

Guiding Principles – NUS Delegate and Trustee Election 2023

1. Students have the right to choose who their representatives are.
2. Candidates must treat other candidates, students, staff and members of the public with respect.
3. Candidates are wholly responsible for the actions of those campaigning on their behalf.
4. Candidates must respect the campus environment and the local area they live in.
5. Candidates' campaigns should be fully transparent and accountable to the Students' Union.
6. Candidates must not do anything to gain an unfair advantage.
7. Candidates must not undermine the fair and democratic running of elections.
8. Candidates must not interfere with students whilst they are casting their vote.
9. Candidates must not break any general Students' Union and University/College rules and regulations. This also includes the Law.

As a 2023 Election candidate, I acknowledge that I understand the above principles and the accompanying rules and regulations and have had the chance to ask for any clarification needed. I understand I am responsible for ensuring any campaigners working with me also follow them.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Elections Guiding Principles should be considered the overarching guidance for all elections conduct, with the following rules and regulations providing specific details on key areas.

Adherence to the following rules **and** to the broader guiding principles is required to ensure a free and fair election; failure to do so may result in penalties that include, but are not limited to, the suspension of a candidate's campaigning activity, or the disqualification of the candidate from the election.

Where a candidate's conduct is investigated by the local Returning Officer, they will be required to attend a meeting with the Returning Officer, and their campaign may be suspended until that meeting is held. Attending such a meeting may take place remotely if needed. Should a candidate fail to attend a meeting with the local Returning Officer, then rulings will be made in their absence.

Should you have any questions on any of these rules, please contact a member of the Democracy Team by emailing democracy@shu.ac.uk.

Budgets and Resources (*The money, materials and resources that Campaigns may use to promote their position*)

1. Candidates have a set budget of £25. This cannot be exceeded under any circumstance. This money will be reimbursed once budget declaration forms and receipts are submitted to the Elections Team.
2. Any materials or resources used in an election campaign should be equally available to all candidates.
3. Candidates must purchase items solely for their own campaign activities. Pooling resources with other candidates is not allowed, and rewards for campaigners will not be considered a legitimate use of campaign funds.
4. The Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to remove campaign material if it is deemed inappropriate.

Physical Campaigning (*Campaign activity carried out in person*)

5. You are not permitted to campaign inside University Learning Centres (Addsetts or Collegiate)
6. Candidates are responsible for obtaining permission to place, affix or carry out campaigning activities around Sheffield City Centre. Sheffield City Council are liable to issue fines around the city if you do not have permission to flyer. Sheffield Hallam Students' Union cannot assist you if this happens.

Digital Campaigning (*Campaign activity carried out on social media or via other digital channels*)

7. Only personal accounts or accounts specifically created for the purpose of election campaigning are to be used to promote a candidate.
8. A named staff member from the Elections Team must be made an administrator in any group or page created for the purpose of a candidate's campaign.
9. Candidates must not make use of pre-existing mailing lists to promote their candidacies.

Endorsements (*Promotion/recommendation of the Campaign by other students or student groups*)

10. An endorsement is considered any activity that indicates a recommendation of a candidate, or that provides a candidate with any form of promotion or platform.
11. Candidates may be endorsed by any full member of the Students' Union, with the exception of individuals and groups listed under rules 12 to 14.
12. Endorsements by Students' Union staff, Elected Officers, Elected Reps, or Student Trustees *are not permitted*.
13. Endorsements by University staff *are not permitted*, with the exception of those by students who hold student staff roles within the University.
14. Student Groups (eg Societies and Clubs) *are not permitted to endorse any elections candidates*. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not preclude individual Student Group members, including Committee Members, from endorsing candidates according to rule 11. **See Appendix A for more information on this rule.**
15. Candidates may not be endorsed by any company, business, or political organisation, by alumni, or by students at other institutions.
16. Candidates may not campaign as a part of a 'slate' (i.e. a group of candidates campaigning together)

Campaign Conduct (*General conduct requirements for the campaign*)

17. Comments or criticism regarding other candidates must never be personal nor include any false statement in relation to a candidate's personal character, manifesto or conduct. Any reference to a candidate's personal traits, character, or religious/political views is not allowed. Within these boundaries, criticism of a candidate's manifesto or campaign is allowed.
18. Campaigning may only take place after 12AM on Thursday 26 January, and only by candidates who have signed and returned a copy of these rules and regulations.

Appendix A: Society & Club Endorsements

Rule 14 states that Student Groups may not endorse Elections candidates. While this does restrict what Student Group Committees are able to do during Elections, this rule should not be interpreted too broadly. For the avoidance of doubt, *all the below activities are allowed*.

- Student Group Committee members can publicly endorse a candidate in a personal capacity according to rule 11. However, they should be careful not to do this via official Club or Society channels, such social media accounts.
- Student Group Committees can promote the Elections in general.
- Candidates are entitled to approach Student Groups to ask for their votes (but not endorsements). Put simply, *any* candidate is entitled to ask *any* member of the Students' Union for their vote – the rules on Endorsement do not affect this.
- Student Group Committee members who are candidates in the Election can refer to their work as a Committee member in their Elections material. They should avoid implying that members of the same Student Group should vote for them on the strength of their membership alone.

Examples

Tim is President of the Robotics Society and is running as a candidate in the Elections. In his promotional material, Tim says, "as President of the Robotics Society, I have organised several successful events, and doubled the membership of the Society."

This does not break any rules, as Tim's work as President is relevant information to voters and doesn't imply that Robotics Society members should vote for him *because* he is President of the Society.

Libby is Social Secretary of Athletics Club. At a social event, she asks other Athletics Club members to vote for her. This is allowed, as she is entitled to speak to any other member about her candidacy. In the interest of fairness, Student Groups should try to accommodate candidates speaking to members during Elections.