



The University of Surrey
Students' Union

SurreyDecides
www.ussu.co.uk/surreydecides

Elections 2014
NOMINATION INFORMATION

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Elections 2014

Thanks for taking the first step in getting more involved in your Union by reading this nomination pack.

The basics:

Every year, the Students' Union holds an election which will choose the people who will lead the Union in the following academic year.

We will be electing our full time officer positions:

President

VP Education

VP Welfare

VP Societies and Individual Development

VP Sports and Recreation

If you are elected into a full time officer role (known as a 'sabbatical officer') you will be working full time at the Students' Union, for a full time salary. It is recommended that you take accommodation on campus and as such will be eligible to apply for a room. As this is full time, you will be taking a year out ([a sabbatical](#)) from your course or from entering your chosen career after graduation. **You cannot do this as a placement**

Our part time officer roles:

We will be electing our Union Chairperson (who is also our student trustee), and 7 part time executive officer positions:

Communications Officer

Community Officer

Ethics and Environment Officer

Equality and Diversity Officer

Events and Trading Officer

International Development Officer

Postgraduate Development Officer

If you are elected into a part time role, you will be continuing with your studies and fulfilling your role at the Union as a volunteer.

We will also be electing our RAG Chair – the student who will lead our 'Raising and Giving' committee for the 2014/15 year, and our Editor in Chief, who oversees our student media.

You perform these roles part time as a volunteer, whilst you are a student. For this reason you should not stand for one of these roles if you are a final year student, unless you intend to progress to a postgraduate course and remain a student.

*Union Chairperson takes the place of the student trustee on the Union Trustee board, you **cannot** be paid by the Students' Union when you take this role, therefore if you are currently employed by the Students' Union (e.g. as bar staff) you will not be able to take this role **and** carry on in your job.

**Editor In Chief has an allowance of £3,500 per annum. This is not a salary; this is an allowance so the student filling this role does not take on a part time job outside of their studies and has the time available to dedicate to the role.

Campaigning for an election is a unique experience, and will give you valuable skills that you will need in later life. Think of an election campaign like a job interview where there are 14,000 members on the interview panel.

Becoming a member of the Union Executive is a big commitment, and a full time sabbatical officer even more so not just in terms of time, but physically and emotionally as well. Please be aware of this when standing. There are a number of legal obligations (for the full time roles) on your part if you do get elected, and they are listed later, so make sure you read through the whole nomination pack.

Nominations must be completed by 12 noon on Wednesday 12th February. **Don't leave this until the last minute in case of technical problems and remember your proposers can only sign propose one candidate and must be a full member of the Student Union.**

The Election Timetable & Deadlines

It is your responsibility to know the election timetable and stick to the deadlines. You should attach the Election Calendar to your own e-mail account so you can see it live. Instructions on how to do this are here

<http://www.ussu.co.uk/yourvoice/Pages/Election-Calendar.aspx>

The calendar is as follows (however this may be subject to change)

Date and time	Event
Monday 3 rd February 2014	Nominations open
Monday 10 th February 2014 6pm TB02	Campaigning Workshop – 6pm (pick up tips for running a successful campaign).
Wednesday 12 th February 2014 12 noon	Nominations close (take note of the 12 noon deadline)
Wednesday 12 th February 2014 6pm Lecture Theatre E	Candidate’s briefing/information session (learn more about the rules – this is essential for candidates).
Thursday 13 th February 2014 5pm	Manifesto deadline
Thursday 13 th Feb – until midnight on 26 th Feb	Campaigning period (10 days)
Sunday 23 rd until Tuesday 25 th February	Election Question Time – 7pm until Midnight each night, confirmation of question time schedule will be sent nearer the time.
Midnight on 26 th Feb until 6pm on Friday 28 th Feb	Voting will be online
Friday 28 th February 8pm	Results announced
Week beginning Monday 23 rd June 2014	Training week for all new officers*
Week beginning Monday 30 th June 2014	Training week for new full time officers*
Monday 7 th July 2014	New team take office

***it is compulsory that all newly elected officers are available during the whole of these essential training weeks.**

Campaign Finance

You can spend **up to £80** on your election campaign, of which you will get £40 back providing you produce appropriate receipts. You will have to complete an expenses form at the end of the campaign to show what you have spent the money on and submit it before the votes are counted. If in the opinion of the returning officer, it appears that you have spent more than £80 on your election campaign you may be excluded from the election. **The limit is what is spent in total on your campaign, not necessarily by you .**

Club or Society support

You may be officially supported by a club or society, this will enable you to declare this on any election material you write, and of course hopefully rely on the votes of that club or society. Each candidate will be required to fill out a form of club or society support which will be available from the Union website that is required to be signed by the club or society committee signatories. These forms should be returned to the Union reception.

Posters, banners & campus publicity

Posters **are permitted** in this campaign. A poster is defined as

- Larger than A6 or smaller than A1
- Anything fixed to vertical surface in a public or communal area

Banners are permitted and are defined as

- Larger than A1
- Produced on material other than paper

When advertising your campaign on the Stag Hill campus, you need to be aware of the following don'ts

- Don't put anything on the 'public facing side' of campus. This is the area from the Stag statue round the perimeter road past the Piazza and lake – stay within the internal section of campus
- Don't do anything that is permanent or semi-permanent (e.g. stickers), you have to have removed all of your campaign publicity before the votes are counted
- Don't use blue tack on painted surfaces
- Chalk on walls & pavements gets messy and annoying

This may seem like your options are limited, however in previous years there have been some very ingenious solutions to these restrictions.

Your term of office

Handover & training for all new officers begins Monday 23rd June 2014 for one week. There is then a further one to one week for the sabbatical officers only from Monday 30th June, and you formally take office from gam on Monday 7th July.

Election Complaints

Anyone can complain about an aspect of an election campaign, and there are a range of sanctions the returning officer may take including recommending expulsion from the contest. The process of complaints will be explained at the candidate briefing.

Your Manifesto

"A manifesto is a public declaration of principles and intentions"

So says Wikipedia. Your manifesto is the most important part of your nomination, it is a list of what you intend to achieve, or the principles by which you stand. When people vote for you, they are voting for what you say you will do. If you are successful in your election, then you will be elected on your manifesto – so if you say you want to paint the Union blue, you cannot then paint the Union red if you are elected.

Try and keep any specific aims and objectives to a concise list, a list of three pledges is both reasonable and realistic. Don't leave your manifesto to the last minute as an afterthought, you will be held to it for your year in office

Manifesto Format

You can put whatever you like in your manifesto, the format we need it in is **A4 Landscape**. It can be in the following formats, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX, CDR, PDF, INDD.

Your manifesto will be reprinted in the election special edition of The Stag, and made available on the Union website. It is also recommended that you take copies with you when you campaign. It can be comprised of just words, or include a picture of yourself – please make sure it is not too colourful so it looks legible when reproduced in black and white. Your manifesto should also include a short paragraph introducing you from one of your proposers, and list who your proposers are (although this is entirely up to you).

Please ask if you would like advice on the layout of your manifesto.

Your Manifesto should ...

Have three or four specific pledges

Be A4 Landscape

Tell the reader a bit about yourself

Only contain the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Your Manifesto should NOT ...

Be too colourful or complicated

Contain 'woolly' or unspecific pledges

Cause offense

Talk about others rather than yourself

Campaigning

The most exciting part of the election is the campaigning itself. You are trying to convince as many Union members as possible to put their faith in you. The best way to do this is not by putting up lots of posters, but by speaking to people face to face.

Campaigning Suggestions

- Come along to the campaigning workshop on Monday 10th February at 6pm (room details tbc) and pick up tips on having a successful campaign.
- Get out and meet as many people as possible
- Do not forget that the vote is STV (single transferable vote), so you are asking for voters to mark 1 in your box, you can also campaign for voters second preference
- Use YouTube, Facebook, Twitter
- Do not use University auto lists on e-mail.
- Knock on doors
- Be positive
- Don't forget Manor Park, Hazel Farm, Bellerby Court, etc

Voting System

Take a moment to understand the voting system, this is not a simple 'the most votes win' election; it has been seen in many elections that the candidate with the most 1's does not actually win, as other candidates have picked up second, third and fourth preferences, etc. For more information see the Union mini guide on Voting.

Being a Trustee (sabbatical & Union Chair only)

If elected you will become one of the trustees of the Students' Union; and although this sounds like a great thing to have on your CV, it is also a legally binding arrangement that makes you personally liable for the conduct of the Union while you are in office, and ignorance is not a defence. In the unlikely event of the Students' Union becoming financially insolvent, the trustees may become personally liable for the debt. You will also become a company director (unless for any reason you are barred from being a director) – again, although this might sound cool, especially that you are no longer liable for all the losses – there are more obligations that you perform your duties competently as a company director and you are still a trustee. For more information on being the trustee of a charity see the following information from the charity commission <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc3.asp>

Guidance for company directors– (from BERR)

- 1) Act in the company's best interests, taking everything you think relevant into account
- 2) Obey the company's constitution and decisions taken under it
- 3) Be honest, and remember that the company's property belongs to it and not to you or to its shareholders
- 4) Be diligent, careful and well informed about the company's affairs. If you have any special skills or experience, use them
- 5) Make sure the company keeps records of your decisions
- 6) Remember that you remain responsible for the work you give to others.
- 7) Avoid situations where your interests conflict with those of the company. When in doubt disclose potential conflicts quickly
- 8) Seek external advice where necessary, particularly if the company is in financial difficulty.

A view from the Vice Chancellor:

"If you would like to have a say in the running of the Students' Union and influence how the University is managed, then becoming a Sabbatical Officer is the ideal way to make a real difference. It is also a very enjoyable and satisfying role, which allows you to proactively shape the policies and activities at Surrey and gain real leadership experience to help develop your career. I know from personal experience from my own student days, how rewarding this can be and also how important it is to ensure good representation of the student community. I encourage you to stand as a candidate in the sabbatical elections and help shape the future of the Union and the University."
(Professor Sir Christopher Snowden).

A view from this year's team:

President

The President is the elected head and chair of the board of trustees that oversees the charity and organisation that is the University of Surrey Students' Union - with ultimate leadership in all aspects of the Union including our activities, commercial outlets, finance, professional relationships, national representation and the local press. As well as all this, the President is the only student representative who holds the position of trustee on the University's Council (the highest decision-making body in this, a top 10 University). In this role, the President represents all Surrey students - past, present and future on high-level University issues and matters e.g. the University strategy - which encompasses new academic facilities like the Vet School - new research initiatives like the 5G Centre, and on the body that will decide on the new Students' Union building. The President is open to very sensitive and highly confidential data.

The President chairs all but one Union decision-making meetings, sits on nearly all high-level University meetings, and meets one-on-one with University management, including the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Finance Manager, ensuring issues important to students remain on the agenda, and our partnership with the University continues to develop. The President manages the Sabbatical team and is the go-to person externally for all things Union-related (this involves being on top of your emails and answer-phone messages as well as drop-in meetings).

I did have preconceptions and misunderstandings about what being President entailed before coming into the role. I've always felt that a step up means a step further away from the action and so in this setting, less interaction with students. The thought of dwelling in a lonely office and dressing smart in order to attend long and boring University meetings didn't thrill me. However, I've come to understand that the role really is what you make it - the opportunities are there, and you can either fully embrace and use them to benefit our students, Students' Union and University, or you can sit back and let them pass you by. Choose not to be removed from students - this year, I introduced a new initiative that enables the Sabbatical Officers to come alongside students in their lectures, labs and practical sessions - further developing that relationship and understanding in order to truly represent them at the highest levels. You are not bound by your office - it's up to you to walk around the Union and University including others and being included yourself on current projects people are working on. Communication is key. And as far as the 'smart dress' etiquette is concerned, you don't actually have to over-do it - the University management loved my Christmas jumper, and Onesie Monday was a blast!

In some ways, after I won the position, I fitted right into the role; I could finally stand up, speak out and make a difference for students. In others ways, I had some growing to do... Politics are real, people are complex and it isn't all plain-sailing. But the support network you have in this role is absolutely second to none.

You will be working closely with University management staff who have an unrivalled depth and breadth of experience: from the former finance manager of Marks and Spencer, to head of Lloyds of London and friends of the Prime Minister. Staff within the Union have the long view and are on hand to help you make sense of it all, but what really keeps you alive? The students - full of passion and

enthusiasm, and deep down are just really good people.

If I could give you just a little advice about campaigning for election... The student body isn't stupid. Your words and actions are an overflow of what's in your heart. You could have the best campaign ever on paper, but if your heart's not in it and your interest is not in the welfare of the student body and direction of the Students' Union, it *will* come across. Don't stress yourself out about what your 'tag line' will be, or what gimmick you're to pull out of the bag. Make sure you know *who* you are and *what* you stand for. Also, remember that I've served my 2-year limit and will not be running in the elections this year. Use me. I'm here to help, but only if you ask!

The benefits of being an officer are different for everyone. I can look back and be proud of so many successes we've achieved both individually and as a team: winning Jenson Button's racing helmet, Tinie Tempah's surprise appearance at the Vice-Chancellor's talk, securing £70,000 worth of maintenance on our current SU building, a jump in NSS satisfaction and consulting the student body on what they would like from their Union in the next decade to name but a few! By the end of this year, we will have recruited a new CEO for the organisation, 2 new trustees, helped to create an appeal process which is quicker and fairer for all students, and finally got tickets online!

From this year experience, what I will take into the rest of my adult life is the beginnings of an unshakeable character. In this role, I have had to face my insecurities head-on, learn to strive for something without seeking credit, and learn the valuable life-lesson of not taking criticism or attack personally. I've learned so much about conflict resolution, team-development and management as well as developing a new understanding, respect and passion for politics, finance and both the education and charity sectors.

My advice to a potential candidate for the role of President is as follows:

Never give up on people. Some of your ideas and plans may be picked up and others lost, there may be disagreements and misunderstandings along the way, but at the end of the day "ideas compete, not people" [Anderson, former USSU CEO]. Always choose to see the best in people.

VP Sports:

VP Sports & Recreation is a fantastic role for anyone interested in sport and you get to work with a wide range of great people to make sport at Surrey better. The role has a wide range of different responsibilities and you can really make it what you want. You can gain experience in marketing, event planning, budgets & finance, strategy and sport development.

I stood for election because I felt that I could make a difference and improve sport here at the University of Surrey. I had been involved with my club for three years, including two on the committee and thought that my experience could help make sport better for all students.

Starting in the role, there was a great summer of planning events, promotional materials and opportunities ready to hit the ground running. Term time was hectic when it came around and it is a much busier role than I first imagined. I didn't realise before I ran that the role is not solely focused on Sports & Recreation but first and foremost you are a Vice-President of the Students' Union. This

means that you have responsibilities for all areas of Students' Union activity and get deeply involved in a wide range of areas including the commercial services as well as helping the other VP's.

Being VP Sports & Recreation is a fantastic opportunity to work with people and to represent students with senior members of University and Sports Park staff. There is a great team at the Students Union and at Surrey Sports Park to help your events and ideas happen.

When campaigning it is really important to get out and talk to as many people as possible. Remember it's not just sports club members who are voting in the election and that the role is VP Sports & RECREATION! Do plenty of research before writing your manifesto and question time so you are well prepared and also realistic.

Any questions?

If you have any further questions before you submit your nomination, please contact the Returning Officer, Charlie Eastaugh on c.eastaugh@surrey.ac.uk.

The Deputy Returning Officers are:

Kath Phillips in the Students' Union Katherine.phillips@surrey.ac.uk or phone 01483 683265 (ext 3265 on campus).

Alex Tolley in the Students' Union a.tolley@surrey.ac.uk or phone 01483 689987 (ext 9987 in campus)