SO YOU’RE THINKING OF RUNNING?

Your guide to running in the Students’ Union Elections.
INTRODUCTION

So, you’ve taken the first step towards the role of a lifetime. By opening this leaflet, you’re probably interested in being a candidate in the forthcoming Students’ Union Elections.

You might know exactly what role you want to go for, and what you want to achieve in that role - equally, you might not really know anything about the roles. Hopefully this booklet will be helpful for you in either scenario! In this booklet you’ll (hopefully!) learn a bit more about what the various roles on offer entail, you’ll get the key dates (pop them in your diary/calendar NOW), some tips on HOW to run in the election and also a brief look at some of the rules you need to make sure you don’t break!

If this booklet doesn’t answer all the questions you have, then fire as many questions as you like at hallamelections@shu.ac.uk where the Student Representation Team will be happy to help you throughout the process!

Good luck!

The Student Representation Team

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Student Representation Team

Your first point of support throughout the Elections is the Student Representation Team. So, whether you’re umming and ahhing about whether to run, need more information on a specific issue, want to run through your campaign ideas or (hopefully this won’t happen) have a problem or need to raise a complaint – go and see them first!

You can find them in the Activities Pod in the HUBS, or you can reach them via email on hallamelections@shu.ac.uk – you’ll also find them at Candidate Academy.

Officer Team

If you’re interested in one of the five full time roles, then Emily, Kieran, Emmet, Melissa and Sophie are definitely people you should try and talk to at some point!

They’re the ones doing the roles you’ll be running for, and so have better insight into what you’ll be doing and what you could achieve than anyone. You’ll find out a bit more about them (and their jobs) later in this booklet, as well as how to contact them. You’ll find them at Candidate Academy and you can pop in and see them in the HUBS.

Returning Officer

Gail Stephens, the CEO of the Students’ Union, is the Returning Officer. Her duty is to ensure that elections are free and fair (in accordance with the 1994 Education Act). They make the final decisions about the running of the elections - you can contact her through hallamelections@shu.ac.uk.
There are 18 different roles up for grabs.

For those of you wanting a full-time, paid role there are five full-time Student Officer positions up for grabs in this election.

You’ll read more about the roles later, but here are the very basics:

**President**
**Activities Officer**
**Education Officer**
**Sports and Physical Activities Officer**
**Welfare and Community Officer**

ANY current student can run for these roles. It’s a great chance to make a positive difference to students, and an incredible opportunity to be a director of a multi-million pound charity.

If you’re not in your final year, and you don’t fancy taking a year out – but you’re still really keen to make a massive different to the Students’ Union and the University, as well as giving a unique boost to your CV, you can take up one of our 13 part-time roles. These include:

**Four Faculty Academic Reps (ACES, D&S, SBS and HWB), Black and Minority Ethnic Students Rep, Disabled Students Rep, International Students Rep, LGBT Students Rep, Mature Students Rep, Part Time Students Rep, Postgraduate Students Rep, Women’s Rep, & Union Council Chair.**
**NOMINATIONS OPEN:**
Monday 12 January 9am

**CANDIDATE ACADEMY:**
Saturday 31st January 10am-4pm

**NOMINATIONS DEADLINE:**
Monday 16th February 10am

**COMPULSORY CANDIDATE BRIEFINGS:**
Monday 16th February (Various Times)

**PUBLICITY DEADLINE:**
Thursday 26th February 4pm

**AWARENESS WEEK:**
Monday 2nd-Friday 5th March 2015

**VOTING WEEK:**
Monday 9th March-Friday 13th March

**HUSTINGS:**
Tuesday 10th March

**RESULTS NIGHT:**
Friday 13th March, 7pm (HUBS)

You can get your campaigns team together and start planning from now BUT you cannot campaign at all until voting week opens. That means no posters being put up, no public Facebook groups/pages, no lecture shout outs. If you think something might be campaigning - it probably is, if you’re in any doubt then do check with hallamelections@shu.ac.uk BEFORE doing something!
Quite simply, there is no other graduate job or student placement like it. If you’re successful, you’ll be the leaders of 35,000 students and have the chance to lead and change a massive organisation. You’ll join an elite few who’ve been Student Officers, and have an incredible line on your CV. You’re also guaranteed to have an amazing year.

And...if you don’t win, you can still add it to your CV and enjoy the campaigning experience. You’ll have talked to hundreds of new people, used marketing techniques, actively campaigned, gained public speaking skills and developed as a person. Lots of former candidates have told us they’ve used the experience they gained from running in elections in applications, and they all made friends during the campaign to boot!

We’ve said the jobs are the best ones out there, so take a look at the next few pages where we’ll explain why!
PRESIDENT

The President leads the Students’ Union, making sure students have the best possible time at University. As well as leading the Officer Team, the President sits on the highest governing boards of the University, and makes sure the student voice is heard.

As well as this, the President is the Deputy Chair of the Students’ Union Trustee Board, and the figurehead of the Students’ Union externally. They also take the lead on supporting the work of Part Time Reps. If you want a role as a leader of a charity in a key strategic position, then this might be the job for you!

“I love that my role is so varied from day to day. I can be meeting the Vice Chancellor one hour, then sat talking to students about green and sustainable issues the next! This post has definitely exposed me to people and experiences that I’ve found really useful to not only make a key different for the lives of students, but also develop my own skills!”

Current Officer, Emily Connor

EDUCATION OFFICER

This role does exactly what it says on the tin – as Education Officer you’d be representing students’ academic interests within the University. The Education Officer is there to make sure students get the most out of their course, and the academic experience at Sheffield Hallam is as good as it can possibly be.

The Education Officer is a key member of a huge number of University Committees and is, like all full time officers, a trustee of the Students’ Union. They work closely with Course and Faculty Reps across the University. If you care about your education and want the University to get even better, then maybe this is the job for you.

“The experience I have had through my role as Education Officer has been fantastic. Being able to put the student views forward at such senior levels in the University is second to none. Linking this with working with our course and faculty reps really allows you to see where the issues facing our students can be taken and how to work towards getting them solved.”

Current Officer, Kieran Pearson
ACTIVITIES OFFICER

The Activities Officer supports the exciting groups and opportunities the Students’ Union has to offer. As Activities Officer, you’ll look after Volunteering groups, Societies, RAG and student Media. You’ll help new groups to set up, and make sure existing ones deliver the best opportunities to Hallam students.

As Activities Officer, you’re a trustee of the Students’ Union and you have the opportunity to really enhance the student experience. If you’re passionate about student groups and have ideas of how to make them even better, then this is the role for you.

“This is the best job you could ever have, it’s fun, challenging, exciting and you get to see and do amazing activities with passionate students. I couldn’t have had a better time over the last two years! I love this job and will never forget it. You honestly do change student’s lives with the work you do.”

Current Officer, Sophie Amos

SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OFFICER

The Sports and Physical Activities Officer is the student representative for all Sheffield Hallam sports clubs and individuals. They lead the many sports groups on campus, and oversee the delivery of major sporting events such as Varsity - including the 8,000 attendee Ice Hockey finale.

The Sports and Physical Activities Officer is a key member of all sporting decision making bodies within the University, as well as being a trustee of the Students’ Union. If you’re passionate about sports, and keen to get experience in the development and delivery of sporting activities, then this is the perfect job for you.

“This is the best job you could hope to have - especially if you want to work in Sport. You get to work closely with all of our brilliant sports teams, and the chance to work on big events such as Varsity is unique. I can’t stress enough how much you’ll enjoy this job!!”

Current Officer, Melissa Penny
WELFARE & COMMUNITY OFFICER

The Welfare and Community Officer is there to make sure students feel safe, supported and part of a community while studying at Sheffield Hallam University. They lead on campaigns around issues as diverse as housing, student finance and health and work on projects with the University and the Council.

The Welfare and Community Officer works closely with a range of people within the city, sits on important University Committees and is a trustee of the Students’ Union. If you’re passionate about student welfare and students’ being part of the city of Sheffield, then this could be the role for you.

“Welfare is something that affects just about every single student here at Sheffield Hallam so there comes a great responsibility on this role. If you’re passionate about creating a community that really looks after Hallam students, then please consider this role”

Current officer, Emmet Cleaver
**Full-time roles**

All current students at Sheffield Hallam University are eligible to run for any of the five full-time Officer positions. It doesn’t matter whether you’re a first year undergraduate or in the third year of your PhD, the Students’ Union is there to represent all of you, therefore it’s only fair you should be able to run!

As we’ve mentioned before, being an Officer really is the perfect graduate job - so if you’re in the final year of your degree, this could well be the role for you. The roles don’t start until July, so you’ll have plenty of time to finish your studies before you get started. That’s not to say others can’t though, and we have plenty of tips and guidance should you want to... **take a year out.**

Undergraduate students not in the final year of their course, or Postgraduates who are still completing research or study, can still put themselves forward to be a full time Officer.

As a Postgraduate Taught student you can either decide to suspend your studies or the Students’ Union can be flexible around you completing your studies. This means that while you are completing your dissertation during July-September we will be more flexible about your hours and the number of meetings you need to attend.

As a Postgraduate research student you can apply to suspend your research while you undertake the full time officer election as long as have the support of your supervisor and sponsor.

If you win the full-time Officer election and you suspend your studies, it means your course will be put on hold for one academic year. In practice this means you could be a full-time Officer from July to the end of June the following year then return to complete your course in July as a Researcher or October as a Taught student. PGR students may return to their studies immediately after completion of a full-time Officer post.

**Part-time roles**

In order to stand for one of the Part Time Rep roles, you must **NOT** be in the final year of your degree.

Some of the roles have additional requirements, these are as follows:

- You can only stand to be Faculty Academic Rep for the faculty you study in.
- In order to run as Black and Minority Ethnic Students Rep, Disabled Students Rep, LGBT Rep or Women’s Rep - you must self-define within one of these demographics.

In order to run as International Students Rep, Mature Students Rep, Part Time Students Rep, Postgraduate Students Rep then you must be defined in one of these categories by the University.
HOW DO I NOMINATE MYSELF?

Nominating yourself is quick and easy and can be done as long as you’re at a computer or internet enabled device.

All you need to do is head to the Students’ Union website and log-in, using your blackboard username and password.

Then, when you’re in, head to www.hallamstudentsunion.com/elections, select the position you want to run for, and then click ‘Nominate Me’.

**Nominations open on 12th January and close on 16th February.**

Once you’re in, you’ll need to submit your draft manifesto. In your manifesto, say what you want to do in the role, and why you’re the best person to do it. If you’re not sure what to put in your manifesto, then get in touch with the Student Representation Team or current Officers to discuss your ideas, and come along to Candidate Academy and our Manifesto workshops.

Once your nomination is submitted and accepted, you’ll be asked to sign-up for a compulsory candidate briefing. This is where you get the rules and campaign tips (and a free breakfast or lunch!), and your photo will be taken for elections publicity.

If you’re not sure the role is right for you, but think you know a friend who would be perfect - then you can **nominate a mate** to run. To do this just go to the elections page, and fill out our ‘Recommend Someone’ box.
We like candidates to have as much freedom to be creative as possible, and want you all to fully engage yourselves with these elections.

Having said that, there are certain rules you need to adhere to in order to remain eligible within the election. Failure to adhere to these rules could lead to disqualification if the Returning Officer feels you have deliberately gained an unfair advantage.

We don’t want to throw all these rules at you here, once you’ve registered as a candidate through the Union website, we will send you a Candidate handbook and a Candidate contract which will contain all the rules. You’ll also have to attend a candidate briefing on Monday 16th February - so ignorance won’t be an excuse should you break any rules!!

For now, the main rule to keep in your head is this - you CANNOT campaign before voting opens. That means you cannot display posters, ask people to vote for you on Facebook or other social media, or do any publicity stunts surrounding the elections. You CAN however, start making posters/banners/videos promoting your candidacy, talk to current officers expressing your interest, start putting together your campaign team and start thinking about what you’d like to change!

The other rule you need to be aware of now is that you can only run for ONE position in these elections - if you’re not sure which role is right for you, try and chat to the postholder, or look closely at what the roles do and see which one appeals to you more!

You can find out more about the rules surrounding the elections within our Articles of Governance which you can find at www.hallamstudentsunion.com/your_union/importantdocuments/.

If you’ve got any queries about this, please email hallamelections@shu.ac.uk or pop into the HUBS building to talk to an officer or one of the Student Representation Team.
HOW DO I CAMPAIGN?

There are a lot of ways you can get your message out to students during these elections, too many to mention here. Basically, think along the lines of - the bolder the better. How are YOU going to stand out?

Here’s a few quick tips:

**Know what you stand for**

Make sure you know your policies inside out, you’ll spend a lot of time talking to students, and you need to give them reasons why they should vote for you.

**Get your campaign team together**

It’s SO important to have a campaign team. They’ll help you to spread the word, help you to design materials and, crucially, support you during the election period! There’s a long time between nominations opening and campaigning opening, so use this time to get a good team of people around you. One thing - do make sure your campaign team are aware that the election rules apply to them as well!

**The Internet**

Everyone uses the internet these days, so during the campaigning period, make sure you have an active presence on there. Use social media with Facebook pages and tweets, you could set up a campaign website. A lot of candidates even used Tinder to ‘match’ with potential voters last year...

**Videos**

Get your message out via video, it’ll reach a lot of people. Try and do something different – whether it’s a song, something funny, or something brand new and creative. Last year some Union election videos were featured on Radio 1, and one has over 100,000 views on YouTube – why not try and go viral with yours!
Visual publicity

Sometimes you can’t beat a good poster! Get your face, your name and your policies on posters, banners and flyers. You could even design and wear some campaign t-shirts (but be aware of your budget!).

There are obviously rules surrounding campaigning – and we’ll be communicating these to you once you’re registered as a candidate, but, for now, get thinking of your big ideas. If you’re not sure whether you’d be allowed to do something, always check with us rather than just discarding the idea.

Budget

All students running for full-time officer positions have a maximum budget allowance of £40, with those going for part-time positions having a maximum budget of £20. This is to make sure the elections are fair and equal – overspending will almost certainly result in disqualification!

If you get stuck for ideas, don’t worry – we’ll have plenty more workshops, guidance and the Candidate Academy to help you make your campaign the biggest (and the best!).

Last years winners
WHAT SUPPORT CAN I GET?

We really do value everyone who runs for our roles, both full time and part time. With this in mind, we’re really keen to ensure you get all the support necessary during the elections.

Candidate Academy

One of the best ways to get support, and find out more about the roles is to attend Candidate Academy.

Candidate Academy takes place on Saturday 31st January in the HUBS, and is your chance to find out a bit more about the Officer roles and how to run in an election.

Students’ Union staff will be on hand to talk you through any concerns you might have (or provide a sounding board for your amazing ideas!) and the current Officer team will be able to talk to you about what it’s like to be them! There’ll also be a Q&A on the elections, so any questions or concerns you have will be addressed.

Workshops

We understand that there’s a LOT involved in trying to get your message out to 35,000 people. During the month running up to elections we’ll be running lots of workshops, and also sending out handy guides on various elements. So whether you’re wanting support on making a viral elections video, getting the perfect poster, perfecting public speaking or nailing a magnificent manifesto - we’ll be able to help!

Candidate contact

Once you’ve put forward your nomination, you’ll be assigned a candidate contact in the Union. This will be a full time member of staff who will be happy to answer your questions and go through your ideas with you. They’ll also be able to help you with any concerns, such as how much time you’ll have to campaign!

Each other

We can’t stress enough how much of a support network candidates are for each other! You’re all going through the same things, and you’ll be amazed how close you get to each other (even with the others going for the same role!).
GOT A QUESTION?
EMAIL HALLAMELECTIONS@SHU.AC.UK

OR READ MORE AT
WWW.HALLAMSTUDENTSUNION.COM/ELECTIONS

ELECTIONS TIMELINE

12 JAN NOMINATIONS OPEN!
31 JAN CANDIDATE ACADEMY
21 FEB NOMINATIONS CLOSE
2 MAR AWARENESS WEEK BEGINS
9 MAR VOTING WEEK BEGINS
13 MAR RESULTS NIGHT