- 1.3. Candidates and their campaigners must treat students, other candidates and their campaign teams, staff, and the general public with respect, engage in civil debate and not campaign negatively or harass.
- 1.4. All candidates and their campaigners must abide by the policies, procedures & regulations of the University of Cambridge and Students' Union.
- 1.5. All candidates and their campaigners must abide by the Law and relevant legislation, including but not limited to the Education Act and the Equality Act.
- 1.6. All candidates, their campaigners and current students members must abide by the election rules.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. All candidates must be current student members of Cambridge SU.
 - 2.1.1. Candidates for the position of President (PG) must be Postgraduate student members of Cambridge SU.
 - 2.1.2. Candidates for the position of President (UG) must be Undergraduate student members of Cambridge SU.
 - 2.1.3. A candidate can appeal their membership status in line with By-Law 13: Membership.



- 2.2. All Sabbatical Officer positions are ex-officio trustees of the SU and University Councillors are trustees of the University. Candidates will only be eligible to run provided they are also eligible to be trustees under the [Charity Commission's](#) rules.
 - 2.2.1. Candidates will be required to complete and submit a declaration form to confirm their eligibility.
- 2.3. Eligibility for the University Councillor role is determined by the [University of Cambridge Statutes and Ordinances](#).
- 2.4. Candidates are only able to run for one role during the Leadership Elections.
- 2.5. Candidates must submit their nomination, via the SU website, by the deadline set out in the election timeline.
- 2.6. All candidates are required to submit a manifesto. The deadline is set out in the election timeline.
- 2.7. Candidates will be required to complete a declaration form to confirm they have watched the candidate briefing and read the election rules.

3. Manifestos

- 3.1. Every candidate must submit a plain text manifesto. Designed manifestos are optional.
- 3.2. Candidates must not exceed 500 words for their manifesto, and slogans are limited to 15 words.
- 3.3. Manifestos and slogans must not mislead students or mention other candidates or individuals other than themselves, by name.

4. Campaigning

- 4.1. A campaign team is made up of a candidate and current students who are working with the candidate to help get them elected, known as "their campaigners".
- 4.2. Students are not considered candidates until they have received an email from the elections team confirming their candidacy.
- 4.3. A campaign team may not undertake any activities that actively promote their candidate until they are able to begin campaigning as laid out in the election timeline (e.g. posters going up, social media accounts actively posting). The following activities are permitted by the candidate before the campaigning period opens:
 - 4.3.1. Talking to or gaining advice from friends about prospective candidacy in a non-public manner.
 - 4.3.2. Recruiting your campaign team in a non-public manner (i.e. direct messaging individuals who may wish to join your campaign team)
 - 4.3.3. Contacting registered societies, clubs, and sports clubs to consider endorsing your candidacy.
- 4.4. Full-time Elected Officers of the SU may not campaign for any candidate in an election, except themselves, and they cannot campaign on paid time. They must take annual leave to campaign during work hours.
- 4.5. Information or campaign material which are directed at other candidates, or other students, is not permitted.



- 4.6. Candidates and their campaign team are not permitted to use the University of Cambridge, College, or the Students' Union logos within their promotion or campaigning materials.
- 4.7. Use of email lists (i.e. using a pre-existing email list to promote your candidacy) is not permitted. The only exception to this rule is if a registered society, club, or sports club has decided to endorse a candidate; they may then use their own mailing lists etc. to announce this.
- 4.8. Candidates and their campaigners must be respectful to students and avoid spamming or sending messages candidates know to be unwelcomed or unwanted. Candidates must ensure they respect the privacy of students.
- 4.9. Candidates, their campaign teams, or any other person attempting to influence a voter must be further than three metres away from an individual when they are casting their ballot.
- 4.10. Fly-posting (displaying promotional material on public property or private land without the owner's consent), graffiti and other forms of defacement are illegal in Cambridge and must not be used.
- 4.11. Candidates and their campaigners must not deface or remove other candidates' campaign materials.

5. Press

- 5.1. Candidates are able to be contacted by the press and to contact the press.
- 5.2. Candidates must follow the Elections & Referendum Press Process.
- 5.3. Where candidates, campaign teams or the SU are mentioned, a right of reply and/or comment should be offered before publication in line with the outlet's regulator.

6. Slates

- 6.1. Candidates cannot run in the election with other candidates as an official slate. A slate is defined as a group of candidates that run in multi-position elections on a common platform.
 - 6.1.1. For the avoidance of doubt, candidates cannot run as a pre-arranged 'group' encouraging students to vote for all candidates in the group.

7. Endorsements

- 7.1. Registered societies, clubs, and sports clubs may endorse singular or multiple candidates if they democratically decide to do so in accordance with their own constitutional requirements. Evidence of the way in which the decision was taken must be made available if requested by the Deputy or Returning Officer.
- 7.2. JCRs and MCRs may not endorse candidates.
- 7.3. Selective moderation of posts to email lists, groups or social media pages resulting in any candidate(s) being favoured shall be considered an endorsement.



- 7.4.** Students must not seek external endorsements or promote endorsements from anyone not a student member of the University of Cambridge or a registered society, club, or sports club.
- 7.4.1.** For the avoidance of doubt; University of Cambridge Staff and the Students' Union Staff must not endorse or show favour towards/against any particular candidate.
 - 7.4.2.** Cambridge student press is encouraged to follow good journalistic standards, and not promote individual candidates.

8. Spending

- 8.1.** Campaign spending for a candidate must not exceed the spending budget they have been allocated. This is set to £100 for Sabbatical Officer roles and £40 for the University Councillor role.
- 8.2.** If using materials or resources you already own or have access to, and which it is not reasonable to assume all candidates would have access to, you must declare these to the Deputy Returning Officer, who will attribute a cost to be taken out of your campaigning budget. When using free resources, these must all be readily available to all candidates.
- 8.3.** Cambridge SU must receive receipts or other declarations, and evidence of spending or campaign materials used no later than 5pm on the day that voting closes.
- 8.4.** Results are only able to be announced once all declarations or receipts, amounting to the materials we are aware of, have been received.
- 8.5.** Candidates who exceed the elections budget may be disqualified.

9. Complaints & Appeals

- 9.1.** Any complaints relating to the rules, conduct of candidates, their campaign team, the election process, organisation of the election, or polling must be raised to the Election Team via the online Elections & Referendum Complaints Form.
- 9.2.** Complaints must be submitted in line with the Cambridge SU Elections & Referendum Complaints Procedure.
- 9.3.** Candidates will be held accountable for the actions of their campaign team. Campaign teams may not do anything candidates themselves are not permitted to do.

If you have any queries or concerns about any aspect of the rules, the election, or its process, please consult the Returning Officer and the Deputy Returning Officer via elections@cambridgesu.co.uk. They are able to offer guidance or clarification of a ruling or the rules without an official complaint, this will also not be considered as an official complaint.