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Introduction to SU Elections

The Students' Union (The SU) runs elections so you, the student community can decide who should lead and represent you in shaping student life at Bath. Most non-academic activities at the University are led and delivered through The SU. By getting involved in elections, you can nominate yourself or vote for students to take on a wide range of positions, including:

- **Full-time, paid roles** (e.g. SU Officers which are covered here)
- **Part-time, voluntary roles** (e.g. committee members, Academic Reps)

Elected students play a vital role in shaping your experience at Bath. They:

- Set the direction of the SU
 - Decide on student policy
 - Run campaigns and organise events to improve student life on campus and beyond
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Key Dates and Deadlines

Various SU elections take place throughout the academic year, with two main election periods:

Semester 1 (Autumn Term)	Semester 2 (Spring Term)
<p>This election period includes the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic Representatives (1st Year Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught)• Senate Representative• PGT Faculty Representatives• Hall Representatives• Postgraduate (Taught) Executive Committee Positions	<p>This is when major cross-SU leadership roles are elected, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SU Officer positions• Student group committee positions• Faculty Reps• Executive Committees• Doctoral Faculty Representatives• Doctoral Executive Committee

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Postgraduate (Taught) Dep Reps• SUMmit Open Place Positions	<p>Positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doctoral Reps• Undergraduate Department Reps
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Semester Two Officer Elections Timeline:

- **Nominations Open:**
Friday 12 December 2025, 12:00
- **Nominations Close:**
Monday 09 February 2026, 12:00
- **Manifesto Deadline:**
Friday 13 February 2026, 12:00
- **Online Campaigning Opens:**
Thursday 19 February 2026, 12:00
- **Banner Setting:**
Sunday 22 February 2026
- **In Person Campaigning & Voting Opens:**
Monday 23 February 2026, 09:00
- **Voting Closes:**
Thursday 26 February 2026, 17:00
- **Results Released:**
Friday 27 February 2026 from 16:00

Who Runs the Elections?

SU Officer Elections are organised and overseen by the Voice Team at The SU. They ensure all elections are fair, transparent, and accessible. The SU follows a clear set of democratic processes and election rules, which will be outlined in the next section of this booklet.

Officer Election Rules

Our rules aim to ensure elections are fair & inclusive to all students. Elections rules are in addition to general SU and University rules and regulations, and the laws of the land.

Behavioural Rules

- All candidates are accountable for the actions of anyone acting on their behalf. This includes being able to demonstrate that they have taken reasonable steps to explain the rules and ensure that their campaigner's actions comply with the campaign rules in the event of a complaint against them.
- Campaigners will make no unsubstantiated, vexatious, or retaliatory claims of another campaign, person, or organisation.
- Campaigners may only alter, move, or remove their own campaign materials. Campaigners must not interfere with the materials of other candidates. The Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to remove, relocate, or amend any campaign materials if they breach rules, cause obstruction, or for any other reason.
- Candidates in Officer Elections are allocated a budget for their campaign. Expenses can only be incurred for SU Officer elections.

Manifestos

- Manifestos must be in line with The SU's values to be inclusive and respectful.
- Manifestos must not knowingly mislead students or contain false information.
- For Officer Elections, videos are allowed in manifestos. If you have any accessibility support needs, please contact sureturningofficer@bath.ac.uk.
- Profile pictures must be of the candidates only.
- Manifestos and Campaigning materials must not mention individuals by name.

Campaigning

- Campaigners may only use a mailing list containing consenting individuals, developed during and for the purpose of the campaign. No other mailing list use is permitted.
- Early campaigning is strictly prohibited. This includes any activity by a candidate or their campaign team that promotes the candidate or encourages students to vote for them before the official campaign period begins. Any breach of this rule may result in penalties at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO).
- The following are not seen as 'early campaigning':
 1. Telling close friends about your prospective candidacy.
 2. Creating election content in a public place ahead of the election period (as long as there is reasonably no form of campaigning).
 3. Researching for a campaign/manifesto. Prospective candidates can contact specific students/student leaders indicating that they are 'considering running for a role'. In this regard, telling others that you are considering to run (is not telling them you are running), and not telling them the position (unless it is reasonably relevant) also makes it clear you are not lobbying for votes or trying to put others off of running
- All members of a campaign team must be currently enrolled students at the University of Bath. Students can only be a member of one campaign team within an election. Candidates are not included within this limit.
- You must ask a lecturer's permission before campaigning in a classroom.
- You must ask the admin's permission before posting in messaging and social media groups.
- Campaigning cannot occur in the following places:
 - 1) The library
 - 2) Student Support (4 West)
 - 3) University commercial outlets or Sports Training Village
- The use of AirDrop and equivalent is not permitted.
- Campaigners can only put up posters and banners on campus during SU Officer Elections. Banners or similar must be fixed only with string, rope or cable

ties. Posters or similar must be fixed only with string, the use of blu-tac, tape or similar adhesives are expressly forbidden.

- Campaigners must allow voters to vote freely and without interference. All electronic devices are counted as ballot papers in this context.
- SU Officers and permanent staff cannot endorse any candidate. Student staff may endorse in a personal capacity. This is to ensure elections remain open and accessible to all students and that the process is fair.
- Campaigners may have to attend mandatory meetings. These will be made clear for the relevant election.
- Campaigns should be fully transparent and accountable to The SU.
- Candidates must not run on a slate in SU Officer Elections. Slates are defined as candidates running on the same platform, normally along with similar branding and/or asking their supporters and the electorate to support another candidate.

Endorsements and staff

- SU Student Group Endorsement is permitted for SU Officer Elections. Student groups must comply with our election rules but can 'endorse' particular candidates in an appropriate way. See the separate guidance document.
- Individual current registered students at the University of Bath can endorse candidates in a personal capacity.
- External endorsements are not permitted.
- Members of staff shall not become actively involved in the politics of The SU, or be encouraged to do so and shall remain neutral during elections (and therefore cannot endorse candidates). SU staff in this context are university employees who work under the direction of the Chief Executive and do not apply to SU Officers and student staff when student staff are not at work.
- Members of staff can be approached for professional advice and shall give information equally to all campaigners.

Expenses

- SU officer campaigns must not exceed £50 in expenditure, of which £20 will be reimbursed from the SU.
- The SU will supply all candidates for officer elections with some basic campaign resources, free of charge.
- All campaigners must submit all their campaign costs with receipts to the Deputy Returning Officer. The final deadline for expenses will be made clear for each individual election. If no expenditure is incurred, this must be declared to the Deputy Returning Officer.
- Items freely and readily available to all campaigners can be used without deduction from expenses and can be used without itemisation.
- Plain shirts and sheets will be expensed at £1 each regardless of cost.
- Printed shirts and transfer papers must be expensed at cost.
- The guidance around the expensing of printing costs will be made clear for each individual election.
- No 'part expensing' is permitted (you must expense the total cost of the entire item you have purchased, e.g. the entire paint can, not just the cost of half of it – even if you just used half.)
- Postage & Packaging costs do not need to be expensed.

Breach of Rules

- All rulings on the interpretation of the rules will be made by the Returning Officer or their nominated representative (i.e. DRO). Interpretation will be in the interest of the electorate above all others.
- Elections rules are in addition to general SU and University rules and regulations, and the Law.
- If a breach of these rules has occurred, the Returning Officer or their nominated representative may apply a sanction.
- Complaints, grievances, and appeals must follow the grievance procedure. The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) may apply any of these penalties at their discretion, depending on the nature and severity of the breach.

Sanctions can include, but are not limited to:

1. **Formal warning**
2. **Temporary campaign ban** (online or in-person)
3. **Compliance Directive:** *An instruction issued by Deputy Returning Officer during the elections period to address a breach or potential breach of the rules. The directive can require an individual or group to take specific corrective actions such as deleting content or halting particular activities to restore fair conduct in the election.*
4. **Disqualification**

Grievance Procedure

Any full member of the Students' Union can submit an election grievance if they believe a candidate's behaviour during an election is in breach of the rules. Note that the grievance procedure is the same for both Officer Elections and Student Leadership Elections.

How to submit a grievance

Grievances will normally only be accepted within 24 hours from the incident and should be submitted to the [Grievances Form](#). No grievances will be accepted if sent through email or any other channels. Finally, no grievances will be considered after 1 hour from the close of voting.

Where possible, any outstanding grievances which could affect the ballot will be resolved before the conduct of the count. The only accepted grievances after this will be in relation to the count itself and must be submitted within 1 hour of the announcement of the results.

What happens next?

Grievance submissions will be considered by the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO). The DRO may seek advice from various sources in reaching their decision. The DRO will decide whether to accept (uphold) or reject the grievance, and you will be notified in writing of any resulting action.

What information should a grievance contain?

To help the Deputy Returning Officer consider your grievance, it should be factual and contain clear evidence about the complaint. Grievances that are comprised of hearsay or activity that does not directly affect you may not be successful. The Deputy Returning Officer reserves the right to consider grievances as vexatious or retaliatory and may take disciplinary action accordingly.

Appeals

Appeals If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the grievance, they may be able to request the opportunity to appeal. The appeal stage will not usually consider the issues afresh or involve a further investigation.

Who can appeal

- Only the individuals directly impacted by the decision may appeal.
- Appeals cannot be made by third parties (someone who submitted the complaint but is not directly sanctioned or affected).

When an appeal can be made

- An appeal can only be made if a sanction has been imposed.
- If a complaint is dismissed, there is no right of appeal.

Important clarification

- If the Decision-Making Officer (DRO) upholds a complaint and imposes a sanction, the people who submitted the original complaint cannot appeal simply because they disagree with the sanction chosen.
- The right to appeal belongs only to the individuals who have received a sanction.

The appeals process exists to give fairness to the person who has been sanctioned not to re-run the complaint or increase penalties. Appeals must be made in writing no later than one hour after the decision and must be submitted by completing the [Microsoft Form](#), following the normal procedure outlined above. This will normally be considered by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer will decide whether to accept (uphold) or reject the appeal, and you will be notified by the RO in writing of any resulting action. The RO's decision is final and completes the appeals process.

How do I Stand as a Candidate for a Role?

Thinking about standing for election? Here's everything you need to know about becoming a candidate, from nomination through to confirmation.

Eligibility Criteria

All registered students at the University of Bath, in whatever, year, whether postgraduate or undergraduate, home or international, may stand and vote in Officer Elections. If you are a student on suspense or distance learner and want to stand in the election and have questions about how this works for you, please contact the Deputy Returning Officer (sureturningofficer@bath.ac.uk) who will be happy to assist you in the election process.

How to Nominate Yourself

Step 1: Access the Nominations Portal:

- Go to thesubath.com/elections during the nominations period
- Log in with your University of Bath Single Sign On (SSO)
- Select the position you wish to stand for. You can only nominate yourself for one role.

Step 3: Complete Your Nomination: You'll need to provide:

- Personal details
- A manifesto (up to 500 words for most positions)
- A clear photo of yourself take a well-lit, front-facing picture, showing your face clearly with no filters
- Contact information

Step 4: Review and Submit

- Double-check all information, especially your manifesto
- Ensure your content follows Election Rules
- Submit your nomination before the deadline

What Happens After You Nominate

1. You'll receive an email confirming your nomination has been received. This doesn't mean you're approved yet, just that your nomination has been received. Until the point of approval candidates can edit their photo, manifesto and candidates can withdraw at any point.
2. The Elections Team will review your nomination to ensure:
 - Your manifesto follows election rules
 - Your photo is appropriate and clear
 - All required information is complete
3. Once approved, you'll receive an official confirmation email. You cannot

start campaigning until the set date above.

4. If there are issues, your nomination may need changes; you'll be contacted with specific feedback and given a chance to make corrections within limited time. If you do not reply in time your nomination may be revoked.

Writing a Manifesto

Your manifesto is a short statement explaining who you are, why you're standing, and what you'll do if elected. It appears on The SU's Elections website during voting. Essentially your manifesto needs to say why you think you would be a good, elected representative and what you would do if you were elected. The manifesto word limit for most elections is 500 words, if it is different the election should specify this.

What makes a strong manifesto?

Your manifesto is your pitch to voters. It helps them understand who you are, what matters to you, and what you'll bring to the role. Writing a manifesto with a clear structure is crucial for voters to get a good idea of who you are as a candidate. Here's a simple 4-part format to help you start writing:

1. **Who are you?** A short intro to you! Your name, course, your interest.
2. **Why are you running?** What motivated you to stand? What do you care about?
3. **What are your goals?** 2–3 achievable things you want to work on if elected.
4. **How will you achieve them?** Show voters you're realistic and know how the SU works.

Manifesto Tips

- Be positive: focus on what you'll do, not what others haven't done.
- Be clear: bullet points and short sentences work better than long paragraphs.
- Be specific: "I want to improve communication by starting a monthly newsletter" is stronger than "I want to improve communication."
- Show why you're the best person for the role.
- Think specifically about the role you're running for and the responsibilities you would have if elected. Consider times you've shown skills that would help you excel in this role.
- Stick to the point and make your manifesto short and clear. Too much information might put students off reading it all. Consider, honestly breaking your manifesto into points you will work to implement within your control, if you win) and goals you will advocate for (out of your control). Students will appreciate the transparency about knowing what you have the power to change!"
- Follow the Election Rules! Inaccurate or inappropriate content can get you removed.
- Upload a clear, appropriate photo of just you, making sure to follow the Election Rules.

Sample Manifesto Excerpt

"Hi! I'm Sara, a second-year Physics student, and I'm running for Treasurer because I want to help the society run smoothly and make the most of our budget.

This year, I want to:

- *Make funding more transparent by posting a short monthly update on our spending.*
- *Work with the Chair to plan affordable trips and events.*

- *Post photos our events on social media so that students can see what we get up to.*

I've got experience managing budgets in my part-time job, and I'm confident I can bring that to this role!"

Campaigning

Campaigning is what candidates do to get votes it's not just handing out leaflets though! Successful candidates take time to listen and speak to students, find out about the current issues relevant to the role they're standing for, and persuade voters with ideas and enthusiasm. If you are thinking of standing for election and want to know how you can improve your chances of success, here are some tips and ideas you might like to think about.

Campaigning Ethically

- Be respectful of voters and other candidates; elections are about ideas, not personal competitions.
- You must always follow SU election rules.

Campaigning Tips and Suggestions

- Create a campaign-specific Instagram or make posts on SU groups chats.
 - Use story templates and share a short video introducing yourself and your campaign.
 - Generate a QR code linking to your manifesto and post it around digital channels.
 - Ask friends to share your posts or help spread your message.
 - Use humour, graphics, or slogans to make your message memorable.
 - Hold Q&A events in SU Groups to speak directly to voters.
-

- Talk to group members! Personal conversations are often the most effective campaigning tool.
 - Remember, people vote for people they feel they can trust.
-

Voting Process

How to Vote

Accessing the Ballot

- Voting takes place online through The SU website
- You'll receive an email with voting instructions when polls open
- Log in using your University of Bath credentials at thesubath.com/elections
- You can vote from any device with internet access

The Voting Process

- Read candidate manifestos directly on the voting platform
- Make your choices for each position
- Review your selections before submitting

Your Voting Rights

Who Can Vote

- All registered students are eligible to vote.

Privacy and Security

- Your vote is completely secret
- No one can see your individual choices

Accessibility

- The voting platform is designed to be accessible
 - If you need assistance voting, contact sureturningofficer@bath.ac.uk
-

After You Vote

Results

- Results are announced according to the election timeline
- You'll be notified by email when results are available
- Full results are published on The SU website

If Something Goes Wrong

If you are unable to vote, try these troubleshooting steps:

- Try refreshing your browser and logging in again
- Clear your browser cache if you're having persistent issues
- Contact SU web team or sureturningofficer@bath.ac.uk immediately if problems continue
- Don't wait until the last minute to vote in case of technical difficulties!

Support and Resources Available

Running in an election can be exciting but also a little daunting... you're not alone! The SU and the University are here to support you every step of the way.

SU Support

- The SU website contains guidance on running elections, including timelines, committee role descriptions, and policy documents. This handbook also covers the core information you need to stand in an election.

University Wellbeing Support

The University offers a range of wellbeing services, whether you're feeling stressed, anxious, or just want someone to talk to, support is available.

- **Student Support & Wellbeing Service:** A confidential, professional service available to all students. You can book appointments or attend drop-in sessions to speak with a Wellbeing Adviser about anything impacting your wellbeing.
- **Be Well – Talk Now:** A 24/7 support line available to all students, offering live chat, phone, or video support whenever you need to talk to someone – day or night.

What Happens After You're Elected

Results from elections will be sent out via email and then can be found on the website. Following elections, there will be an induction training session hosted by The SU to help you understand your new role and its responsibilities. Officer elections also have a handover period. This is an opportunity to connect with the Officer leaving the role you have been elected to. The SU provides a document to be filled in as part of handover, to ensure that the relevant information has been passed on and that those newly elected understand their roles.

Final Words

Your Students' Union exists because students like you decided to get involved. The beauty of SU elections is that there's no single path to making a difference. Maybe you're passionate about sustainability, mental health support, international student experiences, or making your course better. Perhaps you want to organise events, manage budgets, or simply ensure your fellow students have a voice. There's a role for every interest and every skill set.

To Future Candidates

Standing for election takes courage, and that courage is already a leadership quality. Whether you win or lose, you'll gain invaluable experience in public speaking, campaign organisation, and understanding how your university works. You'll connect with students across the university and develop skills that will serve you well beyond Bath.

